



**THE UNIVERSITY
OF ALABAMA
SYSTEM**

**EMPLOYEE
HANDBOOK**

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to The University of Alabama System Office (hereinafter referred to as the UAS Office throughout this handbook). You have joined a staff of employees that is committed to providing quality support service to The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama, to the campuses, and to the citizens of the State of Alabama. The UAS Office is pleased you have chosen to share your knowledge and skills to further our mission and goals. The contributions of each employee are vital to the success of the entire University of Alabama System.

As an employee of the UAS Office, you will want to become well informed about the organization with which you will be working — its employment practices, benefits, facilities, the privileges offered, and the related responsibilities you will be expected to accept.

The policies in this handbook are not an expressed or implied contract of employment. This handbook describes the administrative policies and procedures of the UAS Office that affect employees. Reasonable efforts have been made to cover all important matters and to ensure that the contents are current and accurate. If there are any areas of policy that have been omitted or are not stated clearly, or if ambiguities or inconsistencies are found to exist, decisions will be made by appropriate officials of the UAS Office.

The UAS Office reserves the right to amend or alter the conditions and terms contained in this handbook. The UAS Office will attempt to give notice of changes of information, policy, and procedure to its employees. Inquiries as to whether the information contained herein is the current policy and procedure should be made to the Director of Financial Operations. Board Rule 151 requires this statement:

Although this handbook intends to reflect currently any policies or rules of The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama referred to or incorporated herein, users are cautioned that changes or additions to such policies or rules may have become effective since the publication of this material. In the event of such a conflict, the current statements of Board policy contained in the official minutes and manual of rules, bylaws, and guidelines shall prevail.

This handbook will be revised from time to time to provide you with up-to-date information, including changes in policies and procedures. Suggestions for changes should be addressed to the Personnel Policies Committee. While we may have made every effort to anticipate your questions, you may come across special

problems or particular situations that are not thoroughly covered. When such occasions arise, do not hesitate to discuss them with your immediate supervisor or the Director of Financial Operations.

BRIEF HISTORY

The University of Alabama was created by statute in 1820 and opened its doors on April 18, 1831, as The University of the State of Alabama. The University was elevated to constitutional status in the Constitution of Alabama in 1868. Its statutory corporate existence, under the name “The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama” appears in the 1975 Ala. Code §§ 16-47-1 to 16-47-204, and its constitutional status is recognized in the Alabama Constitution, article XIV, § 264 as amended and Amendment 399. Until 1969, the University, with branch campuses and extension centers around the State, was headed by a single president on the Tuscaloosa campus. In 1969, The Board of Trustees established separate campuses in Birmingham and Huntsville whose presidents, along with the president of the Tuscaloosa campus, reported directly to the Board. In 1974, The Board of Trustees appointed a University of Alabama System staff and in 1976 appointed a Chancellor as chief executive officer of the System.

GOVERNANCE

The University of Alabama System consists of The University of Alabama, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, and The University of Alabama in Huntsville, and is governed by The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama. The Constitution of the State of Alabama states that the Board is composed of three members from the congressional district in which The University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa) is located and two members from each of the six remaining districts. The Governor of the State and the Superintendent of Education are ex-officio members. Those members who are not ex-officio are elected by the Board, subject to confirmation by the State Senate. If the Senate rejects a name of any person submitted to it by the Board, then the Senate elects a person in place of the one rejected. Trustees may serve up to three consecutive, full six-year terms, except for ex-officio members.

The purpose of the Board is to ensure the effective leadership, management, and control over the activities of the institutions within the System in order to provide for a definitive, orderly form of governance, and to secure and continue responsive, progressive, and superior institutions of higher education. The primary functions of the Board are to determine the major policies of the System to include the review of existing policy; to define the mission, role, and scope of each campus; and to assume ultimate accountability to the public and political bodies of Alabama. Rules, policies, and procedures are promulgated to ensure that, through the UAS Office, the necessary flow of information for such accountability takes place.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION

The **Chancellor** is appointed by the Board and serves as the chief executive officer of the System, exercising such executive powers as are necessary for the appropriate governance of the System. The Chancellor is the principal link between the Board's responsibility for policy and each President's responsibility for operations. The Chancellor reports directly to the Board the current affairs of all components of the System and discusses with the Board basic issues, new directions, and policy recommendations. The Chancellor directs the planning, development, and appraisal of all activities of the System, and is responsible for their coordination and implementation. The Chancellor also provides linkage between the System and various components of state government, as well as other educational groups and organizations.

The **Secretary of the Board of Trustees** is appointed by the Board and serves at its pleasure. Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to the following: (1) cause notice of meetings of the Board and committees to be given to the members thereof; (2) prepare and distribute agendas; (3) attend Board meetings; (4) make, record, and retain complete records and minutes of all official actions of the Board and its committees; and (5) maintain all other deeds, contracts, books, and documents and records of the Board and its committees. The Secretary is custodian of the corporate seal.

The **General Counsel** is appointed by the Chancellor with the approval of the Board. The General Counsel represents the System in all legal matters and is responsible for the delivery of all legal services, including the conduct and resolution of litigation, the prosecution and settlement of all claims, and for the legal review of all significant transactions. To fulfill these responsibilities, the General Counsel staffs, organizes, and administers the Office of Counsel of The University of Alabama System. The General Counsel retains and manages all outside counsel performing legal services for the campuses of the System.

The **Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs** is appointed by and reports directly to the Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is the senior academic officer of The University of Alabama System. The Vice Chancellor is the principal advisor to the Chancellor on all academic policy matters and provides leadership in developing programs of high quality.

The **Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs** is appointed by and reports directly to the Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor for Financial Affairs is the senior fiscal officer of The University of Alabama System. The Vice Chancellor is the principal advisor to the Chancellor on policy matters regarding fiscal affairs and related areas, and works closely with campus fiscal officers to provide the leadership necessary to develop and maintain a strong and viable financial program throughout the System.

The **General Auditor** is appointed by the Board and reports administratively to the Chancellor and programmatically to the Board. The General Auditor is responsible for the reliability and integrity of administrative information; compliance with policies, procedures, plans, and laws; safeguarding of assets; economical and efficient use of resources; and determining whether stated administrative goals are achieved. To fulfill these duties, the General Auditor staffs, organizes, and administers the Offices of Internal Audit programs on each campus.

GUIDELINES

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

New employees will be advised by their supervisors at the time of employment to report to the Director of Financial Operations for a general orientation session. This is a vital part of the new employee's introduction to the UAS Office. Personnel policies and benefits are discussed, and benefit enrollment forms are completed during the orientation session. At this time, each new employee will be given a copy of the Employee Handbook.

Specific information such as working assignments, hours of work, and departmental practices will be provided by the new employee's supervisor.

INITIAL EMPLOYMENT PERIOD

All new employees will first serve in a six months' Initial Employment Period during which time the employee's performance and adherence to UAS Office policies and procedures will be closely monitored, and the employee will assess and determine satisfaction with and suitability for the position. The new employee will be counseled when necessary as an ongoing part of this Initial Employment Period. Supervisors will document good performance as well as unsatisfactory performance.

The Initial Employment Period provides an opportunity for the employee to demonstrate, and the supervisor to observe and evaluate the employee's ability to perform job duties satisfactorily. All employment by the UAS Office is at the will of the employer and thus subject to termination at any time without cause or reason. The Initial Employment Period, however, is different because an employee serving in an Initial Employment Period has no right to appeal a termination unless there is alleged discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability/handicap.

The Initial Employment Period is designed to let the employee and employer get to know one another and to determine the suitability and desirability of the employee and the job. The employee will learn the position and become familiar with co-employees, supervisors, policies, and the work environment, as well as the specific duties and requirements of the job. The employer will guide and direct the employee in forming a solid, productive, and satisfying relationship. If during or at the end of the six months' period it appears to the employee or employer (or both) that the anticipated fit is not occurring, and that decision is communicated to the other party, then the employment will automatically terminate without further action on the sooner of: (1) the last day of the six months' period;

or (2) 10 full workdays after notice by the employer or employee to the other of that decision. The employer, however, may require that the employee take administrative leave during that 10-workday period.

The Initial Employment Period is served only once for each continuous period of employment except that, if an employee is promoted or transferred to another position during the Initial Employment Period, a new Initial Employment Period is begun effective on the date of promotion or transfer. If a leave of absence is approved during the Initial Employment Period, upon return to work the Initial Employment Period will be extended by the length of the leave of absence.

Any time after the employee completes the six months' Initial Employment Period, disciplinary probation may be imposed for definite periods, not to exceed six months, in order to allow serious evaluation of their continued employment.

Employees serving an Initial Employment Period are considered to be employed on a trial basis and have no right to grieve the termination or seek a review or hearing unless the employee claims that the termination was for a legally impermissible reason (e.g., race, sex, national origin).

An employee is eligible for all benefits appropriate for their type of appointment immediately upon employment; however, the use of sick leave, annual leave, and personal holiday leave is discouraged during the Initial Employment Period.

TYPES OF APPOINTMENTS

Full-Time Regular Employees: Individuals who are required to work 40 hours a week on a regular schedule and who have an indefinite appointment are considered full-time regular employees. Such employees are entitled to full UAS Office benefits.

Part-Time Regular Employees: Individuals who work less than 40 hours a week on a regular schedule and who have indefinite appointments are considered part-time regular employees. They are entitled to holiday, annual, and sick leave accrual based on the percentage of the FTE (Full-Time Equivalency) that they work. Regular employees working at least 50 percent FTE must participate in the Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama. Participation in group health insurance, voluntary life, and voluntary accidental death and dismemberment plans is available to all part-time regular employees.

Full-Time Temporary Employees: Individuals who regularly work 40-hour weeks for a fixed or predetermined period of time of less than one year from the initial date of appointment are considered full-time temporary employees. These employees are eligible to participate in group health insurance.

Part-Time Temporary Employees: Individuals who work for a fixed or predetermined period of time of less than one year for a specified number of hours per week that is less than 40 hours and whose effective date of termination is less than one year from date of initial appointment are considered part-time temporary employees. Such employees are not entitled to any UAS Office benefits or privileges of employment.

Student Employees: Student employees are individuals enrolled at any System campus who are appointed as Student Assistants, Graduate Assistants, Interns, or Law Clerks. Notwithstanding the length of the employment or number of hours worked, student employees are not eligible for UAS Office benefits or privileges of employment.

WORK SCHEDULE

Normal office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Establishment of schedules within the workweek is the responsibility of the individual's supervisor.

Because the UAS Office must serve and respond to unpredictable and sporadic needs and requests from a wide variety of sources, including members of The Board of Trustees, the campuses of the System, the general public, and numerous governmental and public offices and agencies, employees of the UAS Office must be willing and able to respond to various workloads and operating hours. Consequently, though employees shall normally work Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with one hour for lunch, occasionally they will be asked to work in excess of eight hours per day or 40 hours per week, or both. For non-exempt employees, hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week may be compensable through taking time off within 30 workdays in an amount equal to 1.5 hours per hour of overtime worked or being paid at a rate equal to 1.5 hours per hour of overtime worked. Supervisors requesting overtime service shall schedule and permit appropriate time off and report to the Director of Financial Operations on a timely basis to provide for payment of overtime. (See Overtime and Compensatory Time.)

Administrative and professional employees (exempt) shall generally adhere to the regular work schedule unless the duties or obligations of their positions dictate a different schedule. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime rates.

You are expected to report to work on time daily and to remain on the job throughout your regular work hours. If you have to be absent from work or have an urgent reason for leaving, you must have prior permission from your supervisor.

OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME

Non-exempt employees who are required to work more than 40 hours during one workweek will be paid at the overtime rate of one and one-half times their regular rate of pay. Holiday, sick leave, or annual leave time properly taken by an employee is not counted as hours worked within a workweek in computing overtime pay for that workweek. An employee will not receive overtime pay for working more than eight hours in one day or on Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday if for that week the 40-hour limit is not exceeded.

It is permissible for a non-exempt employee, by agreement with supervisory personnel, to take "compensatory time" off instead of receiving overtime pay. If compensatory time is taken in the same week in which the employee has worked more than eight hours in one day or on Saturday or Sunday, so that no more than 40 hours are worked that week, overtime pay or time off at the overtime rate is not required. However, an employee who works in excess of 40 hours in one standard workweek may arrange with their supervisor to take off, in another workweek, compensatory time at the rate of one and one-half times the number of hours in excess of 40 hours that he or she worked in a single week instead of receiving overtime payment. Conversely an employee who "makes up" time lost in a previous workweek must be paid at the overtime rate in salary or compensatory time off if the "make up" time causes the employee to work more than 40 hours in that particular workweek.

Overtime work and compensation at the UAS Office are governed by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and its implementing regulations. Any questions about the application of this policy and the requirements of the FLSA should be referred to the Director of Financial Operations.

Exempt positions are those, which are exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Staff in exempt positions are compensated at a fixed salary, and hours worked in excess of 40 in a workweek do not result in additional pay. Compensatory time for hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek is generally not appropriate for exempt personnel.

SERVICE DATE

Your service date is the date of your initial appointment within the System unless there has been a break in service by termination of employment.

For those who change from part-time to full-time and/or regular to temporary status or vice versa, the following policies apply:

1. A person who has a part-time regular appointment will retain their service date when changing to full-time regular.

2. A person changing from a full-time temporary appointment to a regular appointment, whether full-time or part-time, will retain their service date.
3. A person changing from a part-time temporary appointment to a regular appointment will receive a new service date.

REEMPLOYMENT

Former employees whose separations were under satisfactory circumstances may be reemployed in the same type of work or in another job for which they are qualified. Individuals who are reemployed will serve a new six months' Initial Employment Period.

Individuals with a break in service in excess of 12 months will have a new service date and will receive benefits and privileges of employment based on the new date; i.e., insurances, annual leave, sick leave, personal holidays, eligibility for merit increases, and all other benefits or privileges of employment that are based on length of service.

Individuals with a break in service of 12 months or less and who have not received the Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama refund will retain their original service date. Annual leave will be accrued based upon total years of actual service and any accrued sick leave balances will be reinstated. All other benefits and employment privileges will accrue from the date of reemployment.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Resignation: Employees who voluntarily terminate their service with the UAS Office by resigning should notify their supervisors in writing as far in advance as possible. The customary period of notice is a minimum of two weeks for hourly paid (non-exempt) staff personnel and a minimum of one month for professional, administrative, or supervisory position (exempt) staff personnel. If the UAS Office must terminate your employment for reasons other than for cause, after the completion of the initial employment period, you will be given the same amount of notice that is expected from you.

When you resign, you will be paid through the last day worked (effective separation date) and will receive your check on the regularly scheduled payday following termination. If you have completed the six months' Initial Employment Period, you will be eligible for payment of all accumulated vacation earned but not taken at the time of resignation, up to the maximum accrual rate reflected on page 23 of this handbook. Accrued leave is paid by special check on the first regularly scheduled payday following resignation and is subject to federal, state, FICA, and applicable local taxes. Employees resigning before the 15th of any calendar month

will not earn vacation for that month. **Special Note:** No final checks will be issued as directed above until all Separation Procedures have been followed. (See page 11 — Separation Procedures.)

No personal holiday time will be paid upon separation from the UAS Office. Accrued sick leave is not paid to the employee upon resignation and may be restored if the employee is rehired within 12 months.

Employee contributions to the Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama (TRSA) will be refunded to employees who are not vested and who make a request for such refund to the Director of Financial Operations. The contributions of non-vested employees may remain with the TRSA for an undetermined amount of time. However, at the end of the fifth year of inactivity, the account will be terminated automatically and will cease to earn interest.

Coverage under the UAS Office group sponsored health-care plan will cease on the last day of the month following the month in which an employee last had a payroll deduction for health-care coverage. However, in many cases you will have the option to choose continuation of group health benefits as provided by the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA). Under the COBRA law, a former employee may, within 60 days from the date on which coverage would otherwise have terminated, elect to temporarily extend their health coverage. Generally, COBRA allows former employees to continue coverage at their own expense for themselves and their dependents for 18 months beyond their termination of employment (except for reasons of gross misconduct) and allows former dependents to continue their coverage for 36 months beyond the death of the employee, divorce from the employee, loss of dependent status, or the employee's entitlement to Medicare. For additional information on this continuation of coverage, refer to your Blue Cross/Blue Shield handbook.

Dismissal: The UAS Office, in its own best interests, necessarily reserves the right to determine the duration of employment of any individual and hence to discharge an employee with or without cause. In instances of discharge not related to misconduct, an employee will be given appropriate notice or pay instead of notice. (See page 15 — Disciplinary Actions.)

Retirement: See detailed procedures under the heading of Retirement Programs (page 29).

Separation Procedures: Employees terminating their employment with the UAS Office are required to check out with both the Director of Financial Operations and their immediate supervisor before or on the date of separation. This is a formalized procedure that provides individuals an opportunity to discuss pertinent matters with appropriate UAS Office representatives. At this time you should arrange for the transfer or conversion of certain benefits.

All time sheets, keys, ID cards, System-authorized credit cards, computer equipment including software, etc., accompanied by an Employee Separation Checklist, are required to be turned in to the Director of Financial Operations. In addition, an Employee Exit Report should be completed which allows the employee an opportunity to offer suggestions and comments relating to their former position. For those employees located on one of the campuses or in the Birmingham or Montgomery offices, these items are to be turned in to the employee's immediate supervisor, who will forward the Employee Separation Checklist to the Director of Financial Operations.

INTERNAL PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

Employees are given the opportunity, along with other applicants, to be considered for vacant positions that would represent a promotion and/or transfer to another department. Qualified employees may apply for promotions during their Initial Employment Period.

In keeping with the commitment to recognize and use the talents of existing personnel, staff positions are announced internally through job postings located at 401 Queen City Avenue; 1818 University Boulevard; #7 Pinehurst; and the campuses' position listings.

Successful promotional applicants are required to give two weeks (non exempt staff) or one month's (exempt staff) notice to their supervisor unless a shorter interval is mutually agreed upon between the two supervisors. Transferred employees retain and carry forward the balance of earned sick leave and annual leave to their new position.

Employees should be aware that there is some personal risk in a transfer. All rights to a position held before a new position will be relinquished, and there can be no guarantee that the employee will be retained or can be placed elsewhere if their performance is not satisfactory. Therefore, sufficient thought should be given to career goals and to building a record of loyalty and longevity before requesting a transfer. Employees on an extended evaluation or disciplinary probation are not eligible for a transfer or promotion. A transfer or promotion does not require another official six months' Initial Employment Period unless that period has not been completed.

TRANSFER OF UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SYSTEM OFFICE STAFF TO UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SYSTEM CAMPUSES AND TRANSFER FROM UAS CAMPUSES TO THE UAS OFFICE

The following terms will apply as employees transfer to System campuses from the UAS Office and to the UAS Office from System campuses.

Service Date: The total service performed at the transferring entity will count as creditable service in the new entity when the transfer occurs. Such service will count for service awards and for accrual rates of annual leave and sick leave, if applicable.

Annual Leave: The number of accrued annual leave days will transfer to the new entity, up to its maximum limit. After transfer, the accrual rate of annual leave at the new entity will apply to the transferred employee. The funding and/or liability for such accruals will become the obligation of the new entity.

Sick Leave: The number of accrued sick leave days will transfer to the new entity, up to its maximum limit. After transfer, the accrual rate of sick leave at the new entity will apply to the transferred employee. The funding and/or liability for such accruals will become the obligation of the new entity.

Initial Employment Period: Employees who transfer to a new entity, while still serving in an Initial Employment Period, will be required to serve an entire six months' Initial Employment Period in the position in the new entity.

Performance Evaluations: All performance evaluations of finalists for positions within the System or the UAS Office will be made available to the entity considering the applicant for transfer; however, such records will be released only to a department head, who must certify the confidential handling of such documents.

Benefit Programs: All benefit programs at the entity to which transferred, including the necessary contributions for such, will become the transferred employee's program of benefits. This includes health care coverage, life insurance, long-term disability insurance, administrative leave policies (such as jury duty, bereavement leave, etc.) as well as sick leave and annual leave. Waiting periods for group insurance, either for pre-existing conditions or overall coverage, will be waived for employees who transfer. The coverages, likewise, of the entity to which the employee transfers will immediately become applicable to the transferee.

Educational Benefits: The educational benefits of the transferring employee will cease following the end of the academic term. The educational benefits of the new entity will be acquired at the time of transfer, and all service performed at the transferring entity will count toward satisfying any waiting period requirements of the new entity.

Leaves of Absence: The transferred employee will inherit the new entity's policies for administering leaves of absence, including leaves with pay, without pay, and local policies for administering the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Military Leave: Transferred employees are eligible for the remaining portion of military leave to which they would be entitled in a given calendar year following the transfer. After the end of the calendar year of the transfer, the policy of the new entity will apply.

Employee Records: A copy of all records of transferred employees to the System campuses should be sent to the Department of Human Resources at the individual campuses. Copies of records of transferred employees to the UAS Office staff should be sent to the UAS Director of Financial Operations.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

Employees, other than those in an Initial Employment Period, who have complaints or concerns relating to their employment are encouraged to take advantage of the Problem Resolution Procedure of the UAS Office. The UAS Office is committed to giving prompt and fair consideration to any such complaint, and no employee will be penalized in any way for using this procedure. The process is structured to assist both employees and supervisors in resolving work-related problems in a constructive, objective manner.

Concerns that arise out of the administration of a specific UAS Office or departmental policy or practice may be reviewed through this resolution procedure. Concerns regarding issues such as job title, rate of pay, organizational changes, performance appraisals, etc., may generally be directed to the immediate supervisor.

The deadlines outlined herein are intended to ensure that the process is carried out in an efficient and timely manner. Both the employee and the institution have an interest in a decision that is made as early as is practicable. While it is expected that these deadlines will be observed, the fact that a specified action is late shall not support a claim that the process is inadequate or defective unless the employee can show that the delay was unreasonable, in terms of cause or duration, and that it has caused serious prejudice or disadvantage. No such delay shall result in a decision "by default."

The UAS Office shall also have the right to modify the stated deadlines and the general procedures as well in a particular case when, in its sole discretion, it deems such modifications appropriate. The following shall constitute the applicable procedure for seeking redress of work-related complaints:

1. The first step to be taken by the employee is to discuss the complaint with his or her immediate supervisor. Nothing said during such discussion shall prejudice any party in subsequent stages of the process. If discussion with the supervisor is not considered feasible or desirable, the employee shall have the option of taking the matter up with the supervisor's immediate supervisor.

2. If the complaint involves a third party, that individual will be alerted that a complaint has been filed and will be provided an opportunity to provide input to the complaining employee's supervisor.

3. If a satisfactory adjustment is not achieved within 14 calendar days from the day the complaint was first discussed with the supervisor, the employee may then submit the complaint in writing to the person at the next supervisory level. The letter of complaint shall state the nature of the problem, the pertinent facts, and the remedial action desired. Within seven working days after receipt of the letter of complaint, the supervisor shall investigate the matter; meet with the employee and any other personnel involved, if deemed necessary or appropriate; and respond in writing. The supervisor's response shall summarize what was done in investigating the complaint, what findings and/or conclusions were reached, and what action is being taken, if any.

4. If a satisfactory adjustment is not achieved at this level, the employee may elect to (a) take the problem to the person at the next higher supervisory level, following the same procedure outlined in step 3 above; if the problem is not resolved at that level, the employee may continue this procedure upward through successive levels of authority; or (b) request a committee review of the problem. The committee will consist of three members. The supervisor will choose one person from any division of the System; the employee will choose one person from any division of the System; and these two will choose a third person from any division of the System. This group, with advice from an appropriate member of the Office of Counsel, will determine the schedule and the process by which they will review the case and arrive at a recommendation. While the schedule may be variable, the committee will be encouraged to continue in a timely manner and should present their findings within 60 calendar days.

5. The last level of appeal shall be to the Chancellor of The University of Alabama System, whose decision will be final. Review at the level of the Chancellor may be made solely on the basis of the letter of complaint, the supervisor's responses, and any other writings or documents which have been identified in the course of processing the complaint, including committee recommendations, rather than on the basis of an independent investigation. The Chancellor will ordinarily refer any grievance charging unlawful discrimination to the UAS Office Equal Employment Opportunity Officer for review and recommendation or action before taking it up for personal review.

If a decision at any level of review below that of the Chancellor is not satisfactory to the appropriate supervisor, the latter may carry the matter to the next higher supervisory level and appeal the decision, using the procedures outlined above.

Complaints involving allegations of unlawful discrimination may arise where individuals believe they have been treated unfairly because of their race,

color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability/handicap, or status as a disabled or Vietnam Era veteran. Such complaints should be directed to the UAS Office Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

As an employer, the UAS Office has the right to establish and enforce standards of performance and conduct for its employees. These standards require employees to comply with all terms and conditions of employment and other institutional policies and rules, to perform their work and assigned duties satisfactorily, and generally to demonstrate positive work attitudes and to conduct themselves in a manner that contributes to the goals of their unit and the UAS Office. Failure to do this will subject an employee to disciplinary action. In this section, the term "discipline" is used in a broad sense to refer to institutional action taken in response to any performance or behavior problems of an employee.

The purpose of the UAS Office's disciplinary system is not punishment but rather the maintenance of these standards of performance and conduct in its work force. This may involve the use of progressive and corrective measures intended to correct a performance or conduct problem. It may also make necessary the discharge of an employee. Employees generally will be given notice of and an opportunity to remedy their deficiencies in the hope that further measures will not be required. However, where it is deemed appropriate, the UAS Office reserves the discretionary right to discipline and terminate an employee summarily and without necessity of following any customary procedures.

Without limiting or qualifying this right in any way, the following system of "progressive discipline" will normally be observed by the UAS Office for employees other than those in an Initial Employment Period. Under this system, corrective action by employees is encouraged in suitable cases by the use of increasingly stronger disciplinary actions. The nature and severity of the problem will determine which disciplinary measure will be applied first. For example, in an instance where the performance deficiency or misconduct is minor and it is a first occurrence, counseling and other non-punitive measures may be used before more formal disciplinary action is invoked. If the problem continues or is repeated, an oral or written warning may be issued. More serious problems may require the use of more severe sanctions.

Normal disciplinary measures, in increasing order of severity, are as follows:

Warnings may be oral or written and should be given in private on a supervisor-to-employee personal basis to correct minor or first-time problems. The severity of a problem or the frequency of its occurrence will normally determine whether the warning given is oral or written. If written, the warning should indicate to the employee:

The specific nature of the problem and any relevant date(s)

That failure to take corrective action may result in more severe discipline

The employee's right of appeal

The supervisor will provide a copy of a written warning to the employee and a copy of that warning will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

Probation may be used as a more formal means of placing an employee on notice concerning the need to correct a conduct or performance deficiency. The employee should be given a written statement setting forth the nature of the problem, the corrective action expected, the fact that more serious disciplinary action may be taken if satisfactory improvement does not occur, the length of the probationary period, and the employee's right of appeal. Disciplinary probation may be imposed for any reasonable period of time, but ordinarily it should not exceed six months.

Suspension, or release from duty without pay, must be communicated to the employee in writing, with a copy to the respective senior staff member, and the personnel file of the employee. The written notice should indicate:

The reason(s) for the discipline

The inclusive dates of the suspension

That more severe discipline may result in case of recurrence

The employee's right of appeal

Suspensions may vary in length depending on the offense or delinquency.

Dismissal of an employee is generally used as a last resort. The frequency or gravity of an offense or continued substandard performance may require dismissal. Very serious offenses lead to immediate dismissal without prior progressive disciplinary steps. Supervisors must advise terminated employees in writing of the reason(s) for dismissal, the effective date, and their right of timely appeal.

Examples of first-time or minor offenses or delinquencies for which warning is normally given are as follows:

Unexcused or excessive absenteeism

Tardiness

Careless or poor workmanship

Failure to report an absence

Loafing at work

Leaving the immediate work area without permission

Malicious mischief

Abuse of sick leave

Examples of more serious offenses that may require suspension or dismissal are:

Failure to report an absence (after prior warning)

Excessive absenteeism (after prior warning)

Unexcused absence for three consecutive days or more

Tardiness (after prior warning)

Abuse of sick leave (after prior warning)

Refusal or failure to perform an assigned job that does not infringe on common safety practices or involve moral turpitude

Reporting to work under the influence of an intoxicant

Neglect of duty or work assignment

Disregard for common safety practices at work

Use of threatening or abusive language

Insubordination

Falsifying records

Fighting or provoking a fight on University premises

Theft or any other dishonest act

Willful damage to or destruction of property

Illegal possession of narcotics, firearms, or weapons

Immoral or indecent conduct

Unapproved political activity

Sexual harassment

The preceding lists are not all-inclusive but are intended merely to illustrate how some of the more common types of conduct or performance problems may be addressed. The UAS Office will respond to other conduct or performance problems with a corrective but constructive action.

Employees may avail themselves of the right to appeal any disciplinary action. An employee serving in a nondisciplinary Initial Employment Period has no right to appeal a termination unless there is alleged illegal discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or disability/handicap.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND CONSULTING

Although full-time employees' jobs with the UAS Office are expected to be their primary employment, employees may engage in other employment under certain conditions.

Outside employment and consulting activities are defined as the rendering of services to an organization outside the UAS Office or to an internal organizational unit within the UAS Office or System other than that in which the individual is employed. These activities are considered privileges that are encouraged if they involve appropriate activities. They must not, however, interfere with an individual's performance of regular responsibilities to the UAS Office, create any conflict of interest, use UAS Office resources or facilities, or be discrediting in any way to the standing or image of the UAS Office.

Outside employment and consulting activities may not be performed during regularly scheduled work hours. Those who pursue outside employment or consulting activities that conflict with regularly scheduled work hours must charge the time to annual leave, personal holidays, or leave without pay.

Employees must obtain written approval from their supervisor prior to engaging in outside employment or consulting activities. Consulting and the performance of duties for special fees within the UAS Office is to be limited in time and subject to prior approval on a project-by-project basis by all supervisors involved. For an individual whose outside professional services consist of teaching, the maximum outside load is normally limited to one course each semester; however, a greater load may be approved, in advance, by the employee's supervisor.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

The official, permanent record of each employee is maintained in the Office of Financial Affairs. Your file may include, but is not limited to, position assignments, transfers, promotions, performance evaluations, wage changes, benefits enrollment, tax deduction information, commendations, disciplinary actions, and correspondence.

Employees may review their personnel files at any time by making an appointment with the Director of Financial Operations.

BENEFITS

GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

The UAS Office requires all regular full-time employees to carry health insurance as a condition of employment. Waiver of this policy may be granted for those who provide evidence of substantially equivalent coverage through another group or through individual policies. Regular part-time employees may enroll at their option. Temporary full-time employees also have the option to enroll, but temporary employees who work less than full time are ineligible to participate in this program.

Because the coverage and premium costs vary, they are not included in this handbook. Details on exact costs, as well as types of coverage provided, may be obtained from the Director of Financial Operations. The UAS Office pays a major portion of the monthly premium for employee coverage and shares in the cost for those who insure their dependents. The employee share of the premium is partially offset by an arrangement under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code that allows the health insurance premium to be excluded from an employee's gross income for federal, state, and social security (FICA) tax purposes. This salary exemption has no effect on Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama benefits, TIAA/CREF benefits, life insurance, or base salary used to calculate future merit increases. Since the amount of the health insurance premium is not subject to federal, state, and FICA taxes, it should not be listed as an itemized medical deduction for federal income tax purposes.

New employees must apply for coverage within 30 days of employment. The premiums for this program are paid in advance; therefore, if a new employee reports to work on September 1, insurance would normally be effective on October 1. Individuals who wish to be covered during the first month of employment must make payment to the UAS Office to cover the applicable premium for that month or have the premium deducted, along with the subsequent month's premium, from the first month's paycheck.

Individuals wishing to add or delete dependent coverage due to a change in family status (marriage, divorce, birth of children, etc.) must notify the Director of Financial Operations within 30 days of the status change. Otherwise, applications will be accepted only during a special open enrollment period in September of each year.

GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Group term life insurance is provided by the UAS Office at no cost to regular full- and part-time employees. Coverage is based on salary level and age, beginning with \$22,500 and increasing up to 125% of salary, with a maximum of \$300,000. Within 31 days of termination, an employee may elect to convert the term policy to an individual policy up to the level of coverage available at the time of termination. Proof of insurability is not required, and the employee premium is based on the type of insurance selected and the age level at date of issue.

Retirees may continue reduced levels of coverage at the regular group rate by paying the total premium.

A voluntary supplemental life insurance program featuring a cash accumulation option is available to full-time regular employees interested in additional insurance coverage. Available at nominal cost (depending on age), this plan also provides coverage for spouses and children. Brochures and/or booklets describing these benefits are available in the Director of Financial Operations' office.

ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE

The UAS Office provides an accidental death and dismemberment insurance policy for all full- and part-time regular employees. In addition to a death benefit, this policy provides varying amounts for loss of bodily functions or dismemberment. This insurance is paid by the UAS Office.

For eligible employees desiring additional accidental death and dismemberment insurance coverage, the UAS Office has arranged for a voluntary AD&D program, providing varying levels of coverage at a reasonable premium rate. Detailed information may be obtained from the Director of Financial Operations' office.

LONG-TERM DISABILITY INSURANCE

Full-time regular employees are covered by a long-term disability plan (salary continuation) which provides protection to employees after a 90-day waiting period should they be unable to work due to illness or injury.

The premiums for this insurance are paid entirely by the UAS Office. This benefit supplements Social Security and other group disability plans to provide up to 66 2/3 percent of salary during the period of a total disability resulting from illness or injury.

ANNUAL LEAVE (VACATION)

The UAS Office employees are eligible for annual leave (vacation) by category as described below. Eligible employees are encouraged to take their earned vacation during the year in which it was earned. Eligible employees who are employed on or before the 15th of the month earn vacation at the full monthly accrual rate; eligible employees employed after the 15th do not accrue any vacation for that month. Vacation may be taken in one-hour increments; fractions of an hour are rounded to the nearest hour. Only accrued unused vacation may be taken and vacation hours or days cannot be advanced. Vacation must be approved by the employee's supervisor before actual absence except in an emergency.

Recognized holidays occurring during vacation will not be charged to vacation time. No allowance will be made for sickness or other incapacity occurring during vacation.

Administrative and Professional Staff (Exempt): Eligible administrative and professional staff earn 1.833 days per month (or 22 days per year) at the time of employment.

General Staff (Non-Exempt): General staff begin to accrue annual leave at the time of employment. The rate of accrual is as follows:

	Length of Continuous Service	Accrual Rate Per Pay Period
MONTHLY Paid Full-Time	1 through 5 years	1.25 days
	6 through 15 years	1.67 days
	16 or more years	1.83 days
BI-WEEKLY Paid Full-Time	1 through 5 years	3.70 hours
	6 through 10 years	5.23 hours
	11 through 15 years	5.83 hours
	16 or more years	6.77 hours

It is not the intent of the UAS Office that any existing employee accrue fewer days per pay period than previously accrued. Consequently, if on the date this handbook is implemented an employee's rate of accrual is higher than the rate of accrual listed above, the higher rate shall be used.

Reporting of Annual Leave: Employees are required to report use of annual leave monthly to the Director of Financial Operations. For employees located on one of the campuses or in the Birmingham and Montgomery offices, this

will be accomplished by reporting the use of annual leave to their immediate supervisor who will report it to the Director of Financial Operations.

Appropriate forms are described in the Payroll Manual. Monthly reports are to be signed by the employee's appropriate senior staff member, the Chancellor, or the Chancellor's designee.

Accumulation and Compensation Upon Separation: A maximum of two years' normal accrual of unused vacation is compensable upon separation of service; e.g., employees earning 22 days of vacation per year may be compensated for up to and no more than 44 days of unused accrued vacation upon termination.

A maximum of two years' accrual of annual (vacation) leave may be carried over from one fiscal year to the next. Employees are permitted to accrue additional annual leave beyond the maximum of two years' accrual as long as the leave is taken within the fiscal year in which it is accrued. Upon termination, only the two years' accrual of leave is reimbursable. Annual leave in excess of the two years' accrual is non-reimbursable.

Non-reimbursable annual leave will be credited at fiscal year-end to the sick leave account of the employee on a one-to-one basis (i.e., one day of sick leave or part thereof for one day of annual leave or part thereof).

HOLIDAYS

UAS Office employees receive eight designated holidays and five personal holidays each year.

Designated Holidays:

New Year's Day	Thanksgiving Day
Martin Luther King Day	Friday following Thanksgiving
Independence Day	Christmas Eve
Labor Day	Christmas Day

Normally, if a holiday falls on a Saturday, it shall be observed on the previous Friday. If it falls on a Sunday, it shall be observed on the following Monday.

Personal Holidays: The five personal holidays are to be determined by the employee and approved by the supervisor. Personal holidays for new employees will be prorated in their first year. They must be taken between October 1 and September 30.

Holidays (including personal holidays) may not be accumulated.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

A maximum of three normal workdays of paid bereavement leave may be granted to employees upon the death of an immediate family member or any other individual permanently living in the employee's home. For purposes of this segment of this handbook, immediate family member is defined as husband, wife, children (including stepchildren), brother, sister, (including stepbrother or stepsister), brother-in-law, sister-in-law, parents (including stepparents and stepparents-in-law), grandparents, grandparents-in-law, grandchildren, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. This benefit does not accumulate from year to year.

JURY DUTY LEAVE

Employees who are selected for jury duty should submit to their supervisor a statement from the court indicating the day(s) of jury duty service. Payments received for jury duty may be retained by the employees in addition to their regular pay for that period. Employees are required to return to work after they are finally discharged for all jury service or are released from service for a particular day by the court.

SEVERE WEATHER LEAVE

If the UAS Office closes due to severe weather, administrative leave will be granted. If, however, the UAS Office remains open, employees will be expected to report to work as usual. An employee experiencing undue difficulty in traveling to work when the UAS Office remains open may request that any resulting period of absence be charged to annual leave or personal holiday.

Employees located on one of the campuses will be granted administrative leave according to their respective campus closing due to severe weather. Employees in the Birmingham and Montgomery offices will be granted administrative leave if the local governmental offices are closed due to severe weather.

VOTING IN ELECTIONS

Time off with pay to vote in primary and general elections is not normally necessary. Voting hours are such that you may vote either before or after work. If for some reason this is not possible, you may ask your supervisor for permission to be up to two hours late in arriving at work or to leave up to two hours early. Your supervisor will determine whether this request will be approved based on the particular situation.

MEDICAL LEAVE

If you are a regular full-time employee with at least one year of continuous active service, you may request a medical leave of absence without pay for justifiable reasons. Employees must submit a request in writing stating the reason(s) for the absence and, if possible, the inclusive dates for which approval of leave is desired.

A leave of absence may be granted for reasons of prolonged illness or medical disability for a maximum of four months or until certification is provided by a physician that the employee is fully recovered and can return to work, whichever is shorter.

Accrued sick leave, annual leave, and personal holiday leave should be used before beginning medical leave without pay.

Under certain conditions, employees may be entitled to leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT OF 1993

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, employees may take family and medical leave of absence for family-related reasons indicated below if the employee has 12 months of continuous active service immediately preceding the beginning date of the leave, and has at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period preceding a leave. Eligible employees may receive up to 12 weeks of family and medical leave (whether it is paid and/or unpaid leave) within a 12-month period starting with the date the leave begins for the following family-related reasons:

1. Birth of the employee's son or daughter or to care for the baby. (Employee's entitlement to leave of absence under this policy expires 12 months from the child's date of birth.)
2. Adoption of a child by the employee or placement of a child with the employee for foster care. (Employee's entitlement to leave of absence under this policy expires 12 months from the date of adoption or foster care placement.)
3. Care of the employee's son, daughter, spouse, or parent (but not in-laws) having a serious health condition. (Children 18 years or older are not included unless they are incapable of self care due to mental or physical disabilities.)
4. When the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

Accrued annual leave, sick leave, and personal holiday leave must be used at the beginning of the leave of absence before entering a "non-paid status." Use of accrued time will not extend the length of time away from the job beyond the 12 weeks allowed. Use of accrued sick leave is limited to eligible medical conditions of the employee or members of his or her immediate household, but not for other family-related reasons.

Holidays, personal holidays, annual leave, and sick leave are not accrued during the unpaid portion of a family and medical leave of absence, but unused earned credit is carried forward. The employee's service date is retained.

During an approved family and medical leave of absence, employees enrolled in the UAS Office's health insurance plan at the time their leave of absence begins may continue their health insurance coverage. If an employee elects to continue health coverage, the UAS Office will continue to pay the employer share for employees who are eligible for the matched rate provided the employee has been employed at the UAS Office for 12 months or more at the time the leave of absence begins. The employer share will be paid up to a maximum of 12 weeks. If an employee fails to return to work after the leave, the UAS Office may, under certain circumstances, recover payments for health insurance premiums paid by the UAS Office during any unpaid leave. Employees with less than 12 months of service will be required to pay the full cost of the health insurance.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 generally requires the UAS Office to restore an eligible employee to the same job or position (or to an equivalent job or position) which he or she held before the leave began. If leave was taken because of the employee's serious health condition, at the time the employee returns to work, they must submit certification of fitness to return.

If both the employee and the employee's spouse work at the UAS Office, the total amount of annual family and medical leave of absence allowed under the Family Medical Leave Act is limited to a combined total of 12 weeks for both employees when leave is taken for the following reasons: the birth of a son or daughter of the employees and to care for the baby; the adoption of a child by the employees or placement of a child with the employees for foster care; or to care for a sick child.

Granting of the family and medical leave of absence is not automatic. The employee must apply for the leave of absence through their supervisor and through the Director of Financial Operations using the required form and must provide appropriate documentation such as a certification from a health-care provider or documentation related to adoption or foster care placement.

MILITARY LEAVE

All regular employees are entitled to Military Leave of Absence when ordered to active duty or for training as members of the Alabama National Guard or any component of the U. S. Armed Forces or any other type of military duty. Under state law, these employees receive full pay for a maximum of 21 working days per calendar year. The 21 working days per calendar year include weekend drills as well as summer training and any other type of military duty. After the first 21 days of military leave per calendar year, any additional military leave will be without pay or may be charged to annual leave or personal holiday leave. Sick leave and annual leave continue to accrue during the military leave.

Under certain circumstances provided for by state law, employees on military leave of absence may be entitled to University compensation to make up the difference between military pay and their University salaries. For further information, contact the Director of Financial Operations.

When requesting military leave, the employee must submit to the Director of Financial Operations a copy of the orders calling him/her to active duty. Employees located on one of the campuses or in the Birmingham and Montgomery offices are required to submit a copy of the orders to their immediate supervisor, who will submit a copy to the Director of Financial Operations.

SICK LEAVE

Regular employees are granted protection from loss of pay due to absences as a result of personal illness or injury, or serious illness within their immediate households to the extent of available sick leave. Immediate household includes any relative living in the employee's home.

Rate of Accumulation: All employees earn sick leave at the rate of one day for each full month worked. Upon retirement, employees can use unused sick leave (up to one day per each full month worked) toward creditable service with the Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama (TRSA). (For additional information regarding accumulation of sick leave, please see page 28 of this handbook.)

Use Of Sick Leave: Sick leave is a privilege, not an earned right. All employees have the responsibility to report to their supervisors prior to taking sick leave, or at their earliest opportunity, giving the reason and expected day of return.

Employees should keep the supervisor apprised of their condition. If an employee is absent due to illness for more than one workweek, the employee must present a physician's statement before receiving payment for sick leave. When an employee returns from an extended sick leave, they may be required to submit certification of fitness to return to their job duties.

Status of Sick Leave at Termination or Retirement: Records of sick leave taken and accrued shall be maintained. Accrued sick leave is not compensable upon separation from service except as described in the following paragraph and chart.

The chart below (effective January 1, 2002) is used by the TRSA to convert accumulated sick leave to creditable months of service upon service retirement for TRSA members who are public education employees. For more information on the formula TRSA uses, or for information on crediting more than 442 eligible days of accumulated unused sick leave, see the Director of Financial Operations.

ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE DAYS	MONTHS OF SERVICE CREDIT	ACCUMULATED SICK LEAVE DAYS	MONTHS OF SERVICE CREDIT
0-7	0	218-232	15
8-22	1	233-247	16
23-37	2	248-262	17
38-52	3	263-277	18
53-67	4	278-292	19
68-82	5	293-307	20
83-97	6	308-322	21
98-112	7	323-337	22
113-127	8	338-352	23
128-142	9	353-367	24
143-157	10	368-382	25
158-172	11	383-397	26
173-187	12	398-412	27
188-202	13	413-427	28
203-217	14	428-442	29

Reinstatement of Sick Leave: If a former employee is reemployed within 12 months of termination of prior service, accrued sick leave may be reinstated.

JOB-RELATED INJURIES AND DISABILITIES

The UAS Office provides benefits for employees who are injured during the performance of official duties. As a condition to the payment of health care costs, a claim must be filed by the employee and reviewed and approved by the UAS Office of Financial Affairs. Claim forms are available in the Director of Financial Operations' office and should be filed with the office when completed. Forms must be submitted no later than the end of the workday following the incident/accident that resulted in the injury. Occupational injury benefits payable shall be reduced by the amount of health insurance benefits carried by or on behalf of the employee. Employees who suffer on-the-job injuries may be eligible for long-term disability benefits after a 90-day waiting period (see page 21). Any claim for additional benefits must be filed by the employee with the State Board of Adjustment within one year from the date of the accident/incident.

RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

TRSA: The Teachers' Retirement System of Alabama (TRSA) provides the retirement program required for all full-time regular employees and part-time regular employees working at least 20 hours per week. Temporary employees on the monthly payroll working at least 20 hours per week must participate when they enter their 13th month of employment.

Employees contribute 5% of their gross salary with a matching amount being paid by the State, by a grant, or other funds (depending upon the source of funding for the position). This matching contribution varies in amount and is based on an actuarial determination of the funds necessary to provide benefits granted by law for members.

After 10 or more years of creditable service, a member has a vested interest in the fund, which means the member is eligible for deferred retirement benefits. That eligibility is not lost if the employee leaves the employ of the System thereafter, as long as the employee's contributions are not withdrawn. Early retirement is permitted at age 60. Upon attainment of that age, therefore, an employee who is vested may apply for monthly retirement benefits. Members who have 25 years of creditable service may retire with benefits regardless of age.

As indicated above, a TRSA member who ceases to be employed by the System (and is not to be employed by an employer covered by TRSA) may withdraw contributions made by filing a request for refund.

Approval by the Internal Revenue Service has been obtained to allow participation in the TRSA on a tax-deferred basis. As a result, employee contributions are not considered part of their wages and are not taxed until withdrawn from the TRSA. Member contributions made before approval of the tax-sheltered plan (January 1, 1982), however, are not taxable when withdrawn because taxes have already been paid on this money. An employee who obtains a refund of contributions upon termination of System employment will be taxed on all tax-sheltered contributions. In addition, if the withdrawal occurs before the employee reaches age 59½ and if the refund is not reinvested or “rolled over” into an Individual Retirement Account or a qualified retirement plan, any taxable portion will be subject to applicable penalties/withholdings as specified by law. TRSA refund requests may be processed during the checkout procedure with the Director of Financial Operations.

The amount of retirement income is determined by the number of years of participation, the salary average (using the best three out of the last 10 years’ salary), a retirement factor, and the option chosen by the individual at the time of retirement.

Complete details are contained in a brochure published by the Retirement System of Alabama. The Director of Financial Operations will furnish the brochure and answer questions concerning this program during orientation and at other times as they arise.

TIAA/CREF: Optional retirement programs are available to full-time regular employees through the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association/College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA/CREF). Employees may choose to participate in the TIAA/CREF tax-deferred annuity program, under which their salary will be reduced by a specified amount and applied toward the purchase of a tax-deferred annuity. Such amounts will not be subject to federal or state income tax until they are received as benefits, when the individual’s applicable tax rates are generally lower. The amount of retirement income for the TIAA/CREF participant is determined by the amount of premiums paid each year of employment, the individual’s age at the time of retirement, the investment experience of TIAA/CREF, the income option selected at retirement, and other factors.

RETIREE PRIVILEGES

UAS Office employees, upon retirement from the UAS Office through the Teachers’ Retirement System of Alabama, may participate in all retirement privileges or benefits that are then available to retired employees of each of the System’s campuses. These privileges and benefits that are available may change from time to time and the UAS Office retiree privileges and benefits will change accordingly.

The following retirement benefits are the same for each campus and are currently available as follows:

Life Insurance: As a retired employee of the System, you may continue \$6,000 of the term life insurance and \$6,000 of the accidental death and dismemberment insurance the System paid for you while you were an active employee. The cost of continuing these two insurance programs is nominal. Counseling is available in the office of the Director of Financial Operations about the continuation of other life insurance amounts that you may have had as an active employee of the System.

Health Insurance: You may continue to be a part of the System's group medical insurance plan by paying the premium due at the beginning of each month. After you have reached age 65 and you are no longer an active employee, Medicare becomes your primary insurer, and the System's group insurance becomes your secondary insurer. You will receive a monthly statement for the premiums due.

If you are vested and elect to activate retirement with the TRSA, you will have the opportunity to purchase medical insurance through their group plan (PEEHIP). The state provides a sizable allocation toward the premium for this plan. Monthly premiums are deducted from your retirement check.

You should apply for Medicare health insurance coverage approximately three months before your 65th birthday regardless of which of the aforementioned plans you choose. There are many Medicare rules and regulations, and they are complex. The local Social Security Administration Office can provide information about their program.

TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR DEPENDENTS

The UAS Office will reimburse one-half of all tuition and required course fees charged to a regular full-time employee's dependent unmarried children who are age 25 or under, taking classes from any System campus. Optional fees and other charges will not be reimbursed. NOTE: If there is more than one eligible employee within the family unit, only one tuition reimbursement per dependent shall be granted.

To obtain reimbursement, the dependent(s) must first enroll and then submit original receipts to the Director of Financial Operations who shall process the reimbursement.

It is expected that all dependents will successfully complete each course, as indicated by maintaining a grade point average of C or better, and those who do not maintain this grade point average or who withdraw after the campus' official withdrawal deadline shall reimburse the UAS Office for those courses.

TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR SPOUSE

The UAS Office will reimburse one-half of all tuition and required course fees charged to a regular full-time employee's spouse taking classes from any System campus. Optional fees and other charges will not be reimbursed. NOTE: If both spouses are eligible employees, only one tuition reimbursement shall be granted to each spouse.

To obtain reimbursement, the spouse must first enroll and then submit original receipts to the Director of Financial Operations who shall process the reimbursement.

It is expected that spouses will successfully complete each course, as indicated by maintaining a grade point average of C or better, and those who do not maintain this grade point average or who withdraw after the campus' official withdrawal deadline shall reimburse the UAS Office for those courses.

TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR EMPLOYEES

The UAS Office will reimburse 100% of the tuition and required course fees for up to three credit hours per term and one-half of all additional tuition and required fees charged to a regular full-time employee for courses taken at any System campus. Optional fees and other charges will not be reimbursed. NOTE: If there is more than one eligible employee within the family unit, only one tuition reimbursement shall be granted to the employee.

Absence from work for class attendance must be made up and appropriate arrangements must receive supervisory approval.

To obtain reimbursement, the employee must first enroll and then submit original receipts to the Director of Financial Operations who shall process the reimbursement.

It is expected that employees will successfully complete each course, as indicated by maintaining a grade point average of C or better, and those who do not maintain this grade point average or who withdraw after the campus' official withdrawal deadline for a non-work related reason shall reimburse the UAS Office for those courses.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The UAS Office provides unemployment compensation benefits at no cost to its employees. Unemployment benefits may be claimed by eligible persons upon termination of employment. An employee who voluntarily terminates employment or is discharged for cause, however, will usually be disqualified for unemployment

benefits. Specific qualification requirements may be obtained from the local State Employment Office.

POLICIES

COLLECTION COMPLAINTS AND INDEBTEDNESS

It is the policy of the UAS Office to avoid official involvement in the personal financial affairs of its employees. However, the UAS Office expects its employees to be financially responsible and to honor their just debts.

All processes of garnishment should be served on the Director of Financial Operations and answered within the requisite time period. Payroll deductions resulting from garnishment of wages will be made by the Director of Financial Operations according to the requirements of the Writ of Garnishment until the garnished sum has been paid to the court in full.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

The UAS Office has adopted this policy in compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, which includes buildings, facilities, and spaces owned, rented, or leased by the UAS Office as well as work space provided for UAS Office operations on the campuses.

The use of drugs not prescribed by a physician is forbidden in any area of the UAS Office facilities. The Chancellor will designate those areas where the use of alcoholic beverages is permissible. Under Alabama law, the possession, purchase, or consumption of alcoholic beverages by a person under 21 years of age is punishable by a fine of up to \$500 and by up to three months in jail.

Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance by any employee of the UAS Office while he or she is at work, or at any other site where the employee is carrying out assigned duties, is prohibited.

Violation of this policy shall result in the prompt imposition of sanctions. In some cases of first violation of this policy for unlawful use of a controlled substance, an employee may be given, at the discretion of the UAS Office, the option to participate satisfactorily in an approved drug or alcohol abuse assistance or rehabilitation program instead of dismissal. Participation in such programs is at the expense of the employee. The option shall not be available for subsequent violations of this policy.

In addition, under Alabama law, for a first offense, unlawful possession of a controlled substance (i.e., illegal drugs) may be punishable by imprisonment of up to 10 years and a \$5,000 fine, and unlawful distribution of controlled substances

may be punished by imprisonment of up to 20 years and a \$10,000 fine. Subsequent violation may carry more severe penalties.

All employees will be given a copy of this policy and will be advised that, as a condition of employment, they are required: (1) to abide by this policy; and (2) to notify their supervisors within five days of conviction of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the UAS Office workplace.

A supervisor who receives such a notice from an employee shall forward the notice to the appropriate senior staff member. In cases where a UAS Office employee is supported by a federal grant or contract, upon receipt of such information, the UAS Office representative shall, within 10 days notice of conviction, notify the granting agency of the conviction.

EMPLOYMENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS

Employees who are members of the same immediate family or who are living in the same household may not have the same immediate supervisor or directly supervise one another. Generally, no family member may interpret policy and procedures or make any work-related decisions regarding hiring, promotion, salary compensation level, job assignment, performance evaluation, discipline, termination, or any other issue affecting another member of the employee's immediate family or another individual living in the same household.

For purposes of this segment of the handbook, immediate family includes one's spouse, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, or similar relationships' in-law, or in step families. Exceptions to this policy require written approval from the Chancellor.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY

The UAS Office is committed to equal opportunity recruitment in employment and education and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, citizenship, or against qualified handicapped persons, disabled veterans, or veterans of the Vietnam Era, as identified and defined by law. The UAS Office complies with all applicable nondiscrimination and affirmative action titles and sections of and amendments to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246, the Education Amendments of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Inquiries concerning this policy may be directed to the UAS Office Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS

The UAS Office is interested in the opinions of its employees about working conditions, ways to improve the efficiency of employee performance, and other matters of employee interest.

This interest in employee consultation does not in any way limit the employer's managerial rights, however, nor must such consultation always occur before decisions are made by the employer in the exercise of these rights. The UAS Office retains and reserves the exclusive, absolute, and discretionary right to exercise the customary functions of management. This includes, but is not limited to, the right to select, hire, promote, demote, suspend, lay-off, dismiss, assign, supervise and discipline employees; to determine the size and composition of the work force; to establish, change, and/or abolish policies, procedures, rules and regulations; to develop and modify job descriptions and job classifications; and to assign work schedules and duties to employees in accordance with needs and requirements determined by the employer.

COMPUTER USE POLICY

All computer use, including e-mail, internet access, data files, hardware and software, and all information composed, transmitted, accessed, received or stored in University computer systems are the property of The University of Alabama System. The systems are to be used for conducting University business only, and the use of this equipment for personal commercial purposes, including any use that results in personal financial or other gain, is strictly prohibited.

Employees may be permitted limited incidental non-commercial personal use, provided such limited use does not consume a significant amount of computing resources, does not interfere with the performance of the user's job or other University responsibilities, does not interfere with other employees' work, does not interfere with the computing activity of other users, and does not violate applicable laws, rules, policies, contracts or licenses, including laws, rules, and policies concerning harassment and copyright protection. At any time that the University has reason to believe that this Computer Use Policy has been violated, or that an individual has utilized a University computer in the course of workplace misconduct, the University reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, and access all materials and information composed, transmitted, accessed, received or stored in the individual's computer.

NONSMOKING POLICY

The UAS Office recognizes an obligation to protect the health of its employees and visitors from the hazards associated with inhaling smoke from tobacco products within the confines of UAS Office buildings and facilities. The UAS Office also recognizes the responsibility to be a good neighbor, and to maintain the grounds free of any remains from tobacco products. For these reasons, the following policy has been adopted:

All buildings, facilities, and spaces owned, rented, or leased by the UAS Office are nonsmoking areas, except for specific areas designated by the Chancellor as smoking areas. UAS Office employees are expected to be good stewards of the System's property and grounds. Individuals who choose to smoke outside, but near, System facilities and grounds are expected to properly dispose of the remains of tobacco products.

The work spaces provided for UAS Office operations on the campuses are nonsmoking areas, except for specific areas designated by the respective campus as smoking areas.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Employees are authorized to engage in political activity provided that it does not result in a conflict of interest or interfere with their performance of assigned duties at the UAS Office. Employees may give public support of a political candidate or cause if they clearly indicate that they speak for themselves and not for the UAS Office. Employees may not lend the name of their positions or departments to the political campaigns of public candidates or to any causes that become matters of civic concern.

Employees desiring to seek election to public office must first obtain written consent from the Chancellor through appropriate reporting channels.

No employee may use or permit to be used any UAS Office resources, including UAS Office stationery, time, or property for or on behalf of any political candidate, campaign, or organization or for any contribution or solicitation of any contribution to any political candidate, campaign or organization.

Political activity on the part of an employee must comply with Rule 304 of The Board of Trustees of The University of Alabama and existing state and federal laws. Employees who have a question about their involvement in such activities should seek guidance from their supervisor. Violations of this policy are grounds for dismissal

SEXUAL AND OTHER FORMS OF HARASSMENT POLICY

The UAS Office is firmly committed to providing an environment that is free of illegal discrimination, including sexual harassment and harassment directed against an individual because of his or her race, age, disability, religion, national origin, or veteran status. The UAS Office prohibits all forms of such harassment and will investigate complaints thoroughly and with the utmost seriousness.

Where harassment is found, the UAS Office will take prompt, appropriate, corrective action. A violation of the UAS Office policy against harassment will result in the taking of disciplinary action that may include termination. Any act of interference, retaliation, or coercion taken against an employee for reporting such harassment is itself a violation of this policy.

Sexual Harassment Defined: Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or abusive working environment. Such behavior may violate federal law and/or lead to personal liability for the results of such behavior.

Reporting and Investigation Procedures: It is a violation of the UAS Office policy for an employee to engage in prohibited harassment in the workplace or in work-related situations. An employee who believes that he or she has been illegally harassed in the work environment should report the incident promptly to his or her immediate supervisor or to the UAS Office Equal Employment Opportunity Officer.

Full and prompt reporting is necessary for effective implementation of this policy, and the UAS Office encourages such reporting. All such complaints will be treated as confidential information to the extent possible and will be disclosed only to those with a need to know as part of the investigation and resolution process. Any supervisor who receives a report of prohibited harassment must refer the report promptly to the EEO Officer for investigation, unless the complaint can be resolved simply, effectively and promptly at the supervisory level. If such resolution occurs, a report of the complaint and the action taken to resolve it should be forwarded promptly to the EEO Officer. The EEO Officer shall endeavor to report back promptly to the individual complaining of prohibited harassment to provide information on the status of an investigation or other action.

The EEO Officer has the responsibility for ensuring that an investigation of all claims of prohibited harassment is conducted. When impermissible harassment is found to have occurred, the EEO Officer, together with the senior

staff member who supervises the person about whom the complaint has been made, shall determine the appropriate corrective action. (If the alleged harasser is a senior staff member, the determination shall be made with the Chancellor.) All such decisions may be appealed directly to the Chancellor, whose determination is final.

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