

# FORWARD

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This handbook provides important information on employment policies, practices, procedures, and resources for the University of Alabama System Office (UA System Office) employees. Because some policies and procedures require periodic updating, the UA System Office reserves the right to change, eliminate and supplement the information in this handbook as deemed necessary to meet the business needs of the UA System Office.

This handbook is not the only document containing personnel-related and other policies of the UA System Office. Departmental policies, procedures, or guidelines may exist and must be followed by employees as appropriate.

Additionally, although this handbook intends to reflect the current 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 any conflict, the current statements of Board policy contained in the Bylaws, Rules, official minutes and other pronouncements of the Board or Chancellor, or superseding law shall prevail.

If there is ever a conflict or ambiguity involving the language of this handbook and the official language of any UA System Office guideline, policy, regulation, or rule referenced herein, the official language of the guideline, policy, regulation, or rule will control and supersede the language of this handbook.

Neither the information contained or referenced herein nor any other communications by a management representative, either written or oral, made at the time of hire or during the course of employment, is intended in any way to create an employment contract with any employee or to alter the at-will status of an employee.

The UA System Office requires that all employees sign an Employee Handbook Acknowledgment. The completion of the acknowledgment is processed through Human Resources.

If you have questions concerning interpretations of the policies contained in this handbook, please contact the Human Resources Department (HR Department) at 205-348-9506.

## **Core Principles**

1. Assure that everything we do is for the purpose of improving the lives and health of the citizens of the State of Alabama.
2. Make higher education accessible and diverse, prepare our students for success, and meet the workforce needs of the State.
3. Be accountable for every dollar we receive while maintaining the highest standards of excellence in every program and endeavor.
4. Work to lead a unified approach to improving education at every level in Alabama.
5. Work to help lead a unified approach to improving the economy, opportunities, and comprehensive health care for all citizens of Alabama.

6. Elevate the status, stature and influence of the University of Alabama System so that we can call on all people devoted to the University of Alabama, UAB, UAH, and the UAB Health System to unite for common purposes.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA SYSTEM**

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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 (the System) consists of The University of Alabama, The University of Alabama at Birmingham, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, and The UAB Health System 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 serves ex-officio. Those members who are not ex-officio are elected by the Board, and 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. Elected Trustees may serve up to three consecutive, full six-year terms.

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 which includes 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 UA System Office, the necessary flow of information for such accountability takes place.

### **UA System Office Administration 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 the current affairs of all System components directly to the Board, and discusses basic issues, new directions, and policy recommendations. The Chancellor directs the planning, development, and appraisal of all System activities, and is responsible for their coordination and implementation. The Chancellor is also the liaison 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) provide Board and committee meeting notices

to the members; (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, documents, and records of the Board and its committees. The Secretary is custodian of the corporate seal.

The head of the **System Office of Counsel** is appointed by the Chancellor with the approval of the Board. The head of the System Office of Counsel represents the System in all legal matters and is responsible for the delivery of all System legal services, its three campuses and related organizations, 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 head of the System Office of Counsel staffs, organizes, and manages the Office of Counsel of the University of Alabama System, which is comprised of attorneys and support staff strategically located throughout the System. The head of the System Office of Counsel retains and manages all engagements of outside counsel performing legal services for the campuses of the System.

The head of the **Office of Internal Audit** is appointed by the Board and reports administratively to the Chancellor. The head of the Office of Internal Audit 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 head of the Office of Internal Audit, organizes, and administers the Offices of Internal Audit programs on each campus.

The head of the **Office of Communications** is appointed by and reports directly to the Chancellor. The head of the Office of Communications is responsible for internal and external communications and media relations on behalf of the Board, the Chancellor and the senior administrative team of the System. The head of the Office of Communications works with the Board, the Chancellor, and administrative staff for each campus to coordinate media relations, crisis management, strategic planning, community outreach, executive recruitment, and joint initiatives.

The head of the **Office of Academic and Student Affairs** is appointed by the Chancellor, and serves as the chief liaison officer to academic, student, institutional research, and planning officials at UA, UAB, and UAH. The head of the Office of Academic and Student Affairs advises the Chancellor on academic and student policy matters and provides primary leadership in program planning, development, and review. The the head of the Office of Academic and Student Affairs is the System's liaison to the Alabama Departments of Education, Postsecondary, and the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

The head of **for Finance and Administration** is the senior fiscal officer of the System. The position is appointed by, and reports directly to, the Chancellor. The head of Finance and Administration 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 head of Finance and Administration is responsible for managing System-wide investment activities including the pooled endowment fund, the long-term reserve pool, and the short term liquidity pool. Other areas of responsibility include physical property and construction oversight and serving as a liaison between the campuses and the Board.