

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION</b> ACAF Academic Affairs		<b>POLICY NUMBER</b> ACAF 1.01
<b>POLICY TITLE</b> Recruitment and Appointment of Academic Administrators		
<b>SCOPE OF POLICY</b> USC System		<b>DATE OF REVISION</b> February 10, 2022
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b> Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost		<b>ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE</b> Office of the Provost

## **PURPOSE**

This policy addresses the recruitment, evaluation, appointment, and reappointment of academic administrators.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Academic Administrative Position** – any leadership position traditionally held by a faculty member

**Academic Administrator** – faculty member who is concurrently serving in an academic administrative position

**Academic Unit** – The academic unit is any campus, college/school, department, program, center, or institute within a larger academic unit or reporting to the institutional chief academic officer

**Academic Dean** – the chief academic administrator of the college, school and as such is responsible for the personnel and program administration of that unit and reports directly to and serves at the pleasure of the provost. The dean reviews curricula and programs in the school or college, appoints chairs of departments and assigns their duties, supervises the use of funds, space, and equipment allotted to the academic unit, and supervises the preparation of the budget of the division. The dean is the presiding officer of the faculty of the school or college. Deans of colleges or schools that are not departmentalized also have the duties and responsibilities of department chairs (see below).

**Academic Vice President** - a vice president position filled by a faculty member and typically reporting to the president

**Campus Dean** The deans of the four regional Palmetto College campuses of the University of South Carolina system report to the chancellor of Palmetto College and are the chief executive officers of their campuses. The deans are responsible for the academic, administrative, fiscal, athletic, physical plant and student affairs of their institutions and serve as the primary liaison between their regional campus and USC Columbia, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, and the South Carolina General Assembly. The deans of the regional Palmetto Colleges serve at the pleasure of the chancellor of Palmetto College.

**Chief Academic Officer** - the individual who directs and oversees the academic program of a university or college

**Department Chair/School Director** - The department chair or school director has a responsibility to departmental faculty matters relating to teaching, research, and service and is also responsible to the dean of the college and other officers of the university for implementing university policies as they apply to the affairs of the department or school. The department chair or school director is responsible for the general conduct of affairs and reports to the dean of the college or school. The department chair or school director is responsible for appointments and non-reappointments, promotions, tenure (except as delegated to the faculty in the *Faculty Manual*), resource allocations, and all other matters relative to the successful implementation of the department's educational and scholarly objectives in accordance with university policies. The department chair or school director is responsible for assisting students with academic concerns and for communicating university policy and processes to faculty. The department chair or school director will consult with and seek the advice of appropriate committees of the faculty with respect to educational and research policy and departmental governance.

**Hiring Authority** - the individual who decides which candidate to hire and who is responsible for ensuring a fair and open search for a particular faculty position in accordance with this and other university policies.

**University Leadership Position** – within this policy, an academic administrative position reporting to the president, any system chancellor, vice president or vice chancellor, or a regional Palmetto College dean.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The University of South Carolina believes the presence of a strong group of academic administrators is necessary to achieve academic excellence and is committed to the recruitment, retention and promotion of outstanding academic administrators at all levels. To that end, the hiring practices adopted by the university are designed to seek out and welcome quality to its administrative ranks through internal and external search processes that are conducted in a fair and open manner.

### **A. Academic Leadership Responsibility: Approvals and Required Procedures**

1. The hiring authority must be identified prior to the initiation of recruitment for the vacant position and named in the official search record. For academic administrator positions, the hiring authority is the supervisor of record and/or the individual who will make the final hiring decision. The approval of the hiring authority is required at each stage of the search process although this responsibility may be delegated in writing. All individuals in academic administrative positions serve at the pleasure of the hiring authority.

The president grants the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost oversight of all academic administrator searches conducted for USC Columbia for positions that do not report directly to the president. The same oversight is granted to the chancellors of Palmetto College and the comprehensive universities.

### **2. University and Academic Unit Leadership Positions**

A documented search process is required for non-interim appointment to any academic administrative position whether the search is internal or external. The hiring authority will determine the scope and structure of the search process prior to the initiation of a search, in consultation with the next highest administrative office when appropriate. The

titles of some of these academic administrative positions may also be used for positions filled by classified or unclassified non-academic employees; for these non-academic administrative positions, search procedures follow the appropriate Human Resources policies and procedures.

- a. At USC Columbia, these academic administrative positions include:
  - i. Reporting to the president
    - executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
    - academic vice president
  - ii. Reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or an academic vice president
    - associate provost, or provost title prefixed by one or more of the words assistant, associate, deputy, senior and vice
    - vice president reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
    - assistant or associate vice president of a unit reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or to an academic vice president
    - academic dean
    - institute/center director reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs provost or to a vice president reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or to an academic vice president
  - iii. Reporting to an academic dean
    - associate dean, or dean title prefixed by one or more of the words assistant, associate, executive, senior and vice
    - academic department chair
    - academic division head
    - department chair
    - school director
    - academic program director

- institute/center director reporting to a dean
- b. At the comprehensive universities, these positions include:
- chancellor
  - vice chancellor, or chancellor title prefixed by one or more of the words executive, senior, and vice

All other academic administrative positions at the comprehensive universities are appointed using campus-specific policies and procedures in the respective *Faculty Manuals*.

- c. For Palmetto College s, these positions include:

- chancellor
- vice chancellor
- assistant vice provost, or provost title prefixed by one or more of the words assistant, associate, senior and vice
- Regional Palmetto college campus dean

All other academic administrative positions on the regional Palmetto College campuses are appointed using campus-specific policies and procedures in the Palmetto College Campuses *Faculty Manual*.

### 3. Required Approvals

In addition to the approval of the hiring authority, the following levels of approval are required prior to extending an offer of employment for an academic administrative position. These required approvals apply to both external and internal searches.

- a. ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track, and Professional-Track Faculty provides additional required approvals for faculty appointment at the rank of professor and/or with tenure.
- b. USC System

The approval of the president is required prior to permanent or interim appointment to the following positions:

- executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
- chancellor
- academic vice president

- c. USC Columbia

- i. The approval of the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost is required prior to permanent or interim appointment to the following positions reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
    - vice president reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
    - associate provost or provost title prefixed by one or more of the words assistant, associate, deputy, senior and vice
    - academic dean
    - institute/center director reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or to a vice president reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
  - ii. The approval of the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost is required prior to permanent or interim appointment to the following positions reporting to an academic dean
    - assistant or associate dean
    - academic division head
    - department chair within a college
    - school director within a college
    - academic program director
    - institute/center director reporting to a dean
  - ii. The approval of the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost and the appropriate vice president is required prior to appointment of an assistant or associate vice president if the vice president reports to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost.
  - iii. The approval of the president and executive vice president for academic affairs and provost is required prior to appointment of an assistant or associate vice president if the vice president is an academic vice president.
- d. Comprehensive Universities

The approval of the president and the chancellor is required prior to the permanent or interim appointment of a senior or executive vice chancellor at a comprehensive university.

e. Regional Palmetto Colleges

The approval of the president and the chancellor is required prior to the permanent or interim appointment of a regional Palmetto College dean. Approval of the chancellor and campus dean is required prior to the permanent or interim appointment of an associate or assistant dean at any regional Palmetto Colleges.

4. Exceptions

In very unusual circumstances, the president, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost or chancellor may grant exceptions to this policy for their areas of responsibility,

B. Equal Employment Opportunity in Hiring Practices

Academic administrators, including the president, executive vice president for academic affairs and provost, senior vice provosts, vice provosts, vice presidents, chancellors, and vice chancellors are responsible for ensuring that policies, procedures, and practices in academic units are consistent and in compliance with federal and state equal employment opportunity and educational access/opportunity laws, rules and regulations. These administrators hold their subordinate administrators responsible for implementing these policies and procedures for academic administrator searches at all levels of the university.

1. It is the policy of the University of South Carolina to recruit, hire, train, promote, tenure, and otherwise make educational and personnel decisions without regard to those protected classes identified in [CR 1.00 Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment & Sexual Misconduct](#).
2. All searches must be conducted in a fair and open manner, with documented efforts to develop the strongest pool possible. All applicants must be equitably evaluated.

C. Freedom of Information Act

Search committees at the university fall within the definition of a "public body" found in the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Therefore, all search committees must operate within the requirements of FOIA. See also policy [UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information](#).

**PROCEDURES**

The following details the procedures for the recruitment and appointment of academic administrative positions to be filled by tenured, pre-tenure and professional-track faculty.

A. Interim Appointments

The hiring authority may offer an interim appointment for up to two years to a current faculty member without a search process. The president, chancellor, or provost should be notified as appropriate, but prior approval is not required. The appointment letter must include responsibilities, start and anticipated end date, and any compensation or other

accommodation associated with the interim appointment. If no individual is appointed to the permanent position by the end of a two-year interim appointment, the hiring authority must either seek endorsement of the unit faculty to extend the interim appointment or appoint a new interim administrator.

## B. Search Committee Composition

Search committees must be representative of the university community whenever possible and practical. The proportion of tenured, pre-tenure, and professional-track faculty members will be determined by the hiring authority and should reflect the mission of the unit and the relative proportions of the faculty within the unit.

The hiring authority or their designee will select the search committee members, in consultation with departmental or unit faculty, and appoint a chair of the committee. When deemed appropriate by the hiring authority or specified in the unit bylaws, some or all committee members may be elected by the faculty and/or staff of the unit.

1. For deans at USC Columbia, please see Procedures section D below.
2. For academic department chair and school director searches at USC Columbia, please see Procedures section E below.
3. For other academic administrator position searches at USC Columbia, the majority of the search committee members will be regular full-time employees who hold continuing appointments.

## C. Internal Searches

Internal searches for academic administrative positions are conducted by a search committee constituted by the hiring authority.

1. The hiring authority shall notify all appropriate constituents of the position announcement and instruct them how to apply or make a nomination. The hiring authority should also advertise the position internally. Units conducting internal searches must consider all applicants fairly using the process outlined in this policy.
2. The hiring authority may consider only applicants with the necessary qualifications as defined in the position announcement. At least two persons should be considered by the hiring authority unless only one has the necessary qualifications, or only one qualified person applies for the position.
3. The university's commitment to affirmative action and equal opportunity should be conveyed to all participants in internal search processes including search committee members and potential candidates.
4. Appointments to academic administrative positions using internal searches must be approved by the hiring authority along with other approvals as indicated in policy section A.3 above. The hiring authority must submit a summary of the search to the executive

vice president for academic affairs and provost or appropriate academic administrator as identified in policy section A.3 above.

The summary must include at a minimum:

- a list of the individuals/groups involved in evaluating the applicants;
- a description of the size and composition of the applicant pool;
- a record of the numeric vote of the department or unit (if applicable); and
- a description of the candidate of choice including a summary of the candidate's experience and credentials.

#### B. External searches

External searches for academic administrative positions are conducted by a search committee constituted by the hiring authority. External searches may be supported by an external search firm at the discretion of the hiring authority. The search process should follow the same procedures detailed in ACAF 1.00 for recruitment of faculty, including advertisement, equal opportunity/affirmative action consideration, campus interview and appointment process.

#### C. Additional guidance for selection of dean

1. The chief academic officer may at their discretion determine whether to conduct a national search or to solicit nominations from the college's faculty and other academic administrators for dean. An internal or external search will be conducted in accordance with standard university hiring procedures.
2. The chief academic officer will seek the participation of the faculty of the college through the search committee and the interview process.
3. Faculty participation in the selection follows unit voting standards; all full-time faculty are allowed to participate fully unless otherwise indicated in the unit bylaws or similar unit policy.
4. Search Process
  - a. When a vacancy occurs in the position of dean, the chief academic officer shall notify the faculty of the college. .
  - b. The chief academic officer shall appoint the chair, typically an academic dean, and other members of the search committee.
  - c. If there is to be an external search, the committee shall place a notice of the vacancy in appropriate professional journals or personnel newsletters, and in one general publication such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
  - d. The search committee shall collect vitae and references for all candidates and after consulting with the chief academic officer 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.
  - e. When the interviews have been completed, the search committee shall solicit input from faculty and other individuals who interacted with the candidates. The committee will



aggregate this information and provide recommendations to the chief academic officer of those candidates that are acceptable for the position.

5. The chief academic officer will either appoint a candidate of choice, ask the committee to submit additional names, or dissolve the search committee and begin the search process again.

#### D. Additional guidance for selection of department chair/school director positions

1. The dean may at their discretion determine whether to conduct a national search or to solicit nominations from the department's faculty for department chair or school director. An internal or external search will be conducted in accordance with standard university hiring procedures.
2. The dean will seek the participation and vote of the faculty of the department.
3. Faculty participation in the selection follows unit voting standards; all full-time faculty are allowed to participate fully unless otherwise indicated in the unit bylaws or similar unit policy.

In the case of a new department with no faculty or a department with fewer than five full-time faculty members, the search procedure may be modified by the dean in consultation with Office of the Provost. In these cases, the dean will prepare a written statement of the procedure to be followed for approval by the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost.

#### 4. Search Process

- f. When a vacancy occurs in the position of department chair or school director, the dean of the college or school shall notify the faculty of the department or school and shall invite the faculty to elect up to three persons to serve on a search committee. The dean shall indicate the proportion of tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty on the search committee.
- g. 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.
- h. If there is to be an external search, the committee shall place a notice of the vacancy in appropriate professional journals or personnel newsletters, and in one general publication such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- i. 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 dean.
- j. 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.

- k. 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 those candidates rated as acceptable 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.
- 5. The dean will either appoint a candidate of choice, ask the committee to submit additional names, or dissolve the search committee and begin the search process again.

E. Appointment and Reappointment of department chair/school directors and associate/assistant deans

- 1. The term of appointment for a department chair, school director or associate/assistant dean will be for three, four, or five years as set by the dean with the advice of the faculty.
- 2. A department chair, school director or associate/assistant dean will be evaluated in that position at least every five years, at the end of the term if appointed for a specific term of office, or at the dean's discretion. Following the evaluation, the dean may reappoint the administrator after consultation with the faculty and after consultation with the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost. Reappointment is normally for one term, with any additional terms being the rare exception.

In addition to a summative evaluation required prior to reappointment, academic administrators are encouraged to have a formative evaluation such as the 360 evaluation administered through the Division of Human Resources. This evaluation should be done mid-appointment for professional development, not as part of a reappointment decision.

- 3. All individuals in administrative positions serve at the pleasure of the hiring authority. The appointment of an administrator reporting to the dean may be terminated at any time by the dean after consultation with the faculty and with the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost.

F. Employees Holding Both Administrative and Faculty Titles

When a person originally appointed to a faculty position is assigned administrative duties or appointed to an administrative position, the faculty appointment determines the primary job title, and the administrative appointment is the secondary job title. If the person is pre-tenure, the administrative assignment does not preclude the running of the probationary period unless an extension of the probationary period is obtained pursuant to ACAF 1.31 Extension of Faculty Tenure-Track Probationary Period and Scheduled Post-Tenure Review.. See also USC Columbia Faculty Manual, Section 2.

An individual is recruited to an administrative position, the faculty title is concurrently awarded, in accordance with their level of education, experience, and accomplishments. In

that case, the appropriate approval steps for a faculty hire at that level must also be followed.

1. The faculty title must be one of the titles listed in university policy ACAF 1.06 Academic Titles for Faculty and Unclassified Academic Staff, and the individual must meet the eligibility criteria for the title as outlined in the policy.
2. The inclusion of an academic title in an appointment obligates the individual to follow the same rules and procedures as faculty of similar rank or title in the department or college (i.e., tenure and promotion procedures, probationary periods, etc.) This should be stated in the offer letter.
3. Awards of faculty rank and tenure must be approved prior to the offer of employment following the procedures described in ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Professional-Track Faculty.
4. Salaries for administrative employees with faculty rank should be determined in accordance with Procedure Section I below. Appointment letters must explicitly define the basis for the initial salary, as well as the conversion that will be used in the future if change to a different appointment basis is made (i.e., twelve-month to nine-month, salary adjustment outside of base pay, etc.).

#### G. Terms of Appointment

Appointments to academic administrative positions are normally for limited terms of three to five years, as stated in the offer letter at the time of hire.

The following positions will normally be appointed on a twelve-month basis:

- executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
- associate provost or provost title prefixed by one or more of the words assistant, associate, deputy, senior and vice
- vice president reporting to executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
- academic vice president
- chancellor
- executive or senior vice chancellor
- academic dean
- regional Palmetto College dean
- assistant or associate vice president of a unit reporting to the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost
- other university leadership positions

The following positions may be appointed on a nine month or twelve month basis, as determined by the hiring authority:

- assistant or associate dean
- department chair
- school director within a college
- institute/center director
- academic program director

- academic division head
- The hiring authority is encouraged to consider the option of maintaining a nine-month appointment with a written commitment to partial summer compensation, as appropriate to the position.

#### H. Annual and Comprehensive Reviews

All positions listed in policy section A.2 of this policy should be reviewed annually by the hiring authority or designate. Deans must complete a comprehensive review at least every five years, as described in ACAF 1.02. Assistant/Associate Deans, department chairs and school directors must have a comprehensive review with input by unit faculty at least every five years and prior to reappointment. Comprehensive reviews for vice provosts, and similar positions are encouraged at the discretion of the hiring authority.

#### I. Salary Basis Conversion for Unclassified Administrators with Faculty Rank

The initial salary and pay basis for an academic administrator with faculty rank will be stated in the offer letter as well as the conversion that will be used in the future if a change to a different pay basis (i.e., twelve month to nine month, etc.) is made.

##### 1. Conversion from Nine-Month Base Salary

If a nine-month faculty member is selected for an administrative appointment at a different pay basis, the salary will be converted using the following formula: Nine-month base salary \* (# of months in new basis) / 9.

##### 2. Conversion to Nine-Month Base

If an administrative employee with faculty rank is initially hired on a pay basis other than nine months and is returning to a nine-month basis, the new salary will be determined using the reverse ratio with which their salary was initially determined or using the following formula: Current base salary \* 9 / (# of months in current basis).

##### 3. Salary Adjustments Outside of Base Pay

Administrative salary adjustments, if any, are for the administrative duties of the position and are not included in the base salary prior to conversion. The use of salary adjustments is not required, nor is a given level of adjustment mandatory. Salary adjustments must be approved in advance by the USC Division of Human Resources. The offer letter should clearly state the amount of the salary adjustment, the conditions for receiving it, and the duration of the adjustment. When the administrative duties are no longer part of the job, the hiring authority will submit the appropriate request to have the salary adjustment removed.

#### J. Required Documentation

All faculty appointments must meet the guidelines below before the hiring process is completed.

1. Non-U.S. Citizens: If the proposed offer of employment will be to a known non U.S. citizen, the Office of International Scholars (OIS) must be contacted prior to extending a verbal or written offer to ensure adherence to all federal and state regulations regarding

the hiring of non-U.S. citizens.

2. Job Reference, Background and Credit Checks: A job reference and criminal background check must be conducted for the final candidate for an academic administrative position at any level. A credit check is also required for officers of the university, senior administrative personnel and staff handling university funds.
  - a. An acknowledgement and authorization for the background check to be conducted must be signed by the final candidate and sent to the Division of Human Resources prior to the completion of the final hiring documents. All academic administrative hires are contingent upon satisfactory results from the job reference check, criminal background check and credit check (if applicable). See university policy HR 1.90 Background Screenings and Professional References.
3.
  - a. Letters of Reference: All academic administrative appointments from external searches require three letters of reference. The letters must be received by the hiring authority before the job offer is made.
4. Written acceptance: The final candidate's signed acceptance of the offer of employment must be received by the hiring authority prior to the completion of the final hiring documents or date of employment.
5. The Electronic Verification of Employment Eligibility (E-Verify): Federal Law requires that all employers verify the identity and employment eligibility of all new employees (including U.S. citizens) within three days of hire. Employers are required to complete a Form I-9, and employees must provide employers with documents establishing both identity and eligibility to work in the United States.

#### K. Maintenance of Official Search File

The office of the hiring authority or its designee has responsibility for the maintenance of the official search file for each position, including all materials submitted by applicants, documentation of advertisement when applicable, all search committee documents including meeting minutes when applicable, a summary of the internal search process and participants when applicable, and any other documents related to the search. This file should be maintained for three years. In cases where a search process included known non U.S. citizens as applicants, the file should be maintained for 6.5 years.

#### **RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES**

These practices are in compliance with all pertinent state and federal laws that require adherence to equal opportunity and affirmative action provisions, and with all requirements of the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education (CHE) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Policies addressing the recruitment and appointment of non-administrative, tenured, tenure-track or non-tenure-track faculty positions, other administrators and classified staff can be found on the web at [www.sc.edu/policies](http://www.sc.edu/policies).

[USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#)  
[USC Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Manual](#)  
[USC Aiken Faculty Manual](#)  
[USC Beaufort Faculty Manual](#)  
[USC Upstate Faculty Manual](#)  
[ACAF 1.00 Recruitment and Appointment of Tenured, Tenure-Track and Professional-Track Faculty](#)  
[CR 1.00 Policy Against Discrimination Harassment & Sexual Misconduct](#)  
[CR 2.00 Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action](#)  
[HR 1.24 Appointment, Transfer, Promotion of Classified, Research Grant, Time- Limited or Unclassified Staff Employees](#)  
[HR 1.90 Job Background Screenings and Professional References](#)  
[UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy](#)

#### **HISTORY OF REVISIONS**

<b>DATE OF REVISION</b>	<b>REASON FOR REVISION</b>
February 1, 1995	New policy
January 17, 2001	Clarified the term of appointment for certain administrative positions.
August 27, 2010	Consolidates University Policies ACAF 1.01, ACAF 1.10, ACAF 1.12, and ACAF 1.27 into one updated policy, policy requisites, and recommended or prescribed procedures for the recruitment and appointment of senior officers and academic administrative hires
September 14, 2012	Changed the time required for the retention of search and hiring records from five years to three years. Also added language requiring an annual review for all academic administrative positions
November 11, 2014	Update departmental name changes and clarify procedures for hiring.
February 16, 2016	Non-substantive revision.
October 31, 2016	Policy revised to update titles.
February 10, 2022	Reformatted policy, combining ACAF 1.01 and ACAF 1.24. Clarified hiring authority and required approvals by administrative title. Expanded evaluation of academic administrators.