



Arts and Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

POLICY: Appointment and Review of Department Chairs and Directors

DATE: September 1, 2023

This policy applies to all units within the College of Arts and Sciences. The College policy is subordinate to related policies outlined in the [University of South Carolina Faculty Manual](#). In case of inconsistencies between this policy and the university, state, or federal policies, the university, state, or federal policy rules are the final authority.

I. POLICY

Within the College of Arts and Sciences, searches for department chairs and academic program directors are governed by [University Policy ACAF 1.01 Recruitment and Appointment of Academic Administrators](#).

A. Search Process

Following approval from the Provost, the search process begins with a formal message from the Dean notifying the unit faculty of their intent to initiate a search for a new chair or director.

1. Search Committee Nomination and Election

In accordance with [University Policy ACAF 1.01](#):

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.

The dean may 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.

Once the committee is confirmed, the Dean will commence the search by charging the Search Committee.

2. Identification of Candidates

a. Internal Searches: Candidate Nomination Process

Once the search committee has been convened, the Search Committee Chair should instruct faculty members in the unit to self-nominate or submit nominations for a new chair or director in writing (by letter or e-mail).

- i. The person nominated should agree to the nomination before candidates are announced. The number of nominations for each candidate should not be revealed.
- ii. The Search Committee Chair will speak individually with the nominees, inviting them to meet with the committee if they desire.

b. External Searches: Candidate Application Process

In collaboration with College of Arts and Sciences' Office of Human Resources, an advertisement will be created and posted for the chair/director position. Applications for external chair/director searches will be received and shared with the Search Committee via the standard process for faculty hiring.

3. Candidate Presentations

a. Internal Searches: Unit Faculty Meeting for Nominee Presentations

The Search Committee Chair will call a meeting of the faculty, including all members of the search committee, for the Chair/Director nominee presentations.

Each nominee should give their thoughts on the position to the faculty in a brief presentation, followed by Q&A. During each candidate's presentation session, the other candidate(s) should not be present.

Each candidate should also be scheduled to meet individually with the Dean.

b. External Searches: Candidate Interviews and Campus Visits

In collaboration with the Office of the Dean, the search committee will conduct preliminary interviews and select finalists for campus visits.

Each finalist should prepare a brief presentation for unit faculty and related college faculty, staff, and students, followed by questions and answers. The unit faculty can ask both general and specific questions of any candidate.

Each candidate should also be scheduled to meet individually with the Dean.

4. Confidentiality

All information submitted to the committee throughout the process, including the final vote, must be kept confidential.

5. Professional-Track Faculty

In accordance with [University Policy ACAF 1.01](#):

All full-time faculty are allowed to participate fully unless otherwise indicated in the unit bylaws or similar unit policy. Votes should be reported separately to the Dean.

6. Unit Staff

If the department chooses, unit staff may be included in the candidate interview process and provide feedback on the candidates. Unit staff feedback should be collected confidentially by the search committee and reported to the Dean.

7. Ballot Format and Distribution

A sample ballot is below. Faculty should rank only the candidates they find acceptable. Ballots may be signed or unsigned.

It is highly recommended that a brief narrative justification be included with each ballot.

Chair Vote

	Acceptable	Unacceptable	Ranking if Acceptable
Person A	-	-	-
Person B	-	-	-
Person C	-	-	-
Person D	-	-	-
Person E	-	-	-

- a. Search Committee Chairs should follow the [Virtual Voting Procedures for Chair/Director Searches](#) guidelines.

- b. The committee should ensure that partners of candidates are not involved in any stage of the search process. In accordance with [University Policy HR 1.27: Nepotism](#), partners of candidates may not vote.

8. Vote Results

The search committee shall tabulate the votes and report those candidates rated as acceptable to the faculty. Votes of tenure-track and tenured faculty should be tallied and reported separately from professional-track faculty.

9. Search Results

The Dean should receive the actual ballots and justifications as well as the vote tally from the search committee chair.

In accordance with [University Policy ACAF 1.01](#):

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. 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.

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. The Chair/Director serves at the discretion of the Dean.

B. Appointment

Department chairs and directors will be appointed in writing by the dean. Appointment letters will specify the term of appointment.

II. PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The performance expectations outlined below form the basis for the annual review and evaluation of chairs and directors during their terms of appointment.

Department chairs, school directors, and program directors are expected to:

1. Conduct themselves in a manner that reflects favorably on the University of South Carolina, exhibiting high ethical standards and integrity in professional behavior.
2. Provide professional leadership to the unit and foster among its members a sense that they are a community of scholars.
3. Display a sound understanding of administrative responsibilities. Keep abreast of major issues and policies affecting areas of responsibility through interactions with the Office of the Dean, other units and programs within the College, and other University of South Carolina colleges, offices, and campuses.
4. Work collegially with other administrators as well as with faculty, staff, and students.
5. Communicate effectively with the Office of the Dean, reporting and explaining University and College policies to the unit, while representing unit perspectives and needs to the College.
6. Exercise sound administrative judgment, efficiently and thoroughly making wise use of financial and human resources in achieving academic unit goals while staying within the unit budget.
7. Promote an atmosphere conducive to the professional growth of others. Nurture junior faculty by providing opportunities and guidance and by fostering mentoring networks.
8. Offer support and guidance for all full-time faculty, both non-tenure-track and tenure-track alike.
9. Promote intellectual diversity among unit faculty.
10. Foster an inclusive sense of community among faculty, staff, and students at all levels.
11. Promote diversity and equal opportunity in employment and educational decisions in the areas of responsibility under their supervision.
12. Act fairly and objectively in decisions about salaries, evaluations, and promotions.
13. Confront difficulties in a positive manner and display the ability to mediate and resolve conflict and to accept advice and suggestions from others.
14. Encourage excellence in graduate and undergraduate program curriculum, activities, and assessment.
15. Promote the unit and its members on the national and international stages to reflect credit on the University of South Carolina. Serve as effective liaison and contact with other institutions, the broader academic community, and the public.
16. Encourage faculty research and creative work by supporting conference participation, award nominations, and internal and external grant applications.
17. Maintain a research and/or teaching career in the discipline.

III. ANNUAL REVIEW

Department chairs and directors, including those on interim appointments, will be evaluated annually by the Office of the Dean.

Steps and timeline:

1. **January 15:** All chairs and directors should submit to the Dean's Office a brief report of their *administrative activities* (2 pages) together with a summary of their *individual activities* in research, teaching, and service as faculty members. In addition, chairs and directors with tenure homes should submit their *individual activities' reports* to their home department following their unit's review process. Reports should cover activities from January 1 to December 31 of the preceding year.
2. Unit faculty and staff may submit confidential letters or comments about their chair or director's performance to the appropriate associate dean. Evaluation surveys may be distributed in conjunction with the annual review at the dean's discretion.
3. **June 30:** The dean will send a review letter to the chair/director, noting the year's achievements and, if applicable, outlining expectations for the upcoming year.

IV. REAPPOINTMENT REVIEW

The dean may reappoint a chair/director for a second term following a full review that includes consultation with the unit faculty. Reappointment is normally for one term, with any additional terms being the rare exception.

Reviews are typically conducted in the fall semester, following this general timeline:

1. **October 15:** The unit chair/director should submit a brief report (2 pages) to their associate dean summarizing their *administrative activities* over the entirety of their administrative term.
2. **October - November:** The associate dean will convene a Reappointment Review Committee consisting of at least two faculty members, one elected by the unit and one appointed by the unit associate dean. Note that elected standing committees may be used for the elected members (e.g., the Tenure and Promotion committee). Professional-track faculty should be represented on the Reappointment Review Committee, as appropriate. All information submitted to the committee in this process, including the survey data and comments, must be kept confidential.
3. **November:** The Office of the Dean will send the Reappointment Review Committee chair three online evaluation survey links, for (1) tenured and tenure-track faculty, (2) professional-track faculty, and (3) unit staff. The Review Committee chair will then distribute accordingly, copying the associate dean for their unit on each of these emails. The Review Committee chair should send follow-up reminders to ensure participation. The surveys will be open for two weeks.

Professional-track faculty and unit staff survey invitations will note that survey results will be reviewed at the college level only by the associate dean and not shared with the evaluation committee or the chair/director.

Unit faculty and staff may also submit confidential letters directly to the appropriate associate dean in hard copy in addition to or in lieu of the online surveys.

4. **November-December:** Aggregate data from the tenured and tenure-track faculty will be sent to the Reappointment Review Committee chair who will work with the committee to generate a summary report on the survey data. The summary report will be due to the unit's associate dean within two weeks of receiving the survey data.

Survey data from the professional-track faculty and staff will be sent directly to the unit's associate dean.

5. **December:** Reappointment Review Committee summary report due to unit's Associate Dean.
6. **December-January:** After reviewing the committee's summary report, the survey results, and confidential letters, the dean and associate dean will meet with chair/director and provide formal notification of reappointment or non-reappointment. The chair/director will receive a copy of the unit's evaluative summary.

RELATED POLICIES

[University Policy 1.01 Recruitment and Appointment of Academic Administrators](#)