Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline practices and procedures for recruiting and hiring faculty, staff, and students in either existing or newly created vacancies, which include regular full-time, regular part-time, temporary full-time, and temporary part-time positions at Middle Georgia State University.

Policy

Middle Georgia State University is an Affirmative Action/Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity institution. Factors of race, national origin, color, sex, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability are not considered in the admission or treatment of students or in employment. To ensure nondiscrimination, hiring managers are expected to comply with the recruitment and hiring policies and procedures.

Employee Classification Categories

The Office of Human Resources is responsible for determining if a position is to be designated as either exempt or non-exempt in compliance with state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications and employees’ employment status and benefit eligibility. Full benefit-eligible definitions, policies, and procedures located on the BOR policy web site.

- **Nonexempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law’s requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime, which means that they are eligible to be compensated for hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week at a rate not less than time and one-half their regular rate of pay. Alternatively, compensatory (comp time) may be earned and accrued by an employee in lieu of cash payment for work performed in excess of their regular weekly schedule. The FLSA requires that comp time be earned at a rate of one and one half hours for each hour of employment over 40 hours. Overtime must be approved in advance by the supervisor or department head and must be reflected on the timecard and/or employee’s pay statement.

- **Exempt employees** are generally managers or professional, administrative, faculty or technical staff who ARE exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt
employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor. They are not entitled to additional pay or compensatory time off for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a given week.

Middle Georgia State University has established the following categories for both nonexempt and exempt employees:

- **Regular, full-time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the University’s full-time schedule of 40 hours per week. These employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefits program.

- **Regular, part-time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than a full-time schedule. Employees generally work 19.5 hours each week. The benefit categories for part-time employees are described below:
  
  - **Full Benefits Eligible:** This is defined as 30 or more hours per week or .75 FTE and greater, which applies to regular faculty and regular staff employees. Full benefits include all benefits in accordance with University System of Georgia of Board of Regents policy 8.2.9 Insurance.
  
  - **Partial Benefits Eligible:** This is defined as 20 to 29 hours per week or .5 FTE to .74 FTE. Partial benefits eligible may apply to regular faculty and regular staff employees. Partial benefits include contributing to TRS retirement and accrual of pro-rated sick and annual leave.
  
  - **Non-Benefited Eligible:** This is defined as 19 or less hours per week (.49 FTE or less), which applies to regular faculty and staff employees. Non-benefited eligible also includes temporary faculty, staff, and student employees who may not work more than 1,300 hours in a 12 month period.

- **Temporary Employees** – Temporary employment is short in duration to address business needs and must meet the requirements and characteristics described below:
  
  - **Temporary, full-time:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work the University’s full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.
  
  - **Temporary, part-time:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce or to assist in the completion of a specific project and who are temporarily scheduled to work less than the University’s full-time schedule for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status.
- **Limited-Term**: Employees who are appointed to perform a grouping of duties and responsibilities on a non-project basis. Limited-term positions are temporary in nature and the conditions for these appointments do not provide for attainment of permanent status, such as a 1-year limited-term faculty position.

- **Ineligible for Benefits**: Temporary employees are not eligible for the University’s benefits. However, temporary employees must contribute to the Georgia Defined Contribution Retirement Plan.

- **Break in Service**: Once a temporary employee has worked 1,300 hours or has been employed for 12 consecutive months, whichever comes first, the temporary employee must have a break in service of 26 consecutive weeks. Employment applies across all USG institutions.

- **Change of Status**: If a temporary employee is needed beyond the 1,300 hours, they must be moved to a regular employee status.

**Student Employment**

In keeping with the USG policy, student employees are considered temporary and include student assistants and federal student workers. Student assistants are generally allowed to work a maximum of 19.5 hours per week. Federal student workers are generally allowed to work a maximum of 16 hours per week. However, the actual number of hours worked depends on the department’s budget.

- **Maximum Hours in 12 Month Period** - Students may not exceed a total of 1,300 hours worked in a 12-consecutive month period. The 1,300 hours can be accumulated in any combination during the 12 month period. Student employees are not subject to the re-employment restriction requiring a 26-week break-in-service after 12-consecutive months of employment. International students in lawful F-1 and J-1 status who are enrolled full-time are eligible to work for an institution but must not work more than 20 hours per week in accordance with visa restrictions and must ensure compliance with Federal Work Study requirements. Once a student reaches the 1300 hour within the 12 month period, their employment ends. However, the student may resume working when he/she reaches the one-year anniversary from the start date.

- **Reclassifying a Student Position to a Regular Position** - If a department’s demands exceed the required hours for a student position and it has approved funding, the department may request to reclassify a student position to a regular position. In consultation with the department and the Budget Office, the Office of Human Resources will review the responsibilities to determine the appropriate classification and compensation for the reclassification. The hiring manager would follow the standard recruitment and hiring process as outlined in this policy.

- **Student Working in Multiple Positions** - Students may work in multiple positions simultaneously within the University. However, to ensure that they do not exceed the maximum hours allowed, students are required to complete the Additional Occupational Activities Report Form. The form must be signed by all respective supervisors indicating how many hours a student will work per
department not to exceed the 16 or 19.5 hours combined. While the policy permits a student to work multiple positions, hiring departments should first consider other available students. The intent is to give as many students as possible an opportunity to gain work experience.

- **Dual Enrollment Students** - Dual Enrollment Students may be eligible for selected employment as a student assistant but may not meet the requirements for federal work study. According to the Georgia Department of Labor, minors 16 and 17 years of age have no state or federal law work hour restrictions.

- **Internships** - Internships may be voluntary or paid and are relatively short term in nature with the primary focus on getting some on-the-job training in a related field of study and taking what’s learned in the classroom and applying it to the real world. Interns generally have a supervisor who assigns specific tasks and evaluates the interns’ overall work. For internships for credit, usually a faculty sponsor will work along with the site supervisor to ensure that the necessary learning is taking place. Students may work as a volunteer for the University, only for purposes of experiential learning. Since employers in today’s competitive job market look to hire individuals with relevant experience, it is in a student’s best interest to complete several internships during their college years.

- **Considering Students to Work in Regular Full-Time/Part-Time Positions** – According to USG policy, students may NOT be placed in a regular status. However, if a student applies for a regular position, meets the minimum qualifications, and selected, the student’s primary status will change to that of employee. The student is encouraged to continue his/her educational program but as a regular employee must do so around his/her scheduled work hours.

**Joint Staffing**

In keeping with the University System of Georgia Business Procedures Manual, section 5.3.3, the practice of employing faculty and other personnel by two or more institutions within the system during the same period of time is a recognized method of keeping costs to a minimum. Due to the complexities of payroll-related reporting, only one institution may record and report the complete payroll activity for the shared employee, using the **University System Employees Consultant Services Agreement Between Institutions** form with the following guidelines.

1. The employee will be considered as a full-time employee at the home institution, and will receive full contract pay from the home institution.
2. Each institution sharing the time of the employee will budget its share of the employee’s time (EFT) and dollars.

   **Note:** For contract employee, close coordination between institutions is necessary to ensure that the EFT and dollars do not exceed those noted in the employee’s contract.

3. After the employee is paid by the home institution using the normal payroll methods, the home institution will enter the personal service expenditures into its accounting records.

If the President wishes to delegate signature authority to department heads, etc. for this process, this must be done in writing with specific reference to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated Section 45-10-25, No. 8.
Pre-Recruitment Procedures

When filling a position vacancy, the hiring manager to whom the position reports must complete a *Job Requisition (JR)*.

1. The completed requisition for staff should go directly to the Budget Office for approval; faculty forms, including the *Faculty Request: Demonstration of Needs* form, are forwarded to the Office of the Provost who will then forward on to the Budget Office. *(Official job descriptions are maintained in the Office of Human Resources. For newly created positions, the Office of Human Resources in consultation with the hiring managers will develop the job descriptions.)*
2. The Budget Office will complete their section of the form outlining position numbers, position funding information, salary grade (if applicable) and starting salary; and then forward the request form to the Executive Vice President of Finance and Operations for approval.
3. The Executive Vice President of Finance and Operations must obtain authorization from the President to fill newly created, faculty and director level and above vacant positions before a search can be initiated. Vacant positions below the director level do not require the President’s approval.
4. The form is then forwarded to the Office of Human Resources, and in consultation with the hiring officials or search committee chair, the search process is initiated. The Office of Human Resources is available to respond to questions or provide assistance.
5. The Office of Human Resources will send the approved PARF to the hiring manager once the request has been approved and the position has been advertised.

Recruitment Methods

There are three (3) standards for filling vacant positions:

- **External Recruitment** – The vacant position is externally advertised in recruitment outlets selected by the hiring manager and the Office of Human Resources. Exempt (monthly) positions must be externally recruited for a minimum of ten (10) business days. Non-exempt (biweekly) positions must be externally recruited for a minimum of five (5) business days.

- **Internal Recruitment** – The vacant position is internally advertised and may be designated in restricted areas such as the department, office, school, college, or University; HR webpage, HR bulletins, faculty/staff distribution lists and/or on InsideMGA. Temporary employees are also eligible to apply for vacant positions in the designated area. To ensure compliance with the Affirmative Action Plan, the Executive Director of Human Resources must approve internal searches in writing. Factors that will be considered are the race/gender makeup of the classification and/or job group, and the department’s past efforts to recruit minorities and women. Only applicants who complete the application process by the deadline date will be considered. Internal searches are open for a minimum of five (5) business days.

- **Direct Appointment** – No search is conducted. An individual is appointed to the vacant position. This method may be used at the discretion of the President and/or for interim positions, which may include emergency hires such as faculty and critical leadership
positions, with a full search to be completed within 180 days from the time of the interim appointment. The direct appointment must be approved by the President. A copy of the written consent must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources for placement in the search/selection file.

Advertising Vacant Positions

Middle Georgia State University has designated a number of recruitment outlets as standard recruitment efforts.

All postings for faculty, staff, and students must be advertised on the Middle Georgia State University’s website. In addition, all internal postings must be advertised on InsideMGA and the University’s distribution email.

No Cost:

- University System of Georgia Applicant Clearinghouse
- Inside Higher Ed
- Georgia Department of Labor
- Various ListServs

Cost:

- Local newspaper advertisements
- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Higher Ed Jobs
- Indeed
- CareerBuilder
- Professional journals and associations
- LinkedIn and other digital platforms
- Third Party/Executive Search Firms
- Job Fairs

Please Note: Costs may vary based on size of ads and length of time advertised. The costs of advertising with these outlets are currently billed to the Office of Human Resources. However, effective July 1, 2016, the costs of advertising will be billed to the respective departments.

All advertisements include a statement expressing Middle Georgia State University’s commitment to equal employment opportunity for all applicants.

Advertising Deadlines

All positions will be posted on Friday of each week, therefore, all requisitions should be submitted to the Office of Human Resources by noon on Wednesday of each week to ensure that positions are included with any postings that will be advertised on InsideMGA. There may be exceptions for emergency hires and critical leadership positions authorized by either a Vice President, Executive Vice President, Provost, President, and/or the Executive Director of Human Resources.
Job Posting Cancellation/Re-Advertising

Hiring managers must ensure that the information submitted for each posting is correct prior to the Office of Human Resources posting the position. Changes made to the active posting may be subject to resubmission through the approval process. If the hiring manager decides to cancel the job posting, the Office of Human Resources must notify all applicants in writing. If the posting is cancelled in order to modify the language and then repost, the Office of Human Resources must note on the posting, per the hiring manager, whether or not the applicants who applied for the first posting will be considered for the re-advertised position by stating either “Previous Applicants need not to reapply” or “This is a re-advertised position. Previous applicants will be considered and need not to reapply.”

Application Process

Middle Georgia State University Employment Applications can be found on its website on the Office of Human Resources homepage under “Employment Opportunities”.

Current employees who are qualified and interested in posted positions should follow the application procedure as specified on the Position Vacancy Notice.

Transcripts, References and other Credentials

- Faculty Positions - Official Transcripts are required and should be submitted to Academic Affairs before the secondary interview
- Non-faculty Positions (where applicable) – Unofficial transcripts may be accepted with the application and official transcripts are required for selected applicants by start date.
- References are required with the application.
- Proof of Licensures and Certifications (where applicable) are required with the application.

Middle Georgia State University relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in University's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

Background Check Release Forms

All applicants will be required to complete the Background Check Release Form as part of their application package. This form is located at: http://www.mga.edu/human-resources/documents.aspx.

Interviewing for Externally Recruited Positions

- Application Screening – The Office of Human Resources must review and screen all staff and student applications that are received to ensure that any candidate considered for an interview meets the minimum advertised requirements. The Division of Academic Affairs is responsible for reviewing and screening all faculty application packages to ensure that any candidate considered for an interview meets the minimum advertised requirements.

- Interview Committee – The hiring manager must form a search committee that consists of three to five (3-5) members for faculty, director level and above positions. Employees from other
departments impacted by the new hire should be included for the search committee. Faculty search committees must include at least one staff member and staff search committees must include at least one faculty member.

At least two (2) members within the respective department should conduct interviews for all other positions and no one from other departments is required to participate on the selection panel.

- **Selecting Candidates to Interview** - The hiring manager determines how many applicants to interview based on the amount of qualified applications received. Ideally, three to five (3-5) applicants should be interviewed. When possible, at least two (2) applicants should be interviewed. With a large number of qualified applicants, the hiring manager may conduct multiple phases of interviews in order to reduce the number of candidates and identify the final top candidates.

- **Preliminary and Secondary Interviews** – The hiring manager is given the flexibility to conduct preliminary and secondary interviews via telephone, Skype, FaceTime, etc. The method of interviews must be consistent for all selected applicants. This process determines who gets face-to-face interviews.

- **Campus Interviews** – For staff positions, the hiring manager must conduct a campus interview. For faculty positions, the candidate of choice will be the one invited for a campus interview. Exceptions may be authorized by the Executive Director of Human Resources on hard to fill positions.

- **Documentation** – During the preliminary and campus interview process, the hiring manager must maintain appropriate documentation of the questions posed by the interviewer(s) and responses of each candidate. After the interviews are complete, the hiring manager will submit a brief summary to the Office of Human Resources, making a recommendation to hire and justifying the selection. The selection must be based on the minimum requirements, including education, training, and experience that are outlined in the job description. In addition, the following documents must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources within five (5) business days from receiving notice of the official job acceptance:
  - Standardized interview questions
  - Summary responses for all interviewed candidates
  - Telephone reference checks for the selected candidate(s)

*Throughout the process, the Executive Director of Human Resources confers with hiring managers regarding concerns or issues related to candidate(s) education and/or experience, will ensure all required documentation is provided, and work with the hiring manager, along with the Budget Office to set the starting salary based upon funding availability, competitive market rates, internal equity, and the rates established within the compensation plan.*
Salary Negotiation

Any recommended salary above the minimum must be approved in writing by the appropriate Vice President or Provost and the Executive Vice President of Finance and Operations. The Executive Director of Human Resources can initiate a discussion with the hiring manager, Vice President, or any designee regarding starting salary concerns or issues. The hiring manager may have preliminary discussions with the selected candidate. However, no salary discussions are final until approved and issued in the Official Written Offer letter.

Scheduling Dates of Hire

When determining the date of hire for the selected candidate, consider the following:
- Exempt/Monthly employees should be hired before or by the 20th of each month
- Non-Exempt/Bi-Weekly employees should be hired on a Monday. Where a holiday falls on a Monday, the new hire may start the Tuesday following the holiday.

All NEW hires are required to attend Onboarding Orientation, which is offered every other Tuesday of the month. Please contact the Office of Human Resources to register the new hire to attend the first Tuesday available from date of hire.

Interviewing for Internally Recruited Positions

There is no minimum requirement for the number of applicants to be interviewed internally. If interviews are conducted, the hiring manager must maintain appropriate documentation and follow other procedures, if applicable, as outlined under Interviewing for Externally Recruited Positions. Hiring managers may review personnel files on internal candidates during the selection process.

Internal Transfers/Promotions

Employees with more than 12 months of service may request consideration for a lateral transfer to other jobs as vacancies become available. At the same time, a hiring manager may request a transfer of employees between departments and campuses to meet specified work requirements and reassignment of work requirements.

Middle Georgia State University offers employees promotions to higher-level positions when appropriate. Management prefers to promote from within and may first consider current employees with the necessary qualifications and skills to fill vacancies above the entry level, unless outside recruitment is considered to be in the University’s best interest.

To be considered, employees must have held their current position for at least 12 months, have a satisfactory performance record and have no disciplinary actions during the last 12 months. Management retains the discretion to make exceptions to the policy. In addition to applying for internal postings, employees may apply for external postings.

Adequate notice of transfer must be given to minimize the risk of disrupting the workflow. When selecting an internal candidate from another department, the hiring manager must notify the selected
candidate’s current supervisor in writing and schedule the date of hire at least two weeks from the time of the notification.

**Background and Reference Checks**

To ensure that individuals who join Middle Georgia State University are well qualified and to ensure that the University maintains a safe and productive work environment, it is our policy to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant’s resume or application form.

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to Middle Georgia State University. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and antidiscrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

If information obtained in a background check would lead the University to deny employment, a copy of the report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report’s accuracy. Background checks shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- A criminal record check covering a minimum of seven (7) years, although a criminal conviction does not automatically bar an applicant from employment;
- A nationwide sex offender search;
- A social security number check; and
- For all professional, faculty and academic positions, an academic credentials check.

Offers of employment for positions of trust may be conditional pending the result of a state and federal criminal history check covering more than the minimum of seven (7) years. Positions of trust are those that involve interaction with children, after-hours access to facilities, access to financial resources or that have been otherwise identified by the hiring official to require a more extensive background investigation.

Additional checks such as a driving record or credit report may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job related.

Middle Georgia State University also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment. Specifically, a background investigation shall be performed on any existing employee being transferred, reassigned, reclassified or promoted to a position of trust unless a background investigation conforming to this procedure has been performed on such employee on or after July 1, 2002. Any existing employee that is transferred, reassigned, reclassified or promoted into a position requiring a Purchase Card, when they have not been assigned a Purchase Card previously, must submit to a credit check. Existing cardholders are subject to a background check before next renewal of card.

Part-time students or temporary employees are subject to background checks. Part-time instructors hired on an as-needed basis who have a one-year lapse in employment must submit to a background check.
A Background Check generally is completed within four (4) business days. However, there are occasions when it could be longer, such as when involving multiple states. **Employees must receive a Background Check clearance prior to the first day of hire.**

Middle Georgia State University performs reference checks on final candidates.

**Final Candidate Selection**

The final selection is made based on the established criteria. The Office of Human Resources notifies Hiring Manager and the Office Fiscal Affairs or the Office of Academic Affairs when the background check is completed and the final candidate is clear for hire. *(The selected candidate's employment is contingent upon a successful background check)*

**Initiating Employment**

When the final candidate has been selected for a position, the hiring manager must complete a *Personnel Action Request Form* (PARF).

The PARF must be submitted to the Budget Office to complete and obtain appropriate signatures. As a result, the Official Offer letter will be mailed directly to the prospective employee. The employee will sign the Official Offer letter and return it to the Office of Human Resources.

**Official Offer Letter**

The Official Offer letter is generated respectively through the Office of Academic Affairs or the Office of Fiscal Affairs and must include the following standard content.

- Job title
- Exempt or nonexempt status
- Starting salary (specifying hourly rate and its equivalent annual rate)
- Work schedule
- Full-time or part-time classification for benefits
- Reporting date
- Home campus, subject to the need of the University
- Any conditions to which the offer is subject, such as:
  - Post-offer medical exam
  - Post-offer drug test
  - Necessary licensure
  - Official transcript(s)
- Direct supervisor
- A statement of the at-will basis of employment
- New Hire Orientation date
- 180-day probationary period
- A deadline of three (3) business days from the receipt of the Offer Letter to return a signed copy to the Office of Human Resources.

The Office of Human Resources must receive a copy of the written offer letter seven (7) business days prior to the date of hire.
Rejection Notices

Once the selected candidate has accepted the position by signing the offer letter and receives a cleared background check, the Office of Human Resources will notify via email all candidates who were not interviewed that the position has been filled with another candidate. The hiring manager will send candidates who were interviewed a written notice via U.S. mail within five (5) business days of being notified by the Office of Human Resources of receiving the signed Offer Letter. The Office of Human Resources will provide a template for managers.

Additional Employment Disclosure

In keeping with USG policy, for all activities, except single-occasion activities, the employee shall report in writing through official channels the proposed arrangements and secure the approval of the President or his/her designee prior to engaging in the activities. Such activities may include consulting, teaching, speaking, and participating in business or service enterprises.

Faculty, staff, and student employees should complete an Additional Occupational Activities Report Form at the beginning of each semester or when there is a change in your previous report. The form will be maintained in the Office of Human Resources respective personnel file.

Nepotism, Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships

Middle Georgia State University wants to ensure that University practices do not create situations such as conflict of interest or favoritism. This extends to practices that involve employee hiring, promotion and transfer. Close relatives, partners, those in a dating relationship or members of the same household are not permitted to be in positions of a subordinate-superior relationship between such individual and any relative of such individual through any line of authority. Close relatives are defined as husband, wife, domestic partner, father, mother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, step relatives, cousins and domestic partner relatives.

If employees begin a dating relationship or become relatives, partners or members of the same household and if one party is in a supervisory position, that person is required to inform management and the Office of Human Resources of the relationship. The individuals concerned will decide who is to be transferred. If that decision is not made within 30 calendar days, management will decide.

Middle Georgia State University reserves the right to apply this policy to situations where there is a conflict or the potential for conflict because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no direct-reporting relationship or authority involved.
Rehire

Former employees who left the University in good standing and were classified as eligible for rehire may be considered for reemployment. An application must be submitted to the Office of Human Resources, and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position.

Supervisors must obtain approval from the Executive Director of Human Resources or designee prior to rehiring a former employee. Rehired employees begin benefits just as any other new employee. Previous tenure will not be considered in calculating longevity, leave accruals or any other benefits.

An applicant or employee who is terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment due to a policy violation will be ineligible for rehire.