Departmental Chairs

Policy/Procedure

General Statement

The College recognizes that the attainment of its objectives depends in large measure upon the effective use of the time and expertise of its faculty. The department chair is key in assuring that this happens. Hence the College recognizes the following duties of the chair and undertakes to provide support necessary for the discharge of those duties.

In each department of instruction in which there are three or more full-time faculty, the chair shall be nominated by the senior members of the department. In departments with fewer than three full time faculty, and for the Education department, nomination is by the Dean of the College. These nominations are reviewed by the Faculty Personnel Committee; the final decision and appointment is made by the Dean of the College. Appointment is typically for three years.

In the department of Library Resources, the chair shall be nominated by the senior members of the department, typically for three years. The chair of the Physical Education department is nominated by the Dean of the College. These nominations are reviewed by the Faculty Personnel Committee; the final decision and appointment is made by the Dean of the College.

Administrative Responsibilities

- The chair speaks for the department as a unit. All other academic and administrative units of the College are expected to deal with or through the chair on all matters of a general departmental nature.

- The chair is responsible to the President of the College, through the Dean, and is expected to keep both of them informed of departmental plans, proposals, problems, and progress.

- It is the duty of the chair to consider the College as a whole and to exercise caution and restraint in making recommendations. The chair may reasonably expect that all recommendations submitted by the chair concerning the department will be cordially received and, whenever practicable, acted upon. Whenever recommendations are not supported, the chair may expect to have an explanation for the negative judgment.

- The chair has a vote on all departmental matters, even in those unusual instances where the chair is not a senior member of the department.

- Each January, the chair prepares a proposed budget to support the operation of the department during the ensuing academic year. The budget is prepared according to guidelines approved by the Treasurer in consultation with the Planning and Budget Committee. The chair will be consulted before final decisions are made if significant
portions of the departmental requests cannot be supported. Requests for major new budgetary items or increases must be submitted to the Dean of the College in October, for consideration during the early phase of the budget building process. The chair is also asked to advise the College on the department's long range anticipated needs for realizing its academic purposes.

- When appropriate, departmental issues that affect the whole College will be discussed in a conference comprising all the concerned chairpersons, along with relevant administrators and committee representatives, to the end that the best interests of the College as a whole be served.

**Personnel Responsibilities**

- The chair is responsible for the recruitment of qualified faculty to fill permanent or temporary staffing vacancies in the department. Approval to begin the search for a new appointment is given by the Dean of the College after consulting with the Academic Program and Standards Committee.

- Recommendations on renewal of contract, granting of tenure, promotion in rank, annual salary, and sabbaticals or leaves of absence, concerning members of the department, shall be made by the chair after consultation with departmental colleagues (or only with senior colleagues where that restriction is stipulated). Such recommendations will be submitted to the Dean of the College who will consult with the appropriate personnel committee before making a recommendation to the President.

- The chair is responsible for the quality of instruction and other professional activity in the department. This is to be accomplished by such means as appear best suited to the situation, including private conferences with colleagues, classroom visits, and professional development proposals, subject to the limitations of tact and good judgment.

- The chair is responsible for assuring that students majoring in the department are adequately advised.

- The chair is responsible for developing and sustaining the departmental morale of colleagues and of students. To attain this objective, regular department meetings are encouraged, in which free and open discussion occurs; procedures for student contributions to departmental deliberations should also be established. Any member of the department has the right to request and obtain a meeting of the department to consider some proposal or idea. Any student has the right to expect opportunity to discuss relevant academic concerns with the chair and, when appropriate, with the whole department.
History/Revision Information

Responsible Office/Division:

Effective Date:

Last Amended Date:

Next Review Date:

Also Found In: Academic Handbook