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## Resolution on Faculty Status, Rank, and Tenure for Librarians

USM Faculty Senate

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# **Resolution on Faculty Status, Rank, and Tenure for Librarians**

**Passed March 21, 2003**

Whereas, it has been reported that Provost Grimes at the March 19 meeting of the IHL Chief Academic Officers raised the issue of eliminating faculty status for university librarians; and

Whereas, high quality information sources and services are essential for supporting learning and research that take place as a part of the academic enterprise; and

Whereas, faculty status, faculty rank, and tenure for librarians is key for maintaining effective library service from the standpoints of: 1) academic freedom and censorship, 2) recruitment and retention of high caliber information professionals, and 3) providing a platform for working collaboratively with other faculty in instruction and research; and

Whereas, librarians at the University of Southern Mississippi have had faculty status for more than 20 years; and

Whereas, the essence of what librarians do is more akin to the teaching, research, and service activity of faculty than it is to what professional staff do in other areas of the university; and

Whereas, starting librarians earn \$34K for 12 month contracts (the equivalent of \$25,500 for a 9-month contract), and eliminating faculty status would result in negligible cost savings; and

Whereas, by July 1 the library will have a 33% reduction in its faculty if no positions are filled, and a loss in faculty status, rank, and tenure for librarians will certainly result in additional resignations; and

Whereas, if and when hiring resumes, it will be extremely important to fill the vacant positions with the high quality of librarians that the academic community has come to expect,

We, the Faculty Senate of the University of Southern Mississippi, endorse faculty status for librarians, and urge the University administration to retain faculty status, rank, and tenure-track for librarians and for new hires.