

Faculty Handbook

Academic Department Chair Appointment and Evaluation

Chapter 2

F. CHAIR APPOINTMENT

1. CONSIDERATION

a) The consideration of academic department chairs is intended to be professionally and personally challenging, enriching, and useful in one's career. It should be structured with boundaries of expectations and demands that are congruent with the limitations of time and resources allocated to the job while permitting one to be an effective, humane chair, teacher and scholar. Included with the position should be the tools to be effective; appropriate staffing, funding, facilities, and discretionary authority. The position should be clearly explained and defined in all its dimensions to incumbents, prospective chairs, and members of the college faculty and staff.

b) Chairs must be articulate champions for their departments while keeping this responsibility in perspective as regards the total circumstance and mission of the school, college, and university. They must accept with conviction the principles of concurrence and collegiality in the decision-making process. Chairs will often face severe limitations on the time available to them for teaching, research, self-renewal, and professional growth. The assessment of chairs must take these limitations into account.

2. DESIGNATION

Chairs shall be designated by the President of the College in accordance with the Policies of the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York and the provisions of the agreement between the State of New York and United University Professions.

3. TERM

a) Appointment - the term of appointment for each chair shall be designated by the President of the College in accordance with the Policies of the Board of Trustees and the provisions of the agreement between the State of New York and United University Professions. The normal term is for 3 years, but can be for less as agreed upon by the chair, department faculty and president. Chair terms begin July 1 and end June 30, unless outgoing and incoming chairs and the appropriate dean agree upon another transition date.

b) Obligation - the term of obligation shall be for the academic year, with the chair also responsible for administrative duties that occur during the summer, such as freshman orientation and the recruitment and hiring of faculty.

c) Rotation - in most cases it is desirable for qualified faculty members to share leadership responsibility for the department by serving as chair. Chairs who have served

two or more terms should consider whether other members of the department should be encouraged to seek the opportunity to serve as chair. In general, it is desirable for chairs to have continuing appointment, although there may be circumstances in which it is necessary for a pre-tenure faculty member to serve as chair.

d) Transition to New Chair - When the end of a chair's term is approaching, all eligible faculty members should be given the opportunity to express interest in being considered for the chair position to avoid the unexamined assumption that the incumbent will continue through multiple terms. Departments should begin the process of evaluating the current chair, if she or he is seeking reappointment, early in the final spring semester of the incumbent's term. Completion of this evaluation should then be followed by nomination of all interested eligible candidates and subsequent implementation of department and school selection procedures, with a recommendation to the appropriate dean by the submission deadline established by the Office of Human Resources. (See also Chapter III-D, Evaluation of Chairs.)

4. TERMINATION

The designation as Chair will automatically cease at the end of the term appointment unless renewed by the President after appropriate consultation. Chairs also may be relieved of their duties at will by the President of the College in accordance with the Policies of the Board of Trustees and the provisions of the agreement between the State of New York and United University Professions.

5. DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for department chairs in matters of appointment and reappointment shall be made by the department concerned, utilizing appropriate procedures established under the provisions of the by-laws of the Faculty of SUNY Potsdam, Article VIII. Such recommendations concerning department chairs will be submitted by the department through normal channels: first to the appropriate Dean, and then to the Provost, prior to being forwarded to the President for final action. Department by-laws should specify voting procedures to be used in the selection of chairs.

Chapter 3: Evaluation and Promotion

D. EVALUATION OF CHAIRS

1. PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Each Chair shall have a review of her or his performance as chair on a regular basis by the appropriate committee or department in consultation with the members of the department. The Chair will have the opportunity to discuss the results of the review in a meeting with the committee. The results of the review will then be given to the Dean of the School, who also will review the chair's performance and discuss it with the Chair. There shall be no final evaluation required for chairs not seeking reappointment.

a) Assessment

For chairs with multi-year terms, the dean shall coordinate an assessment of the chair's performance at the end of the first year or in the fall of the second year of the chair's term. The dean shall consult with individual faculty members in the department through written surveys and/or interviews and share the results of the assessment with the chair for the purpose of performance improvement. There shall be no assessment required for chairs with a single year term appointment or for chairs who have been evaluated and appointed for an additional term in accordance with the evaluation procedures in section III-1-b.

b) Evaluation

At the end of the term of appointment there shall be a final evaluation of the Chair's performance for the purpose of reappointment. The evaluation shall be conducted by the appropriate Personnel Committee in consultation with the members of the Department. Performance shall be characterized, in summary as either satisfactory or unsatisfactory, and the evaluation shall include a recommendation regarding reappointment. The review should evaluate the candidate in regards to performance of the duties outlined in the roles and responsibilities described in Chapter II, Section F, of the Faculty Handbook. The Chair will have the opportunity to review his or her evaluation in a meeting with the committee. The evaluation will then be given to the Dean of the School, who will write his or her own evaluation of the Chair. In a meeting with the Dean, the Chair will have the chance to discuss the materials that he or she prepared, and the evaluation done by members of the appropriate Personnel Committee and by the Dean. He or she may add a statement of commentary and will sign all reviews that he or she has read. The Dean will assemble the materials and send them to the Provost, who will make a recommendation to the President.