



Handbook of Operating Procedures

Section: 6.2.3
Originally Approved: 10/05/1990
Last Amended: 12/3/2008
Last Reviewed: 12/3/2008
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PROCEDURE FOR THE SELECTION AND REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to specify the procedure for selection and review of department chairs.

B. Persons Affected

This policy applies to faculty.

C. Policy

Eligibility Requirements for Chair

1. To be eligible to serve as department chair, a faculty member should meet the following requirements:
 - a. Hold an earned doctorate or other recognized terminal degree in an area related to the department's academic program(s);
 - b. Be a tenured faculty member or, under exceptional circumstances, hold a tenure-track appointment in the department.
 - c. Hold academic rank in the department at the associate professor level or higher.
 - d. Have demonstrated leadership and managerial ability.
2. In the event the eligibility requirements cannot be reasonably met, the eligibility requirements will be established by the Dean in consultation with eligible department faculty and with approval of the Provost.
3. The Dean of the College, after consultation with the Search Committee, shall circulate:
 - (1) Any specific eligibility requirements specified in C.2. above, (2) the calendar by which the search will be conducted and (3) nomination/recommendation procedures to be followed.



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D. Definitions

1. The department chair is a faculty member who serves as the administrative officer of the department academic unit and should have the mutual confidence of the eligible department faculty of his or her department, the Dean of the College, the Provost, and the President of the University.
2. Eligible faculty are defined as those who are on the tenure-track and tenured members of a department, and any additional full-time members of the department empowered to vote on chair selection by the tenure-track and tenured members of the department. Deans shall not participate as department faculty in those departments in which they have their faculty assignments.

E. Responsibilities

Not applicable.

F. Procedures

1. Guidelines for Department Chair Search Committee
 - a. Before beginning the search, the Dean will meet with the eligible department faculty to discuss the needs of the department, the college and the University. The dean and department faculty should reach a mutual agreement on whether to have an internal or external search. The department may conduct an external search with the approval of the Dean and Provost. Eligible faculty within the department may be candidates in the search. All searches must comply with institutional hiring practices including affirmative action policy and tenure-track appointment requirements.
 - b. When a vacancy in the position of Department Chair is anticipated, the eligible department faculty shall, by secret ballot, elect a Department Search Committee or function as a Committee of the Whole in the consultation search process. The Search Committee shall consist of at least three (3) eligible department faculty members and one (1) non-voting student representative from the appropriate discipline. The student member may participate in all committee functions except those relating directly to recommendation decisions on a candidate or candidates. If there are fewer than three (3) eligible faculty in the department, the eligible faculty in the department shall serve as a committee of the whole. In the event of small committees (less than 3 members), the Dean may appoint other eligible faculty from closely related disciplines if necessary to the committee. The Search



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Committee will elect its own chair by secret ballot. The current department chair may not serve as a member of the search committee. An internal candidate must recuse him/her self from the search process.

- c. The advertisement for the chair position will be written in accordance with the University requirements by the Search Committee in consultation with all eligible department faculty.
- d. The Search Committee shall conduct the external chair search for candidates in accordance with University requirements and an established calendar. In the case of an internal search, the procedures and search calendar will be established in consultation with the Dean.

2. Department Chair Selection Appointment and Reappointment Procedures

- a. The eligible department faculty members, including those who are not serving on the search committee, shall vote on all candidates, using multiple-choice ballots that allow for multiple selections. The chair of the search committee must provide to the eligible department faculty a C.V. of all eligible candidates. To be recommended, a candidate(s) must receive the vote of a majority (at least 51%) of the department's eligible faculty members. The Search Committee shall conduct the balloting process and report the results of the department's vote regarding the candidates to all the eligible department faculty.
- b. The Search Committee chair, in consultation with the members of the search committee, will forward the voting results to the Dean, with their written recommendation for department chair with supporting rationale.
- c. Should the Dean and eligible department faculty fail to agree on the recommended candidates for Department Chair, the Dean shall submit a rationale for his or her position in writing to the Search Committee. The Dean will then reconvene the Search Committee to recommend an additional candidate(s). Failing agreement on an alternate selection(s) or approval of recommended candidates, the Provost, after a joint meeting with the eligible department faculty and the Dean, will select an interim Chair from within or from outside the department who will serve with the approval of the President for no more than one full academic year. If the department chair search is unsuccessful the following year, the President may extend the interim Chair's appointment or after consulting with eligible department faculty, the Dean, and the Provost, name a new interim chair
- d. The Dean will forward his or her recommendation and the results of eligible



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departmental faculty voting to the Provost who will, in turn, forward his or her recommendation to the President. The President will forward an appointment letter to the candidate selected.

- e. If a department is to be split into two (or more) departments, department chairs shall be selected for all of the departments involved, using the procedures described above. If departments are merged a search for new chair will occur.

3. Department Chair Review Procedures

- a. Department chairs serve without fixed terms at the pleasure of the President. Service as Department Chair is also subject to periodic formal evaluation. However, a formal evaluation is not required if the President decides to remove a Department Chair. There are three separate procedures for initiating an evaluation of a Department Chair.
 - i. A Chair must be formally evaluated by the eligible department faculty and the Dean at least after each three years of service. It is the Dean's responsibility to initiate this evaluation process at the appropriate time.
 - ii. The Dean may initiate the evaluation of a Chair at any time.
 - iii. The eligible department faculty may initiate a formal evaluation of the Chair's performance by a majority (at least 51%) vote of the eligible department faculty. The department chair is not eligible to participate in the voting. The vote shall be by secret ballot at a called department faculty meeting.
- b. In all of the above cases, the Dean and the eligible department faculty, excluding the Department Chair, shall meet to establish the procedure for the evaluation process, which shall be consistent with the general evaluation procedures for academic administrators in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures*, and transmit them to the Provost. During this meeting, a simple majority (at least 51%) of the eligible department faculty will constitute a quorum. The procedure adopted should ensure a high level of participation by the eligible departmental faculty. During this meeting, a simple majority of the eligible department faculty will constitute a quorum. The procedure adopted should ensure a high level of participation by the eligible departmental faculty.
- c. The Dean shall distribute tabulations of any data collected excluding written comments, in the evaluation process to all eligible departmental faculty and the



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Provost. The Dean shall provide written comments to the Department Chair and Provost.

- d. The eligible department faculty may meet with the Dean and with the Chair to discuss the evaluation.
- e. As part of the evaluation process, the eligible department faculty shall make a formal recommendation, to be determined by majority (at least 51%) vote of the eligible department faculty, on whether to retain or remove the Chair. This recommendation shall be communicated in writing to the Chair, Dean, and Provost. The Department Chair may submit a written response of the department's recommendation.
- f. As part of the evaluation process, the Dean will conduct a separate and independent evaluation. Included in this evaluation should be an evaluation of strengths and areas in need of improvement and a recommendation to retain or remove the Chair. Copies of this recommendation should be provided to the respective Chair, the eligible department faculty, and the Provost. The Department Chair may submit a written appeal of the Dean's recommendation.

G. Review

The Divisional Head for this policy is the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and this policy shall be reviewed every five years or sooner if necessary by the following Stakeholders:

1. Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs – Senior Reviewer
2. Council of Deans
3. Faculty Senate Chair