



Policy Number: IV.08
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SACSCOC Standard: 5.4
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Employee Classifications

I. Policy Statement and Purpose

This policy defines employee classifications within Athens State University. This policy does not apply to those individuals who are working at the University under independent contractual agreements; such individuals are not members of the employee classifications defined in this policy.

II. Definitions

Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

A federal law governing minimum wage, overtime pay, child labor and record keeping requirements.

Exempt Employee

Employees who primarily perform work exempt from or not subject to the overtime provisions of the FLSA and for who overtime pay is not required by federal law.

Non-Exempt Employee

Employees who primarily perform work not exempt from overtime provisions of the FLSA and for whom overtime pay is required by federal law. Non-exempt employees are not permitted to be employed as adjunct faculty.

Job Categories

The University recognizes four job categories; Faculty, Staff (includes Executive/Senior Administrative), temporary employees, and sponsored program employees. At the point of hire, an employee at Athens State University is classified in one of these categories. If for any reason, an employee changes from one to another of these categories, then he/she will be subject to a new probationary period (if one is applicable for that category).



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III. Temporary Employees

A temporary employee is defined as an individual that is hired by the University for a limited time period) of normally twelve (12) months or less) with a specific expiration date. Generally speaking, temporary employees should not work more than 29 hours per week for the limited time period. Temporary employees are hired to fill a specific short-term need such as with respect to a special project, temporary workload or filling in while an employee is on a leave of absence, or while a search is underway. Unless required by law, temporary employees are not eligible for any employee benefits.

Temporary employees are not eligible for tenure or non-probationary status. A temporary employee is considered an at-will employee, whose employment may be continued, discontinued, and/or terminated at any time by the University at its sole discretion.

A current University student will not be considered a temporary employee but rather a student employee, even during the summer months.

Non-Exempt Temporary Employees

Non-exempt temporary employees must be paid on an hourly basis, must be paid overtime for any hours worked over 40 hours in a work week, and must complete a time sheet for time worked.

Exempt Temporary Employees

Exempt temporary employees are typically employed for a specific period of time (i.e., a semester, duration of a project). Exempt temporary employees will receive a contract with stated beginning and ending employment dates and are not eligible for overtime pay.



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IV. Sponsored Program Employees

Sponsored program employees are personnel that are employed to fulfill the requirements of externally funded grants and contracts. These employees are expected to adhere to all policies and procedures that apply to the conduct of University personnel. These employees may be considered exempt or non-exempt, depending on their job duties and responsibilities.

Unless required by law or unless otherwise stated in a contract between the University and the sponsored program employee (as the specific terms may vary in accordance with the specific project/grant involved):

- a. sponsored program employees are not eligible for any employee benefits;
- b. sponsored program employees are not eligible for tenure or non-probationary status; and
- c. sponsored program employees are considered at-will employees, whose employment may be continued, discontinued, and/or terminated at any time by the University at its sole discretion.

V. Faculty Classifications

An employee who is appointed to a faculty position in any of the classifications defined below is considered to be an exempt employee. The term “faculty” includes all instructors and librarians.

Tenure Track Faculty

Faculty members who are appointed to tenure-track positions at the University and who, after a probationary period and review process as specified in the [Continuation of Appointments \(Tenure\)](#) policy, may achieve tenure or continuing contract status. The [Continuation of Appointments \(Tenure\)](#) policy applies to faculty hired on or after October 1, 2012.



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Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Faculty members who are appointed to non-tenure track positions at the University and whose appointments shall begin at a specified date and terminate at a specified date. Non-tenure track faculty may not be awarded tenure, and time employed in a non-tenure track position does not count toward probationary time for tenure.

Tenured Faculty

Faculty members who have successfully completed a probationary period and review process and are considered to have continuing contract status. Tenured faculty typically cannot be dismissed unless adequate cause is demonstrated in a fair hearing following established procedures.

Distinguished Professor of Practice

Faculty members in this category are distinguished professionals in their specific field and are either currently practicing or are retired. A Professor of Practice has a high degree of experience within their teaching discipline which could be the arts, industry, healthcare, education, or other disciplines at Athens State University. The full-time workload expectation of this position typically has a greater emphasis on teaching or student engagement and are not eligible for tenure. Contracts for Professors of Professional Practice shall be from one to three years for the Assistant and Associate Professor of Practice and three to five years for Full Professors of Practice. Renewals can be extended at the University's discretion.

Visiting Scholar/Artist

A Visiting Scholar/Artist position is a guest appointment that is typically a one-year, fulltime, appointment. The Visiting Scholar/Artist brings significant, and often specialized, knowledge or experience that enhances the departmental/program course offerings by bringing in content-specific expertise. This non-tenure track position is expected to teach courses, engage students in their area of expertise (master classes, research, industry/workforce development) and work with the faculty to add to the overall departmental skill and knowledge level. This appointment can be renewed at the University's discretion.



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Adjunct/Part-Time Faculty

Faculty members who have part-time appointments, specifying both the part-time workload and the period of time (normally one term) with the appointment terminating automatically at the end of the specified period. Time employed in an adjunct/part-time position does not count toward probationary time towards tenure. An adjunct employee is considered an at-will employee, whose employment may be continued, discontinued, and/or terminated at any time by the University at its sole discretion.

Executives-in-Residence provide Athens State University students the opportunity to interact with established business leaders from a variety of industries to enhance students' knowledge, share real-life experiences, and provide a realistic outlook on careers. Additionally, this teaching opportunity encourages the involvement of local business leaders in the life of the University. Executives-in-Residence are classified as adjunct/part-time faculty.

Visiting Instructors bring both academic and professional experience to Athens State students and are hired for a temporary time-frame. These temporary positions allow the university to employ leaders either from business and industry or from another university as faculty based on their specific knowledge in a discipline to teach for one academic year, generally. Visiting Instructors are classified as adjunct/part-time faculty.

VI. Faculty Ranks

Faculty is comprised of all employees holding faculty rank. Specific rank categories are defined in this policy. Exceptions to qualifications defined in each category must be approved by the President.

Instructor

This rank is a non-tenure track position, usually for a limited term. To be eligible for this rank, the faculty member should possess the minimum educational level of the master's degree in the teaching field of the appointment and service.



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Assistant Professor

To be eligible for this rank, a faculty member should possess strong potential for future development as a teacher and a scholar. In addition, the member should possess a master's degree in the appropriate teaching field of the appointment and a minimum of two years' appropriate experience; preference is for the terminal degree in the teaching field. In graduate programs, the faculty member must possess the terminal degree.

Assistant Librarian

To be eligible for this rank, a librarian must possess appropriate skills and strong potential for future development in professional responsibility, teaching, research and service. In addition, this individual must possess a minimum of a master's degree in library science or a related field accredited by the American Library Association and a minimum of three (3) years of full-time employment as a librarian. The Association of College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, reaffirmed in May 2011 that the terminal professional degree for academic librarians is a master's degree in library science from an ALA-accredited program.

Associate Professor

To be eligible for this rank, a faculty member must have demonstrated an above average performance in teaching and must possess strong potential for further development as a teacher. Also, the member must have demonstrated a good record of performance in professional contributions or scholarly activities and service. In addition, the individual should have completed at least 6 years of full time teaching (may apply up to three years of teaching at another university) and should possess the terminal degree in the appropriate teaching field of the appointment at Athens State University.

Associate Librarian

To be eligible for this rank, a librarian must have demonstrated an above average performance in professional responsibilities and considerable subject expertise in areas of librarianship with evidence of strong potential for further development as a professional librarian, teacher, and scholar. The individual must have demonstrated a good record of performance in contributions to the profession or teaching, scholarly activities, and service. In addition, this individual must possess the minimum of a master's degree in library science or a related field accredited by the American Library Association and have completed at least 6 years of full-time employment at Athens State University (may apply up to



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three (3) years of full-time librarian status at another University.) A second master's degree as a subject area specialist or an earned doctorate in librarianship, information sciences, or other related field is strongly desired but exception may be made in cases involving extraordinary achievement.

Professor

To be eligible for this rank, a faculty member must have demonstrated outstanding performance in teaching as well as above average performance in professional contributions or scholarly activities and service. In addition, the individual should have completed at least ten or more years of full time teaching (may apply up to five years of teaching at another university) and must hold the terminal professional degree in the appropriate teaching field of the appointment at Athens State University.

Senior Librarian

To be eligible for this rank, a librarian must have demonstrated outstanding performance in carrying out the highest level of professional responsibility, as well as above average performance in contributions to the profession, teaching, scholarly activities, and service. Demonstrated ability in providing leadership in professional and university organizations is required. In addition, this individual must possess the minimum of a master's degree in library science or a related field accredited by the American Library Association, a second master's degree as a subject area specialist or an earned doctorate in librarianship, information sciences, or related field and have completed a minimum of ten (10) years of full-time employment as a librarian at Athens State University (may apply up to three (3) years of full-time librarian status at another University) and must have been an associate librarian for four (4) years.

Emeritus

The President of the University may confer the title Emeritus or Emerita upon a retiring full-time faculty member in recognition of their outstanding contributions. Emeritus status is a privilege and is not a right of any retired faculty member. Please refer to the [Faculty Emeritus](#) policy for details and procedures.



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VII. Staff Classifications

An employee appointed to a staff position may be considered exempt or non-exempt, depending on job duties and responsibilities.

Executive/Senior Administrative

For purposes of this policy, executive/senior administrative positions are designated as:

- President
- Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Financial Affairs
- Vice President for University Advancement
- Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Information Officer
- Community College Liaison for Athens State
- Assistant Provost for Planning Budgeting and Assessment
- Assistant Vice President for Financial Affairs/Business Manager
- Assistant Vice President for External Support and Alumni Affairs
- Assistant Vice President for Development
- Chief Human Resources Officer/Assistant Vice President – Human Resources
- Chief Marketing Officer and Associate Vice President
- Dean for the College of Business
- Dean for the College of Education
- Dean for the College of Arts and Sciences

Executive/senior administrative positions are considered to be managerial positions and persons serving in these positions will not earn tenure or non-probationary status in their respective executive/administrative positions. Some executive/senior administrative appointments may be awarded tenure as faculty members if negotiated in the original appointment or awarded through the established tenure review process. Employees appointed to executive/senior administrative positions are considered exempt employees.



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Probationary

Probationary employees are full-time non-exempt and exempt staff members who have not completed twenty-four (24) consecutive months of employment at the University. Probationary status applies to staff positions hired after October 1, 2012. Staff hired before that date follow the guidelines in place at that time.

The purposes of the probationary period of employment for full-time non-exempt support staff members are:

- To orient and train the new employee so that he or she will know the work assignments and duties, and will have an opportunity to develop an understanding of the work environment, and the standards of performance and conduct required of the position.
- To determine whether the performance of the new employee has been satisfactory so that he or she may either achieve the status of a non-probationary employee, be transferred to another more suitable position for another probationary period assessment, or be terminated.
- To permit the new employee to evaluate the position, the organization and the supervisor in order to determine whether he or she wants to continue in the position.

If a probationary employee discontinues employment with Athens State University for any reason, then he/she will be subject to a new probationary period in the event of a rehire.

If, during such probationary period, such an employee is transferred to a new or different position where one cannot attain non-probationary status under this policy, then such employee cannot attain non-probationary status (or accumulate time toward the attainment of such status).

Non-Probationary

Non-Probationary employees are full-time non-exempt and exempt staff members who have completed twenty-four (24) consecutive months of employment at the University. Non-probationary status applies to staff positions hired after October 1, 2012. Staff hired before that date follow the guidelines in place at that time.



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If a non-probationary employee discontinues employment with Athens State University for any reason, then he/she will be subject to a new probationary period in the event of a rehire.

Part-Time

For purposes of Athens State University's policies, unless otherwise required by state or federal law, a part-time employee is an employee with a normal working schedule of less than 40 hours per week.

Emeritus

The President of the University may confer the title Emeritus or Emerita upon a retiring full-time staff member in recognition of their outstanding contributions. Emeritus status is a privilege and is not a right of any retired staff member. Please refer to the [Staff Emeritus](#) policy for details and procedures.

VIII. Responsibility for this Operating Policy

Policy Owner

As part of the initial approval of this policy by the President and subsequent to the original dissemination of the policy, the Vice President for Financial Affairs is the policy owner for the ongoing evaluation, review, and approval of this policy. Subsequent reviews and revisions to this policy must be in accordance with approved operating policy procedures and processes.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently as needed by the Policy Owner. Revisions will be reviewed/affirmed by the Cabinet and approved by the University President. This policy will be updated/published in the University's Policy Library.

Responsibility for Policy Implementation

The President has assigned the responsibility of implementing this policy to the Chief Human Resources Officer, under the direction of the Vice President for Financial Affairs.

In accordance with Act 2012-497, all full-time employees, whether tenured, non-tenured, non-probationary, or probationary, who were employed by the University on October 1, 2012, shall retain any and all rights and privileges as provided in Chapter 24C of Title 16, Code of Alabama 1975 (the "Students First Act of 2011"). All employees hired after October 1, 2012, will follow the new personnel policies and procedures adopted by the University unless specifically excluded. Effective dates for the new personnel policies and procedures will be retroactive to October 1, 2012, unless alternate effective dates are specifically identified.