

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**

June 24, 2022

**APPROVED**  
**JUNE 24, 2022**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Committee on Academic Affairs  
**FROM:** Teresa K. Woodruff, Ph.D. *Teresa K Woodruff*  
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
**SUBJECT:** Revisions to Emeritus Title Policy 04-17-07 (Emeritus Title)

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Trustee Committee on Academic Affairs recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the revisions to Policy 04-17-07 (Emeritus Title) shown in Attachment A hereto.

**RESOLUTION**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby approves the revisions to Policy 04-17-07 (Emeritus Title) shown in Attachment A hereto.

**BACKGROUND**

Policy 04-17-07 regarding Emeritus Title was adopted on May 18, 1950 and revised on April 5, 1991; June 21, 2019; and February 14, 2020.

MSU deeply appreciates the many years of loyal service and creative contributions of its retired faculty and considers them a continuing important resource for the institution. The Emeritus title awarded to faculty and academic staff, administrators, and executive managers at time of retirement signals honor and accomplishment. It also provides certain rights and privileges, such as continued participation in academic ceremonies, events, and governance. After conducting a thorough review, the University Committee on Faculty Affairs, working collaboratively with the Office of the Associate Provost for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs, proposed several changes to the policy.

The proposed policy revisions (1) change the current process of automatically granting emeritum status to employees with official retirement status, with limited exceptions, to a more rigorous process requiring recommendation and approval; and (2) enhance the current process for



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revoking emeritum status when behavior is substantially inconsistent with expected behavior.

The proposed revisions also (1) change the term “emeritus” to the gender-neutral “emeritum”, but permit faculty and academic staff, administrators, and executive managers to use emerita, emeritus, or emeritum in describing their designation; and (2) distinguish between emeritum status for faculty and academic staff, administrators, and executive managers.

The proposed revisions were endorsed by the University Committee on Faculty Affairs on March 29, 2022 and the University Faculty Senate on April 19, 2022.

#### Attachment

Cc: Board of Trustees  
Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D., President  
Eric Scorsone, Ph.D., Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Norman J. Beauchamp Jr., M.D., MHS Executive Vice President for Health Sciences  
Kathleen Wilbur, Ph.D., Senior Vice President for Government Relations  
Brian Quinn, J.D., Vice President and General Counsel  
Michael Zeig, Ph.D., Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the President  
Tyler Silvestri, J.D., Secretary for Academic Governance

## **Awarding Emeritum Status**

Last Updated: MM/DD/YYYY

### **IV. ACADEMIC HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES (Cont.)**

*The following policy was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 18, 1950, revised on April 5, 1991, June 21, 2019, February 14, 2020, and \_\_\_\_\_.*

Emeritum<sup>1</sup> status may be awarded to members of the faculty, academic staff, and administrators who leave the University with official retirement status<sup>2,3</sup>.

#### **Rights and Privileges**

Faculty and academic staff with the emeritum designation are entitled to attend Faculty Senate meetings with voice but without vote and to march in academic processions, such as commencement.

All individuals with emeritum status may avail themselves of the libraries; have continued access to an MSU e-mail account; receive, on application, an employee vehicle permit; represent the University, on appointment, at academic ceremonies of other institutions; and, in general, take part in the social and ceremonial functions of the University.

#### **Faculty and Academic Staff**

For faculty and academic staff members the "emeritum" designation is appended to the rank held at the time of retirement, e.g., professor emeritum, librarian emeritum, senior academic specialist emeritum, etc.

Written recommendations for the awarding of emeritum status must be made by the chair/school director/unit administrator of the employing department and must be supported by the dean/major administrative unit head. The Office of the Associate

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<sup>1</sup> Faculty, academic staff, and administrators who are awarded emeritum status may choose to use the term "Emeritus", "Emerita" or "Emeritum" in describing their designation.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of granting "emeritum" status only, the employment start date with the former Michigan State University College of Law, a Michigan non-profit corporation, will be used to determine emeritum eligibility for College of Law faculty, academic staff and administrative staff who transitioned their employment to the University, effective January 1, 2020, in then-anticipation of the full integration into the University. Any such individual's "emeritum" status will not affect the University's retirement eligibility requirements as they apply to such individual (*i.e.*, the employment start date with the University will be used to determine such individual's retirement eligibility).

<sup>3</sup> Official retirement status as defined by university policies.

## Attachment A

Provost and Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs (FASA) will then make a written determination indicating whether emeritum status should be awarded.

If at any point during the foregoing process, a faculty member is not recommended, supported, or determined to receive emeritum status, the faculty member must be notified and may file a written appeal within 30 days of the decision to the University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA). If the UCFA determines the appeal has merit, it will forward the relevant documents to the Provost who shall make the final decision.

### **Administrators**

Administrators<sup>4</sup> are eligible for emeritum designation. The emeritum designation is appended only to the most senior administrative title held at Michigan State University, which may be held at or prior to the time of retirement, e.g., vice president emeritum, dean emeritum. The emeritum designation is not normally awarded for administrative titles held on an "acting" or "interim" basis.

Written recommendations for the awarding of emeritum status for academic administrators must be made by the unit administrator of the employing unit/department and must be supported by the dean/major administrative unit head. The Office of the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for Faculty and Academic Staff Affairs (FASA) will then make a written determination indicating whether emeritum status should be awarded.

Administrators who are deans or executive managers may be awarded emeritum designation only after submitting a formal letter of request to their supervisor, which must be supported by their supervisor, the major administrative unit head (e.g., Vice President), and the Office of the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for FASA.

### **Emeritum Status After a Substantial Period of Service**

#### *Faculty and Academic Staff*

Faculty and academic staff who end their employment at the University after a substantial period of distinguished service, but short of the years of service needed for retirement eligibility, may be granted emeritum status by the President upon the written recommendation of the Provost after the Provost consults with the UCFA.

#### *Administrators*

Administrators who end their employment at the University after a substantial period of distinguished service, but short of the years of service needed for retirement eligibility,

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<sup>4</sup> Includes executive managers such as vice presidents, associate vice presidents, etc., and academic administrators such as deans, associate/assistant deans, chairpersons/school directors, etc.

## Attachment A

may be awarded emeritum designation only after submitting a formal letter of request to their supervisor, which must be supported by their supervisor, major administrative unit head (e.g., Vice President), the Office of the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for FASA, and the President.

Granting emeritum status in these cases does not affect the individual's retirement eligibility requirement per University policy.

### **Revocation of Emeritum Status**

#### *Faculty and Academic Staff*

Emeritum status for faculty and academic staff that was granted on or after [date of this policy revision] may be revoked in those cases in which behavior occurring or discovered after being awarded emeritum status is deemed to be substantially inconsistent with the behavior expected of Michigan State University faculty and academic staff.

Either the Dean or the Associate Provost and Associate Vice President for FASA may initiate revocation of emeritum status by making a written request to the Provost. The faculty member must be notified and given an opportunity to respond within thirty days to the Provost. The Provost will consult with the UCFA and recommend to the President whether emeritum status should be revoked. The President will render a written, final decision.

For faculty and academic staff automatically granted emeritum status under the University's emeritum policy in effect before [date of this policy revision], the President may revoke emeritum status (following the procedure above) based on behavior that is deemed to be substantially inconsistent with the behavior expected of Michigan State University faculty and academic staff, regardless of whether that behavior occurred before or after the automatic granting of emeritum status.

#### *Administrators*

Emeritum status for an administrator that was granted on or after [date of this policy revision] may be revoked by the President in those cases in which behavior occurring or discovered after being awarded emeritum status is deemed to be substantially inconsistent with the behavior expected of Michigan State University administrators.

For administrators automatically granted emeritum status under the University's emeritum policy in effect before [date of this policy revision], the President may revoke emeritum status of the administrator based on behavior that is deemed to be substantially inconsistent with the behavior expected of Michigan State University administrators, regardless of whether that behavior occurred before or after the automatic grant of emeritum status.

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In either case, the administrator must be notified and given an opportunity to respond within thirty days to the President. The President will render a written, final decision after considering any written response