



**Middle Georgia** State University

SCHOOL OF HEALTH & NATURAL SCIENCES

## **Faculty Handbook**

**2019-2020**

Department of Natural Sciences  
Department of Nursing  
Department of Rehabilitation Science  
Department of Respiratory Therapy

## **I. Introduction**

### **Message from the Dean**

This Faculty Handbook was created for the School of Health & Natural Sciences. The information contained within this document does not supersede policy found in the USG Policy Manual, USG Academic and Student Affairs Handbook, MGA Policies, or MGA Faculty Handbook. As such, policies found in those locations are not included in this handbook. The guidelines are intended to help faculty members better understand the culture and expectations in the School of Health & Natural Sciences. They also provide guidance on the expectations of faculty members in terms of teaching, the Boyer model of scholarship, and service to the institution, profession and the community.

Kind Regards,

Tara Underwood, DHA  
Dean, School of Health & Natural Sciences  
Professor of Health Administration

## **About the School**

**Our Vision:** Serving Middle Georgia as the destination for STEM and Health Education while graduating adaptable, engaged, lifelong learners who are good stewards of their communities.

**Our Mission:** To deliver quality curricula and programs which incorporate evidence-based practice and real-life application which prepare students to be competent professionals and leaders within our community and beyond.

### **Our Unit Goals:**

The School of Health & Natural Sciences and its programs will:

1. Offer benchmarked curricula that support the workforce needs of the region while meeting program certification and accreditation standards.
2. Attract and retain academically qualified students into our affordable, accessible, and challenging degree programs and produce competent graduates prepared to assume entry level positions in a dynamic healthcare environment.
3. Develop, cultivate, and utilize relationships with alumni, the practitioner community, and the healthcare industry to provide practical feedback and to enhance program development that is conducive to industry standards and trends.
4. Collaborate with the profession, college, and community in service and research to further the health outcomes of the community and contribute to the discipline.
5. Effectively and efficiently manage the resources of the institution.
6. Strategically operate the School in a manner attuned to the mission and initiatives of Middle Georgia State University and the University System of Georgia.

### **School of Health & Natural Sciences Departments**

The School of Health & Natural Sciences is home to four departments:

- Department of Natural Sciences
- Department of Nursing
- Department of Rehabilitation Science
- Department of Respiratory Therapy

These programs are located on four of the five campuses that are a part of Middle Georgia University to include Cochran, Dublin, Macon, and Warner Robins, Georgia.

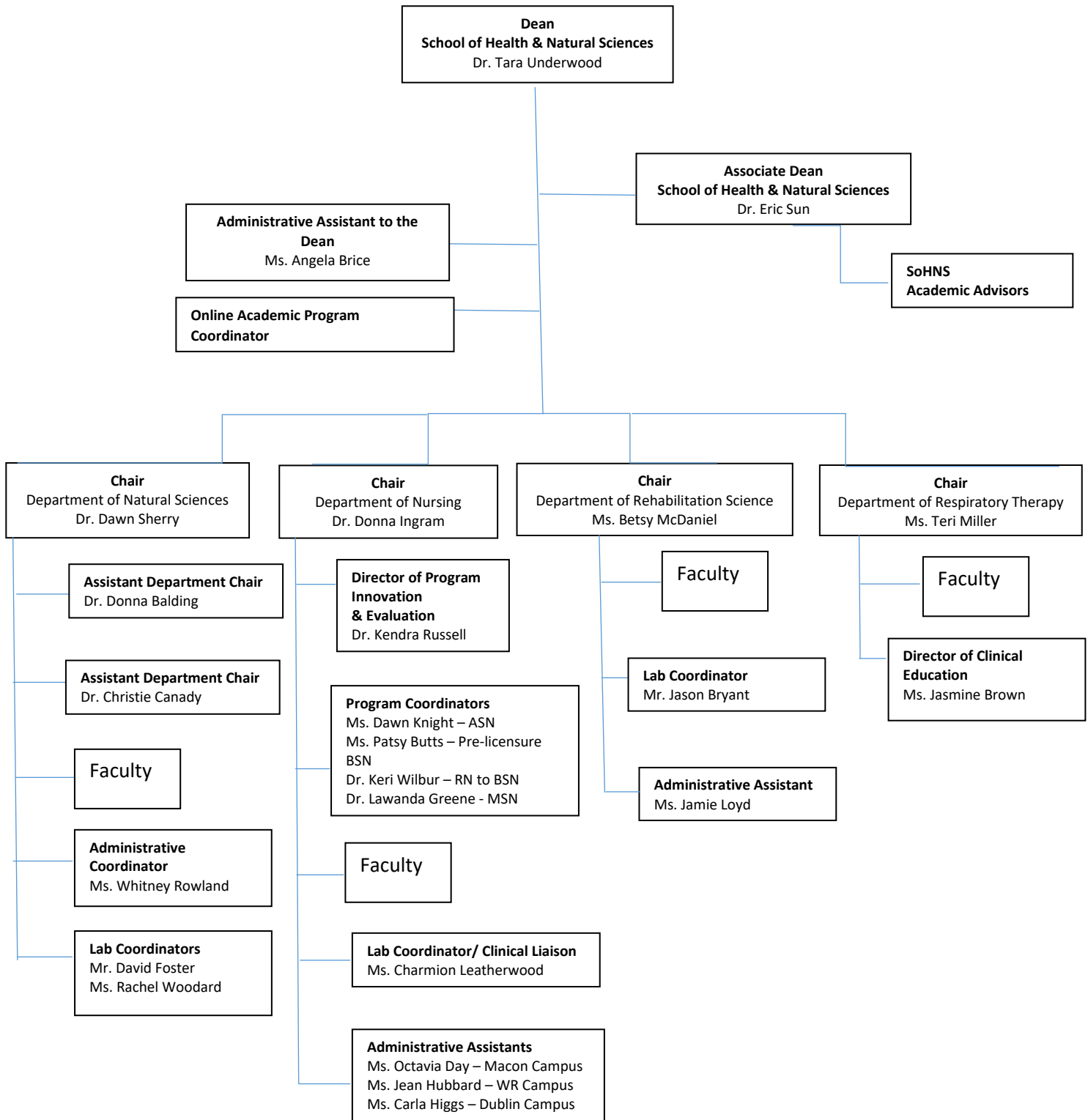
### **Program Accreditation**

The nursing programs are housed in the School of Health & Natural Sciences and are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing. The address for ACEN is 3343 Peachtree Road, NE, Suite 850, Atlanta, GA 30326.

The Occupational Therapy Assistant program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) of the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), located at 4720 Montgomery Lane, P.O. Box 31220, Bethesda, MD 20824-1220.

The Respiratory Therapy program's Bachelor of Science entry-level program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care and is reported as CoARC program number 200424. The address for CoARC is P.O. Box 54876, Hurst, TX 76054-4876.

## School of Health & Natural Sciences – Organizational Chart



## II. Administrative Procedures

As stated in the MGA Faculty Handbook (section 5.03.06 OTHER DUTIES AND EXPECTATIONS),

Faculty are expected to attend all officially designated meetings of the faculty including, but not limited to, Academic Assembly, Faculty Orientation/ Convocation, Commencement, and Department/School/College meetings unless excused by the Provost. Requests to be excused must be submitted to the immediate supervisor for submission to the Provost. All faculty members are expected to follow school policies in regards to attendance and participation in the work of the school.

### Faculty Meetings and School Standing Committees

School of Health & Natural Science meetings will occur once a year in the Fall in order to discuss School business, elect faculty to serve of campus committees, celebrate the accomplishments of faculty members, and introduce new faculty to our unit. During this time we will also identify accomplishments of our school and goals that need to be accomplished in the future. Department Chairs also hold meetings at various times throughout the academic year as needed. If you are not able to attend these mandatory meetings due to illness, death, or other emergencies, you must inform your Department Chair. It is vital that all faculty attend these meetings and do not schedule other appointments during that designated day and time.

University Committees in which the SoHNS needs to be represented include the following Standing Committees and Boards (information that pertains to these groups are located at this link:

<https://www.mga.edu/faculty-staff/governance/2019-2020/standing-committees-boards.php>):

### Standing Committees

- Academic Affairs Committee
- Academic Quality
- Assessment Committee
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Executive Committee
- Faculty Affairs
- General Education Council
- Institutional Policy and Campus Affairs
- Intercollegiate Athletics
- Promotion, Tenure, and Post-Tenure Review Committee
- Strategic Plan Implementation and Assessment
- Student Academic Enhancement
- Student Affairs
- Teaching Resources and Budgetary Allocation

### Boards

- Campus Safety Committee
- Faculty Development
- Institutional Effectiveness

- Institutional Review
- Student Conduct
- Student Fees
- Student Honors and Awards
- Student Media Advisory

### **Councils**

- Graduate Studies

### **School of Health Science Committees**

- Alumni Affairs Committee
- Curriculum Committee
- Faculty Development Committee
- Newsletter Committee

### **Department of Natural Sciences Committees**

- *Biosafety Committee*
- *Curriculum Committee*

### **Department of Nursing Committees**

- *Admissions, Recruitment, and Retention Committee*
- *Evaluation Committee*
- *ASN Committee*
- *BSN Committee*
- *MSN Committee*

### **Department of Rehabilitation Science Committees**

Due to the small number of faculty within this department, the Chair determines who will serve in which capacity to ensure all curricular, alumni, recruitment, and other topics are discussed and addressed accordingly.

### **Department of Respiratory Therapy Committees**

Due to the small number of faculty within this department, the Chair determines who will serve in which capacity to ensure all curricular, alumni, recruitment and other topics are discussed and addressed accordingly.

### **Attendance at Graduation Ceremonies**

All faculty are expected to attend at least one of the graduation ceremonies each year (either Fall or Spring ceremony). Depending upon the size of the venue, Department Chairs will work with faculty members to ensure all faculty members participate as required during at least one of the events.

## **Communication**

To share information and news with faculty, staff, and students, the following information is used:

### **Facebook pages**

Natural Sciences - @MGA Natural Sciences

Occupational Therapy Assistant Program - "Middle Georgia State University OTA Program"

Nursing Program - @mganursingstudents

Respiratory Therapy Program - <https://www.facebook.com/MidGaRespiratoryTherapy/>

Respiratory Therapy Program Alumni page - <https://www.facebook.com/mgreatealumni/>

Contact the Department Chair of your program for details.

### **Social Media Policy (as stated in MGA Faculty Handbook 6.22.02)**

Given the nature of social media and that university professors hold a "special position in the community [that] imposes special obligations" (AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure with 1970 Interpretive Comments, modified 1989 and 1990), members of the corps of instruction should exercise an abundance of caution in how they interact with students, former students, members of the community, and other professionals through such media and should bear in mind how their comments might be construed in legal and professional contexts.

In the case of a social media site that is created solely by the teacher for a class, an organization, or a club, the instructor bears reasonable responsibility for monitoring the appropriateness of content just as he or she would for any other electronic platform directly related to University activities in or outside of the classroom.

In further instances where technology allows instantaneous commentary, faculty members should be extremely careful, as such technology lends itself to off-hand remarks that could later be read in terms of professional reputation, accuracy, and liability. The University strongly recommends that all of its professionals exercise their best professional judgment in the use of all social media.

### **Policy Guidance on Political Activity**

#### **Employee Expression of Political Opinions – (refer to USG policy 6.0 and Memorandum from USG Office of Legal Affairs, January 14, 2020)**

The USG respects the free expression rights of USG employees to share their own views on political issues. Sharing these views should be done only in employees' personal capacities and in a manner that does not interfere with work, does not involve improper use of state resources, and does not create the appearance that the employee is speaking on behalf of the USG or its institutions. Employees desiring to express personal political views should make it clear that their views are personal in nature and do not represent the views of the USG or its institutions. For example, employees desiring to express personal views to elected officials or other third parties must make it clear that their views are personal in nature and do not represent the views of the USG or its institutions, and may not use state resources (including work email) or work time to communicate these views.



In addition, employees are prohibited from using any USG registered trademarks when expressing personal opinions on political issues, unless they are otherwise specifically authorized to do so.

**Employee Involvement in Political Campaigns** Individuals may not hold elective political office at the state or federal level while employed by the USG. Any employee seeking elective office must notify his or her direct supervisor and request a leave of absence without pay prior to qualifying as a candidate.

Employees are also prohibited from managing or taking an active part in political campaigns during work hours or where such involvement would otherwise interfere with work responsibilities. Under no circumstances may employees use any state property, resources, or materials in conjunction with any political campaigning.

**Outside Activities – (refer to MGA Handbook policy 6.18 concerning policies related to occupational, consulting, and political activities)**

### **Leave**

If you are unable to attend office hours or class due to doctor's appointments, illness in the family or other personal issues, you must inform the Department Chair and Administrative Assistant immediately. Such leave is considered sick time and must be reported as such on your monthly time card. See the MGA Statutes and Bylaws that can be found in section 6.04 of the MGA Handbook for details.

### **Guidelines for Office Hours**

Contact your Department Chair concerning the expectation of holding office hours.

Definition of office hours: timeframes during university business hours in which you are available to provide advice, mentor, or discuss academic issues in an individual setting with students.

Faculty should avoid scheduling doctor's appointments or other meetings during posted office hours. Office hours should be posted outside of the faculty member's office door. Office hours should also be articulated in the faculty member's course syllabi.

Any time you are not going to be in your office during your scheduled office hours – for whatever reason – a sign or note must be posted on your office door, notifying visitors where you are, and if appropriate, when you will return. If you know you are not going to be in your office during your office hours, you must announce it to your classes (e-mail is an appropriate way for your online classes), and you must inform the Administrative Assistant.

### **Travel**

All travel, whether it is intercampus travel or travel required for conference attendance, must be approved by the Department Chair or Dean as deemed appropriate. The guidelines, forms, and other information that pertains to travel are located at this link: <https://www.mga.edu/finance/travel.php>

### **Student Attendance Records**

Full and part-time faculty at Middle Georgia State University are required to maintain attendance records in all face-to-face and distance-education classes per section [5.04.05 of the Faculty Handbook](#). It is critical that faculty keep complete and accurate records. In particular, please note the following:

- After the drop for non-payment, students may have dropped from your class rolls. Please print fresh Banner rosters, and identify any students in your classroom who are not listed on the roll. These students should be sent to the Bursar to make payment before being readmitted to class.
- Fresh Banner rosters should be pulled for the next two weeks and periodically throughout the semester, since students may drop from rolls for a variety of reasons throughout the term.
- Attendance for online classes is documented via class participation or academic engagement. Remember that documenting that a student has logged into an online class is not sufficient to demonstrate academic engagement.
- When submitting final grades in SWORDS, faculty are required to enter students' last date of attendance for any grades deemed unsuccessful attempts. Faculty who log unsuccessful grades for online students will be prompted to submit evidence of the last date of attendance in Brightspace/D2L at the end of term.
- Faculty should maintain records of attendance for online and face-to-face classes **for a minimum of three years.**

### **Email Signatures**

Information that pertains to the expected structure of institutional e-mail signature format is located at this website: <https://www.mga.edu/marketing-communications/email-signature-instructions.php>

An example of a proper e-mail signature is as follows:

#### **Amy Lastname**

Assistant Professor of Biology  
Middle Georgia State University  
100 University Parkway, Macon, Georgia 31206  
O: 478.471.0000 F: 478.471.0000  
Amy.Lastname@mga.edu

### **Directory Profile**

Faculty are expected to keep their MGA directories information up-to-date. Profiles can be updated using this link: <https://www.mga.edu/directory/me/index.php>

### **Required Authorization Items**

The following requires prior authorization/approval from the Chair (some cases the Associate Dean or Dean):

1. Canceling a class session (if sick, notify the Administrative Assistant and Department Chair). Faculty should observe the MGA Faculty Instructional Policies (see Handbook section 5.04)

2. Changing the already assigned classrooms - requires authorization from the Chair
3. Moving students from one section of a class to another either in a face-to-face or online class - - requires authorization from the Chair
4. Changing office hours for a certain day or week, etc. - requires authorization from the Chair
5. Prior approval is required for leaving campus for any purpose during the scheduled work day or office hours if it is not related to instructional purposes. Faculty should fill out travel authorization forms prior to attending conferences and gain the signature of the Chair and/or the Dean.
6. Prior approval is required for traveling to conferences, meetings, etc. during work time – need to fill out travel authorization form. Requires authorization from the Chair and/or Dean.
7. Outside occupational activities – requires authorization from the Chair, Dean, the Provost, and the President.
8. Bringing children on campus - requires authorization from the Chair and the Associate Dean and/or Dean. Faculty should observe the HR policy on bringing children on campus.
9. Reserving conference rooms or spaces outside of Departmental spaces – requires authorization from the Chair or Dean.

### III. Faculty Performance: Expectations & Evaluations

**Expectations: Teaching, Advising, Service, Professional Development & Scholarly Activities – (refer to MGA Faculty Handbook section 4.06 and 4.07 for details that pertain to Criteria for Promotion and Tenure respectively)**

Teaching is the primary focus for faculty at Middle Georgia State University. The activities of advising and mentoring students are also vital to the institutional goals of maintaining and increasing retention, progression, and graduation rates. Professional development is an essential component to enhancing the knowledge, skills, and expertise in a variety of disciplines represented in the School of Health & Natural Sciences. Research and scholarly activity can be achieved in a variety of methods in order to contribute to the profession, enhance the learning experience of our students, and cultivate a community of scholars within our institution. Lastly, service to the departments, School, university, and community is a selfless mechanism by which an individual can provide knowledge, volunteerism, information, and actions that enhance the recipient of such efforts.

Based upon the allocation of 100% of the faculty member's time, the percentage break down of time given to each area may vary.

For example:

*Faculty with a terminal degree teaching 4 courses per semester*

Teaching including student advising and mentoring	80%
Service to the Department, School, University and Community	10%
Research/ Scholarly Activities & Professional Development	10%

<b>Total</b>	100%
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*Faculty with a non-terminal degree teaching 5 courses per semester (tenured or non-tenured)*

Teaching including student advising and mentoring	90%
Service to the Department, School, University and Community	10%
Research/ Scholarly Activities & Professional Development	Not Required but encouraged
<b>Total</b>	100%

Preparing Academic Portfolios can be a daunting task. It is vital that junior faculty seek the mentorship and guidance from senior faculty and department chairs for suggestions and improvement. Another good resource that can be utilized in preparing the Academic portfolio is:

Seldin, Peter and J. Elizabeth Miller. *The Academic Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Documenting Teaching, Research, and Service*. Josey-Bass, 2009.

### ➤ Teaching

Excellent teaching and effectiveness in instruction (See USG Section 8.3.6.1 Minimum for all Institutions in All Professorial Ranks).

Teaching honors and awards are relevant and should be mentioned in this area along with average scores and summaries of student comments on evaluations, peer evaluation reviews from classroom observation, and other items.

### ➤ Scholarly Work

The expectations for outstanding research, scholarship, creative activity, or academic achievement will be measured as described in the Boyer model (Boyer, Ernest L. 1990. *Scholarship Reconsidered*. New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) as articulated in #3 of the MGA faculty handbook (page 29, section 4.06 – Criteria for Promotion).

The delineation between the ratings of “meets expectations” versus “exceeds expectations” will be measured based upon the number of relevant activities, and the proof of such activities, submitted with each faculty member’s portfolio. The impact of a faculty member’s work on broader audiences (e.g. national publication, presentation or grant award) will also be considered.

The four domains of this particular model include the domains of discovery, integration, application, and teaching. Examples include the following:

- ✓ The Scholarship of Discovery
  - Search for new knowledge
  - Traditional definition of scholarship
  - Discovery of new information and new models

- Sharing discoveries through scholarly publication
- ✓ The Scholarship of Integration
  - Integration of knowledge from different sources
  - Presents overview of findings in a resource topic
  - Bringing findings together from different disciplines to discover convergence
  - Identify trends and see knowledge in new ways
- ✓ The Scholarship of Application
  - Discovering ways that new knowledge can be used to solve real world problems
- ✓ The Scholarship of Teaching
  - Involves the search for innovative approaches and best practices to develop skills and disseminate knowledge
  - Informal/ formal teaching, advising and mentoring

Specific examples of scholarly work include:

- publications
- developing ways to improve patient care
- presentations at regional, statewide, national, or international relevant discipline-specific conferences
- service to the profession and community concerning a relevant, discipline-specific task – Scholarship of Application
- teaching a patient education seminar
- participating in networked scholarly activities across disciplines, roles, and institutions
- conducting evidence-based practice for a population under the care of the clinician (e.g. nurse, respiratory therapist, occupational therapy assistant)
- applying for/ obtaining a grant from a philanthropic, state, or federal organization
- editorial work
- development of teaching materials that enhance and increase the learning experience (e.g. audio, video, software, etc.)
- serving as a member of a thesis or dissertation committee
- literature reviews

➤ **Service**

Noteworthy professional service to the institution or the community (See USG Section 8.3.6.1 Minimum for all Institutions in All Professorial Ranks).

➤ **Professional Development**

Engaging in those activities which enhance relevant professional knowledge and expertise as it relates to education or a specific discipline. Examples include:

- continuing formal graduate study

- attending relevant lectures
- attending workshops, seminars, and institutes

### **Faculty Teaching Load & Overload Policy (USG 4.10 Faculty Overloads and Instructional Staff Responsibilities and MGA Faculty Handbook section 5.03.0)**

Faculty teaching loads are outlined in the faculty handbook. The definition of a terminal degree used for faculty workload is an earned doctorate, or currently, an MFA for those teaching in the arts. Although, using the MFA as a terminal degree is in transition (<https://tinyurl.com/yyzlcex7>). As such, faculty members with a terminal degree (doctoral degree or MFA) should teach 4 courses or 12 hours per semester. Faculty without a terminal degree (doctoral degree or MFA) should teach 5 classes or 15 hours per semester. Areas (including nursing and aviation) that use clock hours rather than credit hours to assign teaching load should document evidence that the hours worked when assigning clock hours are similar to the hours worked when using credit hours (*as stated in Provost Anderson's memorandum to campus faculty dated June 18, 2019*).

### **Professional Behavior & Conduct/ Etiquette**

BOR Policy 8.2.18.1.4 for Code of Conduct specifies that all USG employees will "Treat fellow employees, students, and the public with dignity and respect".

### **Expectations for Labs (Science labs, nursing labs, simulation labs)**

See Department Chair/ Assistant Department Chair concerning laboratory requirements and expectations.

Communication – All individuals who teach, prepare, or engage in activities that involve laboratory spaces should convey information related to supply shortage, security issues, potential hazards, and other relevant information to the appropriate Department Chair, Assistant Chair, or Administrative personnel.

\*See Natural Science Biosafety Policy Manual concerning additional expectations that pertain to the Department of Natural Sciences laboratory.

\*Simulation Lab Policy Manual

## **IV. Service and Emotional Support Animals on Campus Policy**

Faculty should contact Accessibility Services at 478-471-5730 (Macon Campus) or 478-934-3023 (Cochran Campus) concerning the proper protocol for students that request the presence of service and emotional support animals in classroom and laboratory settings.

## **V. Accessibility Services**

Faculty should visit this website (<https://www.mga.edu/accessibility-services/index.php>) for details concerning the following:

- Students with disabilities
- Referral of students in need of counseling services
- Service and emotional support animals

## **VI. Transfer Articulation Information**

Information that pertains to articulation agreements that MGA has with other schools can be found at this link: <https://www.mga.edu/academics/transfer-agreements.php>.

*This handbook will be modified as trends in higher education and the need for new policies occur.*