



Faculty Handbook

Academic Year 2025-2026

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PREFACE

The Faculty Handbook provides information, policies, and procedures relevant and specific to Faculty across the university in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Adult and Professional Studies.

The Faculty Handbook is organized into four chapters:

1. University Purpose and Governance
2. Organization of the University
3. Conditions of Faculty Service & Benefits
4. Process for Making Faculty Handbook Changes

The Faculty Handbook stands alongside the Mount Vernon Nazarene University Employee Handbook as a distinct but supplementary document. The Employee Handbook, created and maintained by the Human Resources Office, addresses policies and procedures that apply to all employees of Mount Vernon Nazarene University and thus also apply to faculty as employees of Mount Vernon Nazarene University. However, this Faculty Handbook contains issues of University life unique to Faculty (e.g., contracts, rank promotion, sabbaticals). Every attempt has been made to avoid duplicating information in these documents.

This edition of the Faculty Handbook is produced by the Academic Affairs Office in the direction of the Chief Academic Officer. Errors and omissions should be reported in writing (via email) to the Academic Affairs Office. That office is responsible for making editorial changes. This edition replaces all previous editions.

The Faculty Handbook does not create a contract of employment between the Mount Vernon Nazarene University and the faculty member, either express or implied. Mount Vernon Nazarene University reserves the right to add, revise, or remove any section of the handbook, in whole or in part, at any time.

CHAPTER 1: UNIVERSITY PURPOSE AND GOVERNANCE

1.1 MVNU Mission

"Mount Vernon Nazarene University exists to shape lives through educating the whole person and cultivating Christlikeness for lifelong learning and service."

The mission statement of Mount Vernon Nazarene University emphasizes the holistic development of individuals, focusing on educating not just the mind but also the heart and spirit. Living out this mission means embracing a commitment to personal growth and character development rooted in Christ-like values. It encourages students and faculty alike to engage in lifelong learning, fostering a curious and open mindset that values knowledge and understanding.

Furthermore, it is essential to reflect Christ and the teachings of the Church of the Nazarene, embodying the principles of love, service, and compassion in our daily lives. This commitment inspires individuals to apply their education and faith to positively impact their communities and the world. By embodying these principles, we contribute to the transformative mission of the university, nurturing a vibrant community that reflects Christ's love and purpose in all aspects of life, while also upholding the values and mission of the Church of the Nazarene.

1.2 The Importance of Mission-Fit Faculty

As a Christian university rooted in the Wesleyan theological tradition and grounded in the liberal arts, Mount Vernon Nazarene University is dedicated to fostering a mission and educational philosophy that reflect its desire to participate in God's redemptive work in the world. Therefore, it is essential for MVNU to actively recruit, hire, support, and retain faculty who are both committed to and prepared to continually advance the university's unique academic mission.

MVNU is dedicated to cultivating students in character, scholarship, and service, placing the holistic development of our students at the heart of our educational mission. Whether engaged in the College of Arts and Sciences or the College of Adult and Professional Studies learning programs, we pursue academic excellence that emphasizes the practical integration of cognitive, moral, and spiritual growth. Our goal is to prepare students to actively participate in God's purposes for the world.

While faculty members at MVNU are not mandated to attend a Church of the Nazarene congregation, they are expected to respect and adhere to the doctrinal and social standards of the

denomination and to be active in a local church that aligns with its teachings. Furthermore, all faculty are required to sign a statement of faith, lifestyle agreement, and commit to the standards outlined in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene regarding Christian Character and Conduct and all sections of the Manual.

1.3 Statement of Faith and Institutional Philosophy

1.3.1 Statement of Faith

As a university of the Church of the Nazarene, the University stands in the Wesleyan evangelical tradition, as summarized in the "Articles of Faith" and "Agreed Statement of Belief" in the Manual, Church of the Nazarene, we believe:

1. In one God -- the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. That the Old and New Testament scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, contain all truth necessary to faith and Christian living.
3. That man is born with a fallen nature and is, therefore, inclined to evil, and that continually.
4. That the final impenitent are hopelessly and eternally lost.
5. That the atonement through Christ is for the whole human race; and that whosoever repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is justified and regenerated and saved from the dominion of sin.
6. That believers are to be sanctified wholly, subsequent to regeneration, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. That the Holy Spirit bears witness to the new birth and also the entire sanctification of believers.
8. That our Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.

To these ends and in keeping with the ideals of the Church of the Nazarene as the sponsoring denomination, the Mount Vernon Nazarene University curriculum follows the liberal arts pattern, which encompasses career and vocational preparation at the University level in selected professional and pre-professional areas of study. The Mount Vernon Nazarene University experience is designed to provide a program which is sufficiently flexible to meet basic individual needs.

1.3.2 Institutional Educational Philosophy Statement

Liberal arts education at Mount Vernon Nazarene University is a holistic approach to faith and learning with a goal of enabling students to think and act like the persons they were created to be and equipping them for a career and life of service to God and humanity in the twenty-first century. We assert that a lifestyle of study, which we define as the pursuit of goodness, truth and beauty, is a sacred calling. We believe that education should be concerned with developing a person's humanity as one created in the image of God.

We affirm the Wesleyan evangelical worldview as the basis for understanding this humanity both in terms of what we are and what, by God's grace, we can and should be.

1.4 Academic Freedom and Responsibility

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Definition of Academic Freedom: Academic freedom is the calling and responsibility of faculty members to pursue truth through teaching, research, and scholarship in a spirit of faith, trust, and intellectual integrity within the context of our Christian educational mission, informed by the CCCU statement on academic freedom and our institutional commitments.

1.4.1 Scope and Responsibility

Faculty have freedom to explore their academic disciplines as stewards of truth and inquiry, maintaining harmony with the university's Christian mission, statement of faith, and educational philosophy. This freedom includes responsibility for scholarly rigor, student learning, and professional conduct consistent with our institutional commitments.

Faculty exercise academic freedom within the framework of institutional commitments regarding lifestyle, faith, and policies, while maintaining a sincere respect for the theological stance of the Church of the Nazarene.

1.4.2 Faculty as Representatives of the Institution

Faculty serve as vital representatives of the institution and the broader community, particularly at a Church of the Nazarene sponsored school. Faculty are citizens, professionals, and educational leaders who embody the values and mission of MVNU. The university values open dialogue and professional discretion as essential to representing both academic and Christian integrity. Personal expression as citizens occurs within the context of institutional representation.

1.4.3 Classroom Teaching

Faculty have freedom to teach their subject matter according to their professional judgment while ensuring course content supports stated learning objectives and remains consistent with the university's Christian mission and educational philosophy. Faculty are entrusted to teach with intellectual honesty and vocational purposes that strengthen the integration of faith and learning.

Faculty maintain academic freedom to address contemporary social, ethical, and professional issues as they relate to course content and learning outcomes. This includes:

- Presenting multiple perspectives within academic and professional discourse
- Preparing students for real-world professional contexts
- Distinguishing between institutional theological positions and professional/industry standards
- Creating learning environments where students can engage thoughtfully with complex issues

1.4.4 Institutional and Denominational Context

As an institution sponsored by the Church of the Nazarene, MVNU is guided by the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene regarding academic freedom and the relationship between the University and the denomination. The Manual affirms that Nazarene institutions of higher education are governed by boards whose constitutions and bylaws conform to their charters and remain in harmony with denominational guidelines. MVNU upholds this guidance through its bylaws and in alignment with the expectations of its Board of Trustees.

1.4.5 Faith and Learning Integration

Mount Vernon Nazarene University seeks to integrate every facet of life and scholarship under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Faith guides and enhances the learning process, while learning deepens and broadens one's faith. Instead of constraining the pursuit of truth or suppressing creativity, these commitments liberate the academic community to explore, learn, innovate, analyze, critique, and think joyfully in obedience to the God "in whom we live and move and have our being."

This integration of faith and learning represents the distinctive contribution of Christian higher education, where rigorous intellectual engagement serves to deepen rather than diminish spiritual understanding and commitment to the Christian mission. [OBJ]

CHAPTER 2: ORGANIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

2.1 University Governance Structure

The offices described in the following pages outline the current organizational structure. The faculty bears primary responsibility for the University's curriculum, instruction, and academic policies, and a secondary responsibility to provide counsel on activities outside academic affairs. Faculty councils and committees address issues in designated areas of responsibility and report regularly to the faculty.

2.2 University Structure

Mount Vernon Nazarene University is comprised of two colleges: The College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Adult and Professional Studies. These units are responsible for the creation and quality of the academic offerings housed within their respective units and are organized around similar disciplines and professions, student population, and/or modality.

2.2.1 College of Adult and Professional Studies

The College of Adult and Professional Studies offers adult-focused accelerated undergraduate and graduate programs online, in person, and in hybrid format.

2.2.2 College of Arts and Sciences

The College of Arts and Sciences serves undergraduate and graduate students primarily in a traditional residential context on the Mount Vernon, Ohio campus.

2.3 Administrative Positions and Descriptions

All administrative positions serve without entitlement, and at the discretion of the Board of Trustees and "at the will" of the President. The purpose of such positions is to serve the administrative goals of the President and University Cabinet.

2.3.1 President of the University

The President of Mount Vernon Nazarene University is its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and is responsible to the Trustees. His or her primary responsibility is to pursue institutional purposes

through strategic planning, the coordination of essential functions, and the control of performance and results.

2.3.2 Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer

Reports to the President of the University.

The Executive Vice President (EVP) and Chief Academic Officer (CAO) are the next ranking administrative officer under the President.

1. As EVP, he/she provides strategic leadership in the oversight of all university operations. The EVP chairs the university cabinet, and all cabinet members report to the EVP.
2. As CAO, he/she provides strategic leadership in the planning, development, assessment, and implementation of all academic programs of the University. As the senior academic administrator, the CAO works closely with various academic leaders and key faculty governance groups on all curricular, personnel, and budget matters, and recommends appropriate action to the President.

2.3.3 Chief Financial Officer

Reports directly to the EVP and indirectly to the President

The CFO's primary responsibility is to contribute to the achievement of the institutional purposes by performing long-term financial planning, recommending fiscal policy, developing, and administering the annual budget, improving the systems and processes of business affairs, and overseeing the daily operations of these areas. In addition, the CFO gives leadership to Human Resources, Director of Contracts, and University Policies.

2.3.4 Chief Development Officer

Reports directly to the EVP and indirectly to the President

The CDO's primary responsibility is to develop integrated strategies for managing relationships among MVNU's key constituencies to increase understanding and financial support from those various constituent groups. This includes, but is not limited to, Alumni Relations, Annual Fund, Estate and Gift planning, University Endowment, and Community Engagement.

2.3.5 Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)

Reports to CAO

The VPAA oversees all academic programs and student learning and provides oversight to accreditation work across the University. Through this, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Dean of the College of Adult and Professional Studies report to the VPAA. In addition, he or she oversees:

- Institutional Research, providing data to external constituencies as required or requested and to internal constituencies in support of decision-making processes and scholarship.
- Student success
- Academic Services
- Library Services
- Global Engagement

2.3.6 Vice President of Spiritual Formation and Church Relations

Reports to the CAO

VP of Spiritual Formation and Church Relations oversees all aspects of spiritual formation of the students and employees across CAS and CAPS, including but not limited to Chapel, spiritual life week, discipleship groups, routine all-employee events such as convocation and Christmas chapel. In addition, he/she provides a direct point of contact with all the churches and pastors within the MVNU Field giving leadership to the university events focused on clergy and their families.

2.3.7 University Academic Leadership Team

The University Academic Leadership Team (UALT) serves as the primary academic leadership body for coordinating institutional academic initiatives and providing strategic oversight of academic programs and policies. The UALT is composed of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of the College of Adult and Professional Studies, and divisional chairs who provide representation from academic divisions across the University.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs has the authority to add members to the committee as necessary to achieve strategic goals of the University or as needed for specific institutional initiatives. The UALT meets regularly to address academic planning, policy development, and coordination between colleges and divisions.

The UALT plays a significant role in the Faculty Handbook revision process, as outlined in Chapter 4 of this handbook, reviewing proposed changes and making recommendations to the University Cabinet. [OB]

CHAPTER 3: CONDITIONS OF FACULTY SERVICE & BENEFITS

3.1 Faculty Responsibilities and Expectations

As members of an academic community committed to the integration of faith and learning, faculty at Mount Vernon Nazarene University embrace multiple dimensions of responsibility that reflect both professional excellence and Christian character.

3.1.1 Mission Engagement

Faculty members are expected to understand, embrace, and actively contribute to the university's mission of "shaping lives through educating the whole person and cultivating Christlikeness for lifelong learning and service." This includes:

Faith Integration: Faculty should demonstrate how their academic discipline connects with Christian faith, helping students understand the relationship between their field of study and their spiritual development.

Institutional Commitment: Active participation in the life of the university community through attendance at chapel services, faculty meetings, and institutional events that build community and advance the mission.

Church Engagement: While faculty are not required to be members of the Church of the Nazarene, faculty are expected to be active participants in a local church community and to demonstrate a sincere respect for the theological stance and the Church of the Nazarene both professionally and in their public personal life.

The University recognizes that faculty represent a range of denominational backgrounds and encourages each member to identify a church home that nurtures personal faith while respecting the institution's theological commitments.

Campus Ministry Engagement: Opportunities to participate in campus spiritual life—through chapel attendance, spiritual life events, or other campus ministries—provide ways to contribute to the spiritual development of our community while enriching your own experience.

Faculty serving in online programs within the College of Adult and Professional Studies (CAPS) fulfill this expectation through online faith-integration activities such as program-specific spiritual formation and virtual devotionals

A maturing Christian faculty member at a Christ-centered university is an individual who demonstrates an ongoing, authentic relationship with Jesus Christ, seeks continual spiritual and moral growth, and embodies the values of holiness, humility, and service in both personal and professional life (as referenced in V. The Covenant of Christian Character, Church of the Nazarene Manual). This person engages in practices that deepen faith, such as prayer, worship, study of Scripture, and participation in Christian community, and strives to model Christlike integrity, compassion, and wisdom in the classroom and broader university environment.

In addition to professional and academic responsibilities, faculty model collaborative leadership and followership within the University community, contributing to a culture of trust, respect, and accountability while encouraging both colleagues and students in their spiritual and academic growth.

3.1.2 Professional Standards

Relationship to Students: Faculty members must maintain professional relationships with students that reflect Christian character, demonstrate care for student development, and uphold appropriate boundaries while fostering academic growth and personal mentorship.

Relationship to Colleagues: Faculty are expected to work collaboratively with colleagues, contributing to a positive work environment that supports both individual excellence and collective achievement of institutional goals.

Relationship to the Institution: Faculty members should support institutional policies, participate constructively in governance processes, and represent the university with integrity in all professional contexts.

Relationship to the Profession and Research: Faculty members must stay current in their teaching fields and adhere to the ethical standards of their disciplines.

Relationship to the Community: Faculty are expected to engage in personal activities and community service that reflect positively on themselves, the University, their profession, and their students.

3.1.3 Teaching Excellence

Every faculty member must excel in teaching to facilitate genuine learning. Teaching effectiveness will be assessed based on:

Creating a Collaborative Learning Environment: Empowering students to engage in the learning process.

Effective Course Outcomes: Developing, communicating, and fulfilling clear course objectives.

Student Evaluation: Assessing students' achievements related to course outcomes, including timely reporting of grades and attendance.

Consistent Class Engagement: Meeting classes regularly and responsibly; faculty should not unilaterally cancel or reschedule classes, change locations, or assign substitutes without proper authorization.

Current Teaching Methodologies: Utilizing effective and modern teaching practices while regularly updating course content.

Respect and Learning Environment: Earning students' respect, fostering a conducive learning atmosphere, and motivating students to meet course objectives and strive for excellence.

Curriculum Development: Initiating, creating, organizing, and evaluating courses.

Syllabus Maintenance: Developing and maintaining syllabi and relevant course documents as necessary.

Professional Cooperation: Collaborating with others to support University programs.

3.1.4 Scholarship Expectations

Faculty members are expected to engage in scholarship throughout their careers, focusing on their academic disciplines, seeking answers to meaningful questions, being open to review, and producing public work. Examples of scholarly or creative activities include, but are not limited to:

- Research and publication in peer-reviewed journals
- Presentation at professional conferences
- Creative works and exhibitions
- Grant writing and funded research
- Professional development activities
- Integration of faith and learning scholarship

3.1.5 Service Commitment

The faculty are expected to contribute to the governance and operation of the university through service on committees, participation in institutional initiatives, and support of student development through advising and mentoring.

Policy Reference: All MVNU employees, including faculty, have access to the University's Open-Door Grievance Policy, as outlined in the Employee Handbook. This policy provides a structured process for addressing work-related issues through appropriate channels (immediate supervisor, Human Resources, appropriate Vice President, Executive Vice President, and the President, if needed).

3.2 Faculty Classifications

MVNU employs faculty in several categories, each designed to meet specific institutional needs while providing meaningful opportunities for professional contribution and growth.

Understanding these classifications helps members of our academic community navigate expectations, opportunities, and career pathways.

3.2.1 Teaching Faculty

Teaching Faculty represent the heart of our academic enterprise, with primary responsibilities centered on instruction, scholarship, and student development. A person who is employed full-time with primary responsibilities in teaching and scholarship of 51% or greater. Teaching Faculty are the only faculty to whom the entire Faculty Handbook applies. They are also the only faculty eligible for sabbatical leave and for annual or multi-year contracts. At the time of hiring, they will be assigned academic rank, and their contract and compensation will reflect the earned or awarded rank.

3.2.2 Administrative Faculty

Administrative Faculty serve in leadership roles that blend academic expertise with institutional administration. These positions typically require advanced degrees and significant academic experience, focusing on strategic leadership, program development, and institutional management.

Administrative Faculty may have teaching responsibilities as part of their role, but their primary function involves academic administration.

3.2.3 Part-Time Faculty

Part-time Faculty contribute specialized expertise to specific programs or courses while maintaining other professional commitments. This classification provides flexibility for both the institution and the individual, allowing for targeted expertise without full-time commitment.

Part-time Faculty are eligible for limited benefits and participate in divisional and institutional governance as appropriate to their level of involvement.

3.2.4 Adjunct Faculty

Adjunct Faculty provide instructional services on a course-by-course basis, typically bringing professional expertise from outside the academy or supplementing divisional capacity during peak enrollment periods.

Adjunct Faculty are not eligible for rank advancement but play important roles in program delivery and student education. They may participate in divisional meetings and activities as appropriate.

3.3 Faculty Ranks and Promotion

Faculty rank reflects professional development, academic achievement, and contribution to the institutional mission. The rank system provides a framework for career advancement and professional recognition.

3.3.1 Rank Classifications

Faculty rank at Mount Vernon Nazarene University reflects progressive achievement across the four pillars of faculty life: **Teaching, Scholarship, Service, and Faith & Personal Commitment**. Advancement in rank signifies growth in competence, excellence, leadership, and mission integration consistent with MVNU's identity as a Christian liberal arts university.

Instructor

Appointment typically for faculty at the beginning of their academic careers or with professional expertise but without a terminal degree. Instructors hold at least a master's degree and demonstrate potential in all four pillars: competence in teaching, engagement in professional development, participation in service, and authentic Christian commitment consistent with the university's mission.

Assistant Professor

Faculty who typically hold terminal degrees (or the highest appropriate degree in their field) and have demonstrated competence in all four pillars with emerging excellence in one or more areas. Assistant Professors show consistent teaching effectiveness, developing scholarly productivity, meaningful institutional service, and growing integration of faith and learning. This rank represents the entry point to a career-track academic appointment.

Associate Professor

Faculty who have established excellence in teaching, demonstrated sustained scholarly or creative productivity with professional recognition, and provided significant service to the institution and discipline. Associate Professors exhibit mature faith integration and serve as mentors and leaders within the academic community. Advancement to this rank affirms excellence in at least two pillars and competence in all four.

Professor

The highest academic rank, signifying sustained excellence in teaching, distinction in scholarship or creative work, and significant leadership in service and faith integration. Professors are recognized as leaders who advance MVNU's mission through exemplary Christian character, professional influence, and enduring contributions to their discipline and the university community. Promotion to this rank affirms excellence in at least three pillars and distinction in at least one.

3.3.2 Promotion Criteria

Promotion decisions are based on demonstrated excellence in four key areas: Teaching, Scholarship, Service, and Faith & Personal Commitment. Each area requires specific evidence and progressive development appropriate to the candidate's rank and career stage. For alignment with the Four-Pillar Rubrics, expectations are as follows: Assistant Professor requires competence in all four pillars; Associate Professor requires excellence in at least two pillars with competence in all; Professor requires excellence in at least three pillars with distinction in at least one. Detailed evidentiary standards are defined in the Faculty Promotion Guide maintained by Academic Affairs.

3.3.3 Promotion Process

Promotion is determined through a comprehensive review involving peer committees, administrative evaluation, and final affirmation by the Board of Trustees at its spring meeting. Applications are due December 1. Procedures, portfolio requirements, and timelines are published in the Faculty Promotion Guide, which is the controlling procedural document and is updated by Academic Affairs.

3.3.4 Rank and Service Eligibility Requirements

A. Minimum Service Requirements for Promotion

Faculty members must meet the following minimum years of service in their current rank before being eligible for promotion consideration:

For Promotion to Assistant Professor:

- Instructors with a master's degree: Minimum 3 years of full-time service
- Instructors completing terminal degree: Eligible upon degree conferral

For Promotion to Associate Professor:

- Minimum 5 years of full-time service as Assistant Professor at MVNU
- Up to 3 years of equivalent rank service at another accredited institution may be counted toward this requirement upon approval by the CAO

For Promotion to Professor:

- Minimum 7 years of full-time service as Associate Professor
- At least 5 of these years must be at MVNU
- Exceptional cases may be considered with a minimum 5 years at Associate rank with extraordinary achievement in all four pillars

B. Terminal Degree Requirements

Definition: A terminal degree is the highest degree commonly awarded in a specific field of study.

Terminal Degree Requirements by Rank:

- Assistant Professor: Master's degree required; terminal degree preferred or considerable progress toward terminal degree
- Associate Professor: Terminal degree required, OR master's degree plus 30 additional graduate hours in discipline, OR master's degree with extraordinary professional achievement as determined by Promotion Committee
- Professor: Terminal degree required except in extraordinary circumstances with Board approval

Equivalency Determination: When the terminal degree status is unclear for a specific discipline, the Dean in consultation with the Department Chair and CAO shall make the determination based on:

- Standards in peer institutions
- Accreditation requirements
- Professional association guidelines
- Current academic practice in the field

C. Service Eligibility Calculation

Full-Time Service Definition:

- Contract of 0.75 FTE or greater constitutes full-time for promotion eligibility
- Part-time service (less than 0.75 FTE) counts proportionally
- Sabbatical leave counts as continuous service
- Approved medical or family leave counts as continuous service
- Administrative appointments with faculty rank maintain promotion eligibility

Eligibility Timeline:

- Faculty become eligible for promotion consideration in the fall semester of their final required year
- Applications due December 1 of the eligibility year
- Promotion effective beginning of next academic year
- Early consideration permitted with exceptional merit and Dean recommendation

D. Special Circumstances

Clinical and Professional Faculty: Faculty in clinical or professional programs may substitute equivalent professional experience for academic credentials as follows:

- 5 years of distinguished professional practice = 1-year academic service

- Professional licensure/certification at highest level may substitute for portion of degree requirement
- Industry leadership roles considered in lieu of traditional scholarship

Administrative Faculty: Faculty serving in administrative roles (Dean, Associate Dean, Directors with faculty rank):

- Maintain promotion eligibility during administrative service
- Administrative excellence may fulfill portion of service pillar requirements
- Teaching load adjustments considered in teaching effectiveness evaluation

E. Promotion Review Committee Composition Requirements

Committee Membership Criteria:

- Minimum 5 members, maximum 7 members
- At least one Full Professor required (two preferred)
- At least one member from candidate's discipline or related field
- Only faculty at or above the rank being sought may serve
- No more than two members from same department
- Ex officio: Dean (non-voting)
- Members with conflicts of interest must recuse; alternates are appointed by the Dean

Application Requirements:

- Self-Assessment Narrative (3,500–5,000 words) covering faith journey, educational philosophy, teaching effectiveness, scholarship, professional activity, and service.
- Teaching Portfolio: Course evaluations, syllabi, peer observations, and supervisor letters.
- Professional Development & Scholarship Documentation: Current CV, coursework, and scholarly work.
- Service Portfolio: Evidence of university, community, and church involvement.

3.4 Academic Governance

Academic governance operates as part of the University's shared governance model, which includes the Board of Trustees, the President and Cabinet, and the faculty. This collaborative framework ensures quality, integrity, and effectiveness in teaching, learning, research, and scholarship.

The Chief Academic Officer establishes academic governance structures, with oversight from the Vice President for Academic Affairs and College Deans. Faculty provide input on academic standards, admission policies, curriculum development, and related academic matters.

3.4.1 Organizational Structure

Academic committees are established by the Chief Academic Officer upon recommendation of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Committees undergo annual review for viability and effectiveness.

Faculty elect representatives to committees based on established parameters, with elections occurring annually. Committee chairs are selected by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with College Deans.

All faculty are expected to serve on at least one academic or university committee. Written approval from the Chief Academic Officer is required for exemption from committee service.

3.4.2 Academic Council Structure

MVNU operates a two-college academic governance model through college-specific councils. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Academic Council reviews academic matters affecting the undergraduate programs offered through CAS. The College of Adult and Professional Studies (CAPS) Academic Council addresses adult and professional programs, including exclusive oversight of all graduate-level programming. In addition to these distinct areas of focus, both councils share responsibility for reviewing and approving new programs, curricular changes, academic standards, and admission requirements. Actions taken by either council are reported to the Faculty Assembly.

3.4.3 Faculty Assembly

The Faculty Assembly includes all full-time and part-time faculty. It considers and votes on university-wide academic policies, major programmatic changes affecting institutional direction, and other significant academic matters referred to by the academic councils. The Faculty Assembly reviews actions from academic councils and can call for such actions to be reconsidered by the assembly as specified in the action history form protocols. All members are expected to attend scheduled meetings and special meetings.

3.4.4 Academic Proposal Process

All academic changes require AHF submission with the current form available from the Academic Affairs Office. The AHF determines appropriate routing pathway, required approvals, timeline expectations, and implementation procedures. Current procedures and special circumstances are detailed in the AHF maintained by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

3.5 Faculty Development and Support

The university is committed to supporting faculty in professional development through various programs and resources designed to enhance teaching effectiveness, scholarly productivity, and service contributions.

3.5.1 Sabbatical Leave

Teaching Faculty with appropriate rank and tenure are eligible for sabbatical leave for research, scholarly writing, creative activity, or other professional development that advances individual career goals and institutional mission.

3.5.2 Professional Development Funding

The university provides financial support for faculty attendance at professional conferences, workshops, and other development activities that enhance their contributions to the institution.

3.5.3 Faculty Development Programs

Regular programming supports faculty in areas such as teaching innovation, scholarship development, faith integration, and leadership skills.

3.6 Faculty Benefits and Compensation

Comprehensive information regarding faculty benefits, including health insurance, retirement plans, tuition assistance, and other employment benefits, is maintained in the Employee Handbook and through the Human Resources Office.

Faculty compensation reflects rank, experience, performance, and market considerations, with annual reviews conducted according to established institutional processes.

3.6.1 Multi-Year Faculty Contracts

Faculty contracts may, at the university's discretion, be issued for periods longer than one academic year. Eligibility for multi-year appointments is determined by rank, performance, and institutional need, and is contingent upon satisfactory annual reviews and continued alignment with the university's mission and policies.

Multi-year contracts do not imply tenure or guarantee renewal beyond the stated term.

Application Window (January 1–February 15): Eligible faculty may submit a multi-year contract application and self-assessment to the Office of Academic Affairs. Division Chairs and Deans review applications and provide recommendations. Final approval is granted by the Chief Academic Officer in consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Details regarding contract terms, renewal timelines, and supporting documentation are coordinated through the Office of Academic Affairs and Human Resources.

CHAPTER 4: PROCESS FOR MAKING FACULTY HANDBOOK CHANGES

4.1 Amendment Authority

The Faculty Handbook may be amended through several processes, depending on the nature and scope of proposed changes. Three types of revisions might alter the text of the Faculty Handbook: editorial changes that do not affect the substance of policies, changes in university policy statements originating outside of the University's academic offices and inserted for public awareness, and changes in academic policies or governance that directly affect the function and responsibilities of the academic operations of the University.

4.2 Process for Change

Proposals for academic policy or governance changes may originate from the President, Chief Academic Officer, or a task force appointed by either. All proposed changes are submitted to the University Academic Leadership Team. The UALT may endorse the proposed changes and recommend approval to the University Cabinet, ensure that the policies for one college are compatible across the University, or recommend further study and modification.

The CAO will forward the revised Faculty Handbook to the University Cabinet for final approval. The President will provide as an information item the updated Faculty Handbook to the

Board of Trustees. Implementation of Faculty Handbook changes will occur after approval by the University Cabinet, except for contractual matters which will take effect at the beginning of the next contract year.

Academic Operational Changes such as committee and council changes, operational procedures, or position title and description updates are under the purview of the CAO and changes require the approval of the President. Suggested changes may be raised by the President, the CAO, or the University Academic Leadership Team. Changes are to be communicated with the University Academic Leadership Team and faculty.