



DA: August 21, 2019
FR: John G. Igwebuike
Interim Provost & EVPAA
TO: Alcorn Instructional Community
RE: **AY 2019-2020 HELPFUL REMINDERS & CONTRACTUAL UPDATES**

On behalf of our president, Dr. Felecia M. Nave, I am pleased to welcome each of you to the 2019-2020 academic year and present you with the IHL Board of Trustees faculty contracts. Faculty are the heart and soul of Alcorn's academic mission. To ensure you have important information you need to do the vibrant work of research, scholarship, teaching, and service, I provide the following reminders and updates as we engage in the mission-critical work of educating students for leadership in a fast-changing 21st Century marketplace. In the spirit of transparent communications, previous contractual updates are presented here: (See [2017 memo](#); [2018 memo](#)).

Assist with Successful Self Study

Our SACSCOC Self Study sojourn continues. This broad-based effort will be an opportunity to collaborate, improve systems, and demonstrate the quality work in which Alcorn engages to improve the lives of Southwest Mississippi residents, Mississippi, the nation, and the world. Opportunities to chair/participate in (sub-)committees, lead working groups, take on time-sensitive tasks, conduct research, analyze data, draft policy, or perform policy reviews are available. Contact Dr. Hart for information. The most recent reaffirmation update (as of 8/9/19) is available → [here](#).

Confirm Credentials--Nuventive Vitae

SACSCOC establishes basic standards that higher education institutions should meet to ensure that each institution's faculty holds appropriate level (and kind) of credentials. Specifically, Alcorn is to employ competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. To ensure compliance, deans will (i) perform audits on every instructor--including adjuncts--to (ii) certify that every instructor teaching courses within the unit's course menu has a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline (e.g., for baccalaureate courses)--as a threshold matter--or masters/doctorate in the discipline. (iii) Where the minimum qualification is identified as not met, the dean will take appropriate action to ensure alignment with SACSCOC requirements. The Nuventive platform allows for a seamless way to capture and report faculty credentials. *Faculty will receive instructions at a later date through deans/chairs when to enter information into Vitae.* To access the recording on the Nuventive system, click the link below: <https://vimeo.com/349510573/6952573658>.

Assess, Assure, Advance Student Learning

Instructors are expected to implement course activities that measure, monitor, and modify teaching methods to assure student learning outcome achievement. This practice includes collecting, analyzing, reporting (i.e. SACSCOC, NCAA Data Review, institutional effectiveness, and special accreditation information), and closing the loop for continuous improvement. Instructors should report to their chairs, deans, and/or departmental representative the results (data, analyses, artifacts,

portfolios, etc.) of approved student learning outcomes, at the end of each semester/term. Deans/chairs should convene departmental meetings to discuss the results to determine what changes or improvements should be made to the overall program (i.e. updated syllabi, new interventions, additional/deletions of courses, course sequence). The following deadlines regarding assessment reports and assessment plans should be noted:

- September 15, 2019—2018-2019 completed assessment reports due
- October 31, 2019—2019-2020 assessment plans due

Nuventive Improve is the new platform into which student achievement data can be input. Nevertheless, paper templates should be submitted to assessment@alcorn.edu by the deadline. Note: A conference call will be with deans and chairs for student achievement and general education chairs. For any questions, contact Dr. LaToya Hart, Institutional Assessment Director.

Attend Distance Education Webinar

The Office of Distance Education and Vicksburg Expansion is pleased to invite all faculty and staff who teach online, hybrid, and/or dual-enrollment courses to a Distance Learning Webinar. This webinar is geared towards addressing all facets of online teaching at Alcorn State University to promote student success, retention, completion, and graduation. Key units and departments will share important information as it pertains to online policies, procedures, and guidelines as well as strategies for successful course development and deployment. As a proactive notification, the date, time, and webinar access is forthcoming.

Tech Notifications & Updates

- (i) Per instructor feedback, go.alcorn is being upgraded to implement grade changes via a robust, secure, and paperless workflow. Initiated by the instructor, grade change requests would be digitally routed to the chair, dean, Academic Affairs, and the Office of Student Records Office for final processing. Instructors would be able to upload supporting documents in the grade change portal. This should be another time saver for our instructors.
- (ii) Card-scanners are now affixed in nearly all classrooms. When fully functional, instructors will have the option to use the card scanners to take roll. The data would integrate into Canvas for tracking, monitoring, and reporting. More information will come from CITS.
- (iii) Alcorn will continue to deploy the SmartEval platform for course evaluation applications during the 2019-2020 academic year. Faculty have shared positive feedback about this software application.

Verify BANNER Rolls & Refer Students

BANNER is the official attendance roster. Please take due care to ensure that the same students in Canvas, online textbook portals, face-to-face classes, discussion boards are those reflected in *BANNER's* official rolls. Students whose names do not appear on BANNER rolls (i.e. for failure to complete registration or pay fees) should be directed to the appropriate office (Retention Specialist Advisor, Financial Aid, Student Records, Bursar/Cashier, Office of Athletics Academic Enhancement) for customer service. A student's unpermitted, yet continued, attendance in an unpaid/unregistered class presents a host of liability issues. Accordingly, no retroactive credit will be given for such conduct. Instructors should notify students who are not on the official rolls to resolve outstanding issues and gain appropriate Vice-President permission (e.g., permission from VP of Finance & Administration for payment plan) before they can return to class. Unit deans are responsible for upholding this academic requirement. Note: Students can be directed to go.alcorn "HELP" button for assistance.

Schedule International Students for One Online-Course

The Department of Homeland Security requires international students (with F-1 visas) to maintain a full course of study, and the course of study must lead to the attainment of a specific educational or professional objective. A full course of study requirement is defined as a minimum of: 12-credit hours for undergraduate and 9-credit hours for graduate students. Generally, international students may only take one 100% online/distance learning class per semester while attending Alcorn. International students are required to attend classes physically for “hybrid”-mediated courses (i.e. part of the class meets online and others in the classroom). Failure to comply with the Homeland Security regulation will be a violation of a student’s F-1 status. Mrs. Julia Odoms, Director of Graduate Studies, is a resource to that end.

https://www.alcorn.edu/uploaded/files/oaa/International_Students_Distance_Online_Hybrid_Course_Policy1....pdf

Adhere to University Calendar/Deadlines

The university and its faculty and staff must adhere to *its* various published deadlines and deliverable dates. Said dates and deadlines impact students’ official attendance records, financial aid, athletic-eligibility, scholarship status, and transcript records. Please adhere to time-sensitive calendar deadlines such as close of pre-registration; end of registration; UW or No-shows reporting; WP/WF; drop deadline; 75% attendance rule; fee payment due date; I-to-F conversion date; fee remission; senior grades; and final grades). Prior written approval from the area vice president is needed to deviate from published university due dates/deadlines. See Calendar convenience: <https://www.alcorn.edu/newsevents/calendar>. See the promotion, rank, tenure, and leave timeline → [here](#).

Execute Employment Contracts by Deadline

Alcorn disseminates *Mississippi Board of Trustees Institutions of Higher Learning* employment contracts per a defined process to tenured and tenure-track employees. Specifically, the Provost issues contracts to unit deans (issue date: on or before August 30, 2019). Deans will deliver contracts on the day of receipt, if possible, to those faculty members who are employed at the time. Faculty members shall return their signed original contract to the Dean in a timely manner, i.e., no later than 14-days from the stated issue date, to enable the Dean to return all unit contracts to the Provost. Deans are to return all signed contracts to the Provost by the submission date: COB Friday, September 13, 2019. Failure to return the signed contract within the 14-day period (or before the expiration of any written extension granted by the Provost) may be grounds for disciplinary action up to, and including termination. **The deadline to return IHL contracts to Academic Affairs is COB Friday, September 13, 2019.** *Important: Failure to return a signed contract by the deadline may result in abandonment of the faculty member’s position with the university, revocation of the contract offer by the university, and/or termination of the faculty member’s relationship with the university (MS Attorney General’s Office).*

Have a great academic year!

Once again, welcome back to campus and the start of another great year at Alcorn State University. I am excited at the possibilities of what we will accomplish together by way of our cherished motto: *service, scholarship, and dignity* (we extend to each other). Thank you in advance for all you do to promote student success and help Alcorn soar to higher heights. Go Braves!