



University Policy Statement

UPS 211.100

APPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND VICE-CHAIRS

- I. A Department Chair is responsible for leading the Department, and also for representing it. It is therefore critical that a Department have a Chair in whom it has full confidence. In this document, “department faculty” refers to all temporary faculty, probationary faculty, and tenured faculty. In this policy, FERP and Pre-Retirement Reduction in Time Base faculty are considered tenured faculty. These procedures are designed to enable department faculty to communicate their preferences in the matter of their Chairs as clearly as possible within the constraints imposed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement and by the need to maintain the anonymity of the participants. While the President is responsible for the appointment of a Chair, he or she should make every effort to respect the recommendations of the Department.

The procedures herein apply when selecting program coordinators or heads/directors of schools or divisions who have responsibilities that include the evaluation of personnel and, separate from the department personnel committee, evaluate and make recommendations regarding retention, tenure, and promotion of department faculty.

II. Procedures

- A. When a Department Chair is to be chosen, the Dean of the College shall be responsible for convening the department faculty for their initial meeting on the matter. Such a meeting shall be convened as soon as it is clear that the Chair position will become vacant, but not more than 11 months prior to the time the vacancy will occur. The Dean of the College shall ensure that the department faculty are fully cognizant of the applicable procedures. In instances in which it is known in the previous academic year that a Chair’s position will become vacant, the meeting shall be held before November 1st of the previous academic year.
- B. The probationary and tenured faculty shall set the recommended term for the Chair. Normally the term shall be three years, unless a recommendation for some other term is made.
- C. The Dean of the College or the Dean’s designee shall be responsible for administering the election in cooperation with the Department’s election liaison chosen by the department faculty. The election liaison shall be a tenured or probationary faculty member. Neither the designee nor the Department’s election liaison shall be candidates for election to the position of Chair.

D. Nominations and Eligibility

1. The department faculty may nominate a tenured or tenure track faculty member, including himself or herself, for Chair. Such candidates shall normally hold the rank of tenured Associate Professor or Professor in the Department.
2. A Department Chair shall be eligible for reelection for additional terms unless the Department has specified otherwise in the departmental constitution or bylaws.
3. Any enfranchised member of the Department who wishes an outside search to be conducted may nominate an unspecified off-campus candidate, provided there is an available position. If the unnamed candidate wins, a search shall be initiated immediately. The selection of an off-campus candidate must conform to UPS 210.001, "Recruitment of Faculty."
4. A nomination is not valid unless the person nominated indicates in writing a willingness to serve in the position if elected.

E. Election Procedures

1. Nominees shall provide the following to the person administering the election:
 - a. Curriculum vitae.
 - b. A candidate statement of no more than one page that includes the nominee's vision and goals for the Department for the next three years as well as their qualifications to be Chair.
 - c. Department faculty may ask candidates to orally present their vision and goals to the Department and/or take questions from department faculty.
2. Enfranchisement and Verification
 - a. No person separated from the University shall be enfranchised to vote.
 - b. All probationary, tenured and full-time temporary faculty shall have one vote.
 - c. All part-time temporary faculty shall have a vote proportionate to the total number of weighted teaching units assigned in the current and previous semester divided by 30 rounded up to the nearest tenth.
 - d. The list of voters, including the weighting of their vote, shall be verified by the Dean or their designee and the Department election liaison.
3. The person responsible for administering the election shall distribute the curriculum vitae and candidate statement of each nominee to all individuals enfranchised to vote in the election at least one week prior to the opening of the election.
4. Elections shall be carried out electronically via secret ballot using a system selected by the Provost that maintains the anonymity and confidentiality of the electorate. Elections shall be carried out no more than six weeks after nominations are complete. The election shall be open for a period of at least one week and at most two weeks.

5. Reporting the Recommendation of the Department Faculty (Election Results).
 - a. The Dean or designee responsible for administering the election and the Department election liaison shall report the election results to the Department.

F. Recommendations

1. The Dean of the College shall provide a written recommendation that includes the results of the election, the curriculum vitae, and candidate statement of each of the candidates to the Provost. The vote of the department faculty should be more heavily considered as it expresses the preference of the Department. If needed, the Dean of the College may ask for additional information from or consultation with the department faculty, staff and/or students to complete their recommendation.
2. The Provost shall then make a recommendation to the President.

- G. If the department faculty fail to provide a recommendation by April 15th, the Dean may appoint an Acting Chair for not more than six months. When an off-campus candidate is to be selected, the President or designee, in consultation with the Department, shall extend the time limit as appropriate.

H. Appointment of the Department Chair by President or President's Designee

1. When selecting the Chair, the President or designee shall take into consideration the votes cast by the department faculty and the recommendations of the Dean of the College and the Provost. Department preferences can be ignored only for the most compelling reasons.
2. The President or designee shall inform the Dean and Department whom he or she has appointed as the Department's Chair and explain the rationale for the appointment.

III. Unexpected Vacancies and Leaves

- A. When a Department Chair position becomes vacant unexpectedly and the Department has not recommended a new Chair, the Dean of the College shall, after consultation with the department faculty, appoint an Acting Chair. An Acting Chair so appointed shall serve for no longer than 12 months.
- B. If a Department Chair applies for leave during the term of office, the Dean of the College shall ask the department faculty for a recommendation on whether the vacancy should be regarded as temporary or permanent. If the vacancy is to be considered temporary because the incumbent Chair will return to duty, the procedure for choosing an Acting Chair shall be the same as that for choosing a regular Chair. An Acting Chair chosen in this way shall serve for not more than 12 months.

IV. Recall of a Department Chair

- A. When there are indications that a Chair does not have the confidence of their department faculty, the Dean of the College shall investigate. If substantial evidence of lack of confidence is found, the Dean of the College shall conduct a referendum to recall the Chair.
 - B. Such a referendum shall also be carried out if requested in a petition signed by a majority of the tenured and probationary faculty of the Department.
 - C. Voting shall be carried out electronically using a system selected by the Provost that maintains the anonymity and confidentiality of the electorate, and votes shall be weighted according to section II.E.2 of this document.
 - D. The results of such referenda shall be reported to the Department. If a majority of those voting call for the selection of a new Chair, the Dean shall proceed according to the procedure specified in Section II. No recall proposal may be made during the first semester of a Chair's term.
- V. A Department may decide whether or not to appoint a Vice-Chair. If it decides to do so, it may give the power to appoint a Vice-Chair to its Chair, or may adopt another method of selection. The responsibilities of the Vice-Chair shall be assigned by the Chair or by the Department. The term of a Vice-Chair shall not continue beyond the term of the Chair. No Vice-Chair shall succeed to the Chair position solely by virtue of being Vice-Chair.

Source: Faculty Affairs Committee

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