



## Department Chair Appointment Policy

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Effective:	[Leave this date blank.]
Prior Versions:	June 2009; August 2009 (Memos, not policies)
Responsible Office:	Office of the Provost
Review By:	[Date will be assigned by Executive Policy Committee]

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### **I. PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines and standards for the appointment of a Department Chair in the academic colleges.

### **II. POLICY**

Auburn University at Montgomery subscribes to the “Joint Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities” adopted by the American Council on Education, the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, and the American Association of University Professors regarding the selection of department heads/chairs: “The chair or head of a department, who serves as the chief representative of the department within an institution, should be selected by departmental election or by appointment following consultation with members of the department and of related departments; appointments should normally be in conformity with the department members’ judgment. The chair or department head should not have tenure in office; tenure as a faculty member is a matter of separate right. The chair or head should serve for a stated term but without prejudice to reelection or to reappointment by procedures that involve appropriate faculty consultation. Board, administration, and faculty should all bear in mind that the department chair or head has a special obligation to build a department strong in scholarship and teaching capacity.”

Department Chairs report to the Dean of their College, and normally serve a three-year term contingent upon the continued support of the dean. The appointment of a Department Chair can occur through the regular faculty hiring process, or through an internal appointment. In either case the appointment is made by the dean, contingent upon the approval of the Provost. In rare circumstances the dean may appoint a Department Chair from among the faculty of another department. In the case of departments with accredited programs, care must be taken to ensure Department Chairs meet accreditation requirements.

The Dean may make a recommendation to reappoint the department chair at the end of a three-year term, contingent upon the approval of the Provost after the process outlined below is followed.

### **III. APPLICABILITY**

This process applies to the selection of Department Chairs in academic colleges, and replaces all previous policies or memoranda describing processes for selecting department chairs or heads.

### **IV. PROCEDURES**

**EXTERNAL SEARCH:** The procedure, including hiring at rank and with tenure, shall adhere to the standards of the regular faculty hiring process as outlined by the Office of Human Resources and the Office of the Provost.

**INTERNAL SEARCH:**

1. The dean shall request nominations for the position from the department. Self-nominations and confidential nominations are allowed. Nominations should be received within five business days from the request for nominations.
2. After receiving nominations, the dean should consult with members of the department and the candidates individually, to discuss the position and receive feedback from the department. This consultation should occur within five business days of the close of nominations.
3. All full-time faculty of the department should then be invited to submit their recommendations, along with the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate or candidates, to the Dean. Submissions should be received via a confidential process within five business days of the request for feedback.
4. Upon receiving departmental recommendations the dean will make a recommendation to the Provost. Upon receiving confirmation, the dean should confer with the candidates to inform them of the decision, and then inform the department. Ideally this informational communication should occur within five business days of approval from the Provost. In cases where the choice of the dean does not conform with the majority recommendation of the department, the dean would normally provide a rationale.

### **REAPPOINTMENT**

The dean should review the record of the chair and survey each member of the department to solicit feedback on the performance of the chair. The dean should solicit from all tenured and tenure-track members of the faculty a statement of strengths and weaknesses along with a recommendation for or against reappointment. The dean should then forward a recommendation to the Provost. Ideally, this process should be completed before the expiration of the chair's three-year term of service.

### **V. INTERPRETATION**

Questions about the interpretation of this policy should be directed to the Office of the Provost.