

NUMBER: ACAF 1.24
SECTION: Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Selection of Department Chairs

DATE: February 1, 1995

LATEST REVISION: January 17, 2001

Policy for: All Campuses
Procedure for: All Campuses
Authorized by: Jerome D. Odom
Issued by: Provost's Office

I. Policy

A. The position of department chair will be filled by an internal, external, or full search. The scope of the search will be determined by the dean in consultation with the chief academic officer of the campus (i.e, the Provost on the Columbia and regional campuses; the vice chancellor for academic affairs on each of the four-year campuses).

B. The selection of the department chair will be accomplished through the joint action of the faculty and the administration. Faculty participation in the selection is restricted to regular, full-time department members who hold continuing appointments as assistant professor, associate professor, or professor and who have not been officially notified of non-reappointment or of a final, unfavorable decision on tenure. Full-time instructors may be eligible to participate if such participation is recommended by the majority of the departmental faculty eligible to vote and is approved by the dean.

II. Procedure

A. Terms of Appointment

1. The term of appointment for a department chair will be on a nine-month or an eleven-month annual basis for three, four, or five years as set by the dean with the advice of the departmental faculty and the approval of the chief academic officer of the campus. All individuals in administrative positions serve as administrators at the pleasure of the appointing authority.
2. After completing a term, a chair may be reappointed by the dean, who will consult the departmental faculty and secure the approval of the chief academic officer of the campus. Reappointment beyond the second term will only rarely be considered appropriate.

3. The appointment of a chair may be terminated at any time by the dean after consultation with the faculty of the department and with the approval of the chief academic officer of the campus and the President (or chancellor on each of the four-year campuses).

B. Selection

1. When a vacancy occurs in the position of department chair, the dean of the college or school shall inform the faculty of the department in writing and shall invite the faculty to elect up to three persons to serve on a search committee.
2. The dean shall appoint up to two additional persons, one of whom shall serve as chair of the search committee and at least one of whom shall be a member of the faculty of another department or academic unit.
3. If there is to be an external or full search, the committee shall place a notice of the vacancy in an appropriate professional journal or personnel newsletter, and in one general publication such as the Chronicle of Higher Education.
4. The search committee shall collect vitae and references for all candidates and after consulting with the dean shall arrange for interviews with the most promising candidates. The number of external candidates shall not exceed four, except with the specific approval of the chief academic officer of the campus.
5. When the interviews have been completed, the search committee shall send a ballot containing the names of all active candidates to all voting members of the departmental faculty.
6. Faculty shall rate each candidate as acceptable or unacceptable and rank acceptable candidates in order of preference. The committee shall tabulate the votes and report the results to the faculty.
 - a. If two or more candidates are acceptable to a majority of the participating faculty, the committee shall forward their names, along with all letters of recommendation and other materials received, to the dean.
 - b. If there are not at least two acceptable candidates, the dean shall have the option of requesting a full report on all candidates or instructing the committee to resume the search.
7. The dean shall recommend an appointment and forward all materials to the chief academic officer of the campus, and to the President (or chancellor on each of the four-year campuses). The President (or chancellor on each of the four-year campuses) will either approve the appointment, ask the dean to submit additional names, or direct the dean to dissolve the search committee and begin the search process again.

- C. In the case of new departments which have no faculty or departments with fewer than five full-time faculty members, the search procedure may be modified by the dean to fit the circumstances. The dean will prepare a written statement of the procedure to be followed for the approval of the chief academic officer of the campus.

III. Reason for Latest Revision

The latest revision the term of appointment for department chairs.