

UCCS GUIDELINES ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

Approved April 2023

These Guidelines are approved by the UCCS Provost in coordination with Faculty Assembly Executive committee, Faculty Assembly Personnel and Benefits, and Faculty Assembly Education Policy and University Standards and Deans.

It is the intention of the Provost that these Guidelines are followed by all colleges. The procedures describe how these guidelines are to be enacted.

I. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the responsibilities, appointment procedures, terms of appointment, evaluation, orientation, and compensation for department chairs. The term “chair” and “department chair” as used here include other titles such as “director” or “team lead” when such titles are used for faculty who are in administrative roles where they are leading an academic unit which houses multiple faculty and are involved in the supervision and evaluation of faculty. This is an academic affairs guidelines document that holds for all academic affairs units.

II. PROCEDURES

A. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair

Regent Policy 4.A.1 delegates the development of the working structure of a department to the department in consultation with the appropriate dean. Each college and school has its own mechanism in place to select the department chair and to define the specific roles and responsibilities. In all instances, it is recognized that the department chair is first and foremost a member of the faculty, a teacher and scholar of the highest order, contributing to the academic and scholarly missions of the department. As chair, the faculty member is also the designated administrative leader of the department and the leader of the faculty, staff, and students who comprise the department.

1. Leader of the Department

- a. The chair has the responsibility for providing leadership toward the achievement of the highest possible level of excellence in the teaching, research/creative work, and leadership and service activities of the department. The chair is expected to articulate the goals of the department, both within and outside the department, to articulate the department's actions or requests in pursuit of these aims, and to maintain a climate that is collegial, that respects diversity, that treats faculty, staff and learners fairly and supports creativity and innovation. The chair has the

responsibility to inform the department of the stances and actions of the dean and other administrators that might affect the department.

- b. As the chief administrator for the department, the chair is the essential link between the administration and the department in representing departmental views on matters of academic affairs and academic and research ethics.
- c. The chair, in cooperation with the dean, is responsible for the recruitment, selection, onboarding, development, and evaluation of both the academic and the staff personnel of the department. In consultation with colleagues, and in compliance with the appropriate departmental, college, and campus procedures, the chair recommends appointments, promotion, merit increases, and terminations. The chair has the explicit responsibility to ensure that all faculty members (tenured, tenure track, instructional, research, and clinical faculty) are aware of the departmental, college, and campus criteria prescribed for appointment, reappointment, promotion, tenure, post-tenure review, and annual merit review, and to make appraisals and recommendations in accordance with the procedures and principles stated in department, school/college, or campus policy, including the [Laws and Policies of the Regents; APS 1022 - Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review; and APS 5008 Faculty Performance Evaluation](#). Department chairs/unit heads have the responsibility in cooperation with the dean to assist any faculty member who requests a mentor at any point during their career progression to locate an appropriate mentor.
- d. The chair, to the extent needed in their role as a supervisor, shall be familiar with the state personnel system and system, campus, and college HR policies, and ensure that staff members are aware of departmental expectations and of state personnel system or campus/college/department criteria for appointment, reappointment, job classification, and promotion.
- e. The chair should be receptive to questions, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from members of the department, both academic personnel and staff, and from students. The chair has the responsibility to take appropriate action in compliance with, and to the extent permitted by, campus policy.
- f. The chair should be attentive to incorporating core values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in interpersonal and organizational communication, curriculum oversight, departmental activities, accessibility, hiring practices, retention and promotion progress, and the creation, revision, and implementation of departmental policies and processes.

2. Administrator of the Department

Although special assignments may be added from time to time, and the dean may specify additional duties, the chair, as the head administrator of the department, has the following responsibilities:

- a. Workload assignments of teaching and other duties within the department consistent with appropriate FTE levels and college/school workload expectations, recognizing that the appropriate mix of teaching, research/creative work, scholarship, professional practice, clinical work and leadership and service may differ from person to person, and from time to time in the career of an individual.
- b. In cooperation with the college and Office of the Registrar, preparation of the schedule of courses including modes of delivery and times and places (for departmentally controlled spaces) for class meetings.
- c. Arrangement and assignment of duty for mentoring of graduate and undergraduate students and for training and supervision of teaching assistants and other student teachers and teacher aides.
- d. Responsible, ethical, and fiscally sound management of departmental resources including preparation of the proposed budget and administration of the financial affairs of the department, in strict accordance with dollar and FTE allocations and in accord with college and University rules and procedures.
- e. Recommendation of sabbatical assignments and leaves of absence to the dean, and confirmation that scheduling and proposed coverage of classes is consistent with departmental needs.
- f. Prompt reporting of the resignation or death of any member of the department (faculty, staff, or student) to the dean's office.
- g. Custody and authorized use of University property charged to the department, and assignment of departmentally controlled space and facilities to authorized activities in accordance with University policy and campus rules and regulations.
- h. Review and approval of sponsored program proposals, technology control plans, any petitions for restricted party research, contract grant approvals, and any other necessary sponsored program approvals. Chairs also must approve any PI eligibility requests. Chairs should be familiar with sponsored program responsibilities as outlined in UCCS Campus Policy 900-001.
- i. Departmental observance of proper health and safety regulations, in coordination with the campus environmental health and safety officer.
- j. Maintenance, in cooperation with the college, of departmental records and faculty and staff personnel files, and preparation of reports in accordance with the University and college procedures.
- k. Reporting on faculty compliance with the "one-sixth" rule ([Regent Policy 5.C.4](#)) and other policies specific to the college or school regarding outside consulting and other professional activities.

- l. Ensuring all required faculty and staff employees complete an annual conflict of interest disclosure. Assisting the dean, or appropriate administrators, in ensuring compliance with all existing conflict of interest management plans.
- m. Reporting to the dean, or appropriate administrators, whenever the problem cannot be expeditiously resolved at the departmental level, any failure of an academic or staff member of the department to carry out responsibilities, and recommending appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action.

While assuming the responsibilities listed above, the chair is expected to seek the advice of departmental faculty colleagues in a systematic way, to provide for the conduct of department affairs in an orderly manner through department meetings and the appointment of appropriate committees, and to keep department members informed of their actions in a timely manner. The chair is also expected to seek student advice on matters of concern to students enrolled in the department's programs. In large departments, the chair may be assisted by an assistant/associate/vice chair or other colleagues in carrying out their responsibilities.

B. Appointment

1. Criteria

The appointment of department chairs should be based on the following criteria:

- a. Ability to provide intellectual leadership in the development of departmental faculty and programs;
- b. Ability to provide administrative leadership in the effective functioning of the department; and
- c. Personal skills to permit effective interactions with faculty, administrators, and staff within the college and campus structure.

2. Procedures:

- a. Prior to initiating search and nomination procedures for a department chair, the faculty of the department should meet with the dean of the school or college to discuss the needs and expectations of the department as they relate to the appointment of a new chair, the role of the chair, and the type of search (i.e., internal or external) that will most likely assure that an appropriate candidate is recommended, and to discuss any budgetary considerations related to the search for and appointment of a new chair.
- b. A search and nominating process will be carried out by the faculty of the department in accordance with department procedures. The faculty will subsequently submit its recommendation to the dean.

- c. If the dean does not concur with the department faculty's recommendation, the dean will meet with the department faculty to discuss the reasons for disagreement.
- d. The campus chancellor has ultimate appointment authority for all department chairs. This authority may be delegated to the provost or dean.
- e. It will be the responsibility of the deans to assure that recruitment and appointment procedures for department chairs reflect the University's commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination, as articulated in [Regent Law](#) Article 8 and [Regent Policy 10](#).

In order to achieve this objective, efforts should be made to provide experience to diverse groups consistent with the university's policies on equal opportunity and non-discrimination that will prepare them for these positions.

3. Term of Appointment

- a. Consistent with Colorado state law, the position of chair is an at-will administrative position.

C. Evaluation

- 1. All department chairs will undergo annual performance evaluations of their chair duties by the dean of the college or school. This may be included in their faculty annual evaluation or may be a separate evaluation depending on the college/school process.

D. Orientation

- 1. For all new department chairs, each dean will develop an orientation process within the college or school. The orientation should provide information that will enable the department chair to function more effectively and efficiently. Areas that may be addressed in the orientation program include University personnel procedures for faculty, university, and classified staff, especially those relating to appointment, reappointment, tenure, and promotion; the budget and planning processes; development of new degree programs; faculty governance relationships; relationships with other offices and with the administrative hierarchy; and other areas that are relevant to the department. In consultation with the departments and the provost, each dean may consider developing other processes that will enhance the ability of the department chair to provide strong leadership. Campus orientation processes may substitute for a college/school process for areas that are addressed by a campus orientation process.

E. Compensation

- 1. Within budgetary limitations, the administration will make a commitment to provide a

level of support to department chairs (including compensation and other forms of support) that makes the job of department chair more attractive and recognizes the value of strong leadership.

2. A special stipend or other form of compensation will be provided to department chairs to recognize the important leadership role they play. The size of the stipend should be determined in the context of the size of the department, the functions of the chair, and other types of support that will be provided to the chair.