

POLICY ON DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

A. GENERAL POLICY

Each department shall have a Chair¹ who is the designated administrator of the department and the academic leader of the departmental faculty. The position of Department Chair is an instructional administrative assignment and does not carry tenure with it. Each Department Chair serves at the pleasure of the President.² Each term of a Department Chair shall be for four (4) years. The Chair reports to the respective School Dean.

B. ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to serve as a Department Chair, an individual shall hold a tenured position in the department at the rank of either Associate Professor or Professor.

C. NOMINATION BY THE DEPARTMENT

1. Department Chairs shall normally be selected by the President from the list of nominee(s) recommended by the department. These procedures shall provide that all full-time tenured and probationary faculty members of the department are eligible to vote on the nomination of a Department Chair. Temporary faculty unit employees may participate in department chair nominating elections as follows:
 - a. All temporary faculty members with 15 WTUs during the semester the nomination takes place are entitled to a full vote. Temporary faculty who have maintained 6 WTUs or more for four consecutive semesters including the semester in which the nomination takes place are entitled to a full vote.
 - b. All other temporary faculty teaching 6 WTUs or more in the current and previous semester of the nomination are entitled to a half vote.
 - c. Temporary faculty who are appointed below 6 WTUs and have served four consecutive semesters are entitled to a .25 (ONE-QUARTER) vote if in active status, including when the nomination takes place during the fourth consecutive semester of service.
 - d. Service for either semester during an academic year shall count as a "consecutive semester" served, if the faculty member serves for any other semester during the same, previous or next academic year.
 - e. In reporting the vote to the dean, the department shall provide a single tally of the votes cast by the department faculty. There shall be no distinctions on the ballots except as necessary to identify the numerical value of the vote cast for counting purposes.

¹ The term "Department Chair" also means "Program Coordinator" in programs recognized for this purpose by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

² For purposes of this Policy, President means President or designee

Among those eligible to vote are faculty members on sabbatical or difference-in-pay leaves and participants in the Faculty Early Retirement Program who are teaching during the semester in which the nomination election occurs. Individuals who are on a professional or personal leave without pay are ineligible to participate in the nominating election. Proxy voting shall be prohibited but provisions may be made for absentee voting.

2. The department's nomination(s) shall be forwarded to the President via the School Dean and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. The nomination(s) should be accompanied by a description of qualifications.
3. Should the President find the nominee(s) of the department unacceptable, the President shall give the department faculty one (1) additional opportunity to nominate another individual. Should the department fail to nominate an acceptable candidate, the President may appoint an interim chair for one (1) year.

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is the responsibility of the Department Chair to consult with the full-time departmental faculty on policy matters, plans, and procedures, which affect the department. In those cases, when consultation is not possible, the Chair may make an interim decision until such time as full-time faculty can be assembled for consultation.
2. The Department Chair is also responsible for the overall direction and management of the department, including:
 - a. overall responsibility for the planning and administration of academic programs within the department including the evaluation and enhancement of instruction,
 - b. the formulation, development, and implementation of strategic plans for the department,
 - c. the preparation and administration of the department's budget,
 - d. the proper implementation of the adherence to all University, school and departmental policies and procedures, especially those relating to personnel administration,
 - e. the preparation of required reports, position descriptions, and hiring requests.
 - f. the performance of other responsibilities as assigned by the School Dean.

E. EVALUATION

1. A formal evaluation of the Chair shall occur in the academic year in which the normal term of the Chair is to be concluded.
2. Where the evaluation is scheduled, notice of the evaluation shall be posted in the department office and prominently in the School seeking written comments from all concerned including staff and students. All such comments must be signed.

3. The evaluation shall be conducted by the School Dean, according to procedures developed by the school faculty. These procedures shall provide for input from the faculty of the department. The evaluation should be based, in part, upon progress toward the achievement of written departmental goals.
4. The report of the evaluation results shall be placed in the Chair's Open Personnel File.
5. Information resulting from the evaluation, which may be useful to the department, should be shared by the Chair and/or Dean with the departmental faculty.

F. VACANCIES

1. Vacancies in the position of department chair shall normally be filled by a nominating election at the earliest possible date.
2. After consultation with the faculty of the department, the President may appoint an interim chair for one (1) year to temporarily fill a vacancy.
3. A department or School Dean may request that an outside search be conducted for the position of Department Chair. Such requests must be approved by the Provost prior to the commencement of the search process.
4. In filling a vacancy, an individual may serve up to one (1) year of an unexpired term prior to the commencement of a four-year term. In this eventuality, an individual elected as Department Chair could serve up to five (5) years in one term.

G. REASSIGNMENT

Should the President remove the Department Chair prior to the conclusion of the term, the President shall meet and discuss the decision with all of the full-time tenured and probationary faculty members of the department. This meeting will occur only after the Chair has been informed of the President's decision.

Recommended by the Academic Senate

May 1982; May 1989; April 1995
November 18, 2015
May 8, 2017

Approved by the President

January 11, 2016
June 16, 2017