

Department Chairs

The chair is an administrative officer of the university, and the chief executive officer of an academic department/school. The chair has primary responsibility for the development and evaluation of educational and clinical programs, research, and professional service within the department, as well as recruitment, appointment, retention, and promotion of faculty. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the chair shall be a tenured full-time member in the department/school appointed by the dean after survey of the full-time faculty of the department, and with approval of the appropriate Executive Vice President (EVP).

Duties of the Department Chair

Within the context of university and college/school policy and governance structure, the chair's responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- a. Administration of university and college/school policies at the departmental level;
- b. Development of departmental short- and long-range plans and the evaluation thereof;
- c. Clarification of the role of the discipline(s) and department in the college/school and the university, and the department's relationship to external stakeholders;
- d. Development of departmental curricula;
- e. Support for effective advising;
- f. Preparation and administration of the departmental budget;
- g. Administration of the departmental office and facilities and the supervision of the departmental staff;
- h. Provision of leadership in the development of faculty in teaching, research, clinical activities (if applicable) and professional service;
- i. Evaluation of faculty performance in teaching, research, clinical activities (if applicable), and professional service, and of all departmental staff;
- j. Promotion of an effective diversity, equity, and inclusion program within the department;
- k. Recruitment, evaluation, and reappointment of faculty, and the recommendation of faculty for tenure, promotion, and merit-based salary increases;
- l. Promotion of the welfare of faculty, staff, and students;
- m. Promotion of collegiality and a culture of civility;
- n. Service as liaison with other academic and administrative units of the college/school and university, and with appropriate external agencies and partners.
- o. In addition to the regular duties of a department chair, individuals appointed as chairs of clinical departments in the School of Medicine will be expected to (a) lead departmental meetings with division Chiefs, residency directors, and clerkship directors, (b) serve on the Board of appropriate Medical Group(s), (c) ensure all quality standards and budgetary expectations are met, and (d) maintain an agreed upon clinical effort.

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Term of Service

The chair normally serves a three-year appointment. Six months before the end of the term of the chair, the dean shall invite anonymous feedback on the chair's performance from all full-time faculty of the department. Such responses shall be submitted on a survey instrument appropriate to the department, to be developed by the dean in consultation with the Promotion and Tenure Policy Committee of the Faculty Senate and with the appropriate EVP. The dean, considering the survey results, shall recommend to the appropriate EVP either (a) reappointment of the incumbent chair, (b) appointment of a new chair from within the department, or (c) appointment of a new chair to be recruited from outside the department. After the approval of the recommendation by the appropriate EVP, the dean shall make a written report to the departmental faculty, summarizing important conclusions of the evaluation and announcing the decision.

A person normally may serve no more than two consecutive terms as chair. However, if the departmental survey supports such a conclusion, the dean may reappoint a two-term chair for one additional term subject to the approval of the appropriate EVP. Appointment exceeding three consecutive terms requires the approval of the appropriate EVP and the President, and a justification to the department faculty.

Termination of a chair's appointment prior to its normal expiration date may be affected by the dean for reasonable cause, after consultation with faculty of the department and approval by the appropriate EVP.

The annual performance evaluation of all chairs is the administrative responsibility of the dean and will be conducted by the dean. The evaluation shall be based on the annual identification and review of the accomplishments of each chair's goals and objectives established in collaboration with the dean and conducted each spring prior to the salary adjustment process. Deans must solicit anonymous comments from all full-time faculty in the department or school. The evaluation results shall be discussed with the chair and reported to the appropriate EVP.

The chair does not hold tenure in the administrative office. In cases in which persons are recruited from outside the university to serve as chairs, recommendations for academic tenure effective upon initial appointment shall normally follow the established tenure review process. If time constraints preclude full employment of the regular tenure review process, academic tenure on initial appointment will be recommended by the president to the Board of Visitors if (a) the dean so recommends after consultation with tenured faculty of the department, and (b) the appropriate EVP approves.

- Approved, as revised, by the Council of Academic Deans
May 1978
Revised by the president
January 9, 1990
February 27, 2007
Reviewed; No Changes Proposed April 20, 2022

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