

Austin Peay State
University

Department Chair Appointments ~~Chairs~~

POLICIES

Issued: TBD

Responsible Official: Provost and ~~Senior~~ Vice President for Academic Affairs

Responsible Office: Office of the Provost ~~Academic Affairs~~

Policy Statement

It is the policy of Austin Peay State University to appoint ~~employ~~ academic department chairs ~~that lead academic units~~.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish general guidelines for the ~~employment~~ appointment of academic department chairs.

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Procedures

~~Unless otherwise noted, "chairs" refers to chairpersons and directors of academic units.~~

Selection and Review of Chairperson

Selection: Department chairs serve at the pleasure of the University Provost and are appointed and removed by the College Dean in consultation with the department faculty, as appropriate.

- (1) Prior to selection of the department chair, the Dean meets with the department to discuss the responsibilities of the chair, expectation for the position, college initiatives, and receive feedback from the department regarding needs and strategies.
- (2) The Dean ~~shall request nominations~~ will issue a call for applications for the position from tenured faculty in the department. If a faculty member would like to nominate a tenured faculty member of the position, they can do so by directly contacting the Dean with the name of the nominee. The Dean will then reach out directly to the nominee to see if they are interested in applying for the position. Self-nominations and confidential nominations are allowed. Interested ~~interested~~ candidates will submit a letter of interest and an up-to-date CV to the Dean. ~~Nominations~~ Application materials should be received within ~~five~~ ten (10) business days from the ~~request for nominations~~ call for applications. All ~~nominations~~ applicants should be tenured faculty within the department.
- (3) All applicants are announced by the Dean and application materials are shared with all full-time faculty.
- (2)(4) All full-time faculty of the department ~~will be asked to should then be invited to~~ submit their feedback to the Dean on each applicant ~~nominee~~, including their perceived strengths and weaknesses to serve as ~~as~~ chair, ~~to the Dean~~. ~~Submissions~~ Feedback should be received via a confidential form within five (5) business days of the Dean's request ~~for~~ feedback.
- (5) Upon receiving all of the feedback from the faculty, the Dean will decide which applicants will move forward to be considered for the position. No more than three (3) faculty names will be ~~considered~~ moved forward by the Dean.

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~~(3)~~(6) The Dean ~~(or designee)~~ will convene a meeting of all full-time faculty of the department for the purpose of voting on the ~~nominees~~ applicants that have been moved forward for candidacy per submitted in step 24.5 above. Before the vote, the Dean ~~(or designee)~~ will provide the opportunity for each ~~nominee~~ candidate to share a present their case regarding for why they should be the next chair of the academic unit based on their experience and qualifications short (no longer up to 5 than 10 minutes) ~~statement highlighting their qualifications for the position~~. The ~~nominees~~ candidates will then be excused from the room, and the Dean ~~(designee)~~ will lead the department in a discussion about each ~~candidate~~ nominee. ~~Voting will then proceed by secret ballot. The slate of candidates (no more than 3) will then be voted on using a secret ballot process. All eligible voting faculty will rank order the preference of candidates where #1 represents the first choice, #2 represent-s the second choice, and #3 represents the -third choice. The candidate who received the lowest total score will represent the faculty's nominee to the Dean for consideration. In the event of a tie between two (2) candidates, the faculty will vote one (1) more time using a secret ballot to rank order the two candidates. In the event, of a tie after this second vote, the Dean will consider both candidates as equal nominees from the faculty for the Dean consider. In a chair election, each faculty member shall rank all the candidates in order of preference. All of the first choice votes will be counted, and if any candidate receives more than 50 percent of the votes, that candidate stands as the department's nominee. If no one has a majority, the candidate with the fewest first place votes will be eliminated, and the ballots that listed that candidate first are then reassigned to the next ranked (valid) candidate on each of those ballots. The votes are counted again, and this process of eliminating the last place candidate and reallocating their ballots based on the next available preference continues until a candidate secures a majority and is declared the nominee. Once the voting process is complete, [The Dean (or designee) Dean will share the results of the voting process vote with the department.]~~

~~(4)~~(7) Once the voting process has been completed, the Dean has up to five (5) business days to appoint Upon receiving departmental votes, the Dean will select the next chair or director of the academic unit. The Dean and will then make the share their decision recommendation with the to the Provost. In cases where the choice of the Dean does not

Commented [BBD1]: In our college everyone votes, including each nominee because they are still considered a faculty member of the department. I am fine with this change, but just wanted to make this note.

Commented [BRJ2]: Perry Scanlan asks if the votes needs to have a clear majority. Should a run off be included if no single nominee/candidate has a clear majority on the vote?

Commented [BRJ3]: From John Phillips:

I agree with you, a counting procedure for chair elections needs to be specified. Otherwise, it sounds like the Dean has the authority to just decide based on the outcome of that first round of voting, even if the vote is a tie or results in a small plurality (A gets 4 votes, B gets 3 votes, C gets 3 votes, D gets 2 votes...).

As a political scientist, I would add: "In a chair election, each faculty member ranks all the candidates in order of preference. All of the first-choice votes are counted, and if any candidate receives more than 50 percent of the votes, that candidate stands as the department's nominee. If no one has a majority, the candidate with the fewest first-place votes is eliminated, and the ballots that listed that candidate first are then reassigned to the next-ranked (valid) candidate on each of those ballots. The votes are counted again, and this process of eliminating the last-place candidate and reallocating their ballots based on the next available preference continues until a candidate secures a majority and is declared the nominee."

This kind of instant runoff procedure eliminates the need for multiple rounds and prevents the spoiler effect/strategic voting, where a vote for one's favorite candidate might cause one's least favorite candidate to "win."

~~conform with the majority vote of the department, the Dean shall provide a clear written rationale to the Provost and ultimately, the department. This consultation should occur within five business days of the vote.~~ Upon receiving approval of the ~~endorsement for the selection by the~~ Provost in support of the selection, the Dean ~~will should~~ confer with the candidates to inform them of the ~~decision, and~~ decision and then inform the department. Ideally, this ~~informational should be communicated~~ communication should occur within five (5) business days of ~~approval endorsement from~~ from the Provost. Once the successful candidate has been identified and shared with the department faculty at-large, the Dean's Office will create and send the appointment letter to the candidate outlining the terms and conditions of the appointment.

Commented [BBD4]: It needs to be clear that the dean's rationale should be reported to the department.

~~(5)~~ The ~~Department e~~Chair's ~~department chair~~ term ~~should~~ is for no more than last four (4) 4 years. By the end of February of the third year, the Department Chair should inform the Dean of their intention to either seek reappointment to another term, or their plans to step down ~~as chair~~ at the end of their current four (4) -year term.

REAPPOINTMENT

Should the Department Chair indicate ~~their~~ they intent to seek reappointment, the Dean will then review the performance of the Chair, via Annual ~~Chair~~ Evaluation data, including annual feedback provided by the department via the Faculty Chair Review Survey and share the aggregated results with tenured and tenure track faculty of the department. Methods of sharing the aggregated results with the appropriate department members should adhere to high standards of confidentiality. If the Dean supports the reappointment of the Chair, the incumbent will serve receive another term. If the Dean decides not to reappoint the incumbent, the Dean will initiate the ~~The~~ selection process again for a new Chair in the Spring term of the last academic year of the current chair appointment. The selection of the new of a chairperson will commence ~~continue as outlined in~~ with section (1) above. the previous, Selection and Review of Chairperson, during the Spring term of the third year, regardless if the

~~chairperson is seeking reappointment, or a new chair is to be selected. When possible the selection process of a new chair should allow for the incoming chair time to job-shadow the outgoing chair.~~

A. Chair Evaluations

Annual Evaluations: In the first year of their Department Chair appointment, new ~~chairs~~ individuals will be exempt from a formal ~~chair~~ evaluation process and instead should be evaluated using the ~~faculty~~ annual ~~faculty~~ evaluation tool and process. Beginning in the fall semester of the second year of the appointment, and each subsequent year, Chairs will be evaluated using the Annual Chair Evaluation (ACE) form which includes a self-evaluation as well as evaluation by the immediate supervisor (typically College Dean). Additionally, confidential feedback from departmental faculty will be collected via the Faculty Chair Review Survey, with the results aggregated for incorporation into the Chair's evaluation. The Annual Chair Evaluation (~~ACE~~ AFE) will serve in place of the chair's Annual Faculty Evaluation (AFE).

College deans will meet individually with each Department Chair on an annual basis to review the data from the faculty feedback, self-evaluation data and evaluation data conducted by the supervisor. When appropriate, performance improvement plans or departmental goals and objectives will be established for the coming year and will be reviewed annually as part of the Annual ~~Department~~ Chair Evaluation (ACE) process.

B. ~~Removal~~

~~The r~~Removal of a department chair should follow ~~a clearly defined~~ the process defined below. Any need for improvement in the chair's performance should first be addressed through the Annual Department Chair Evaluation (ACE) process and remediated through a formal improvement plan devised by the Dean. If a department chair is removed due to insufficient performance, removal should occur at the end of the current term or during the intersession. If a chair engages in ~~egregious~~ behavior that is clearly counterproductive or detrimental to the function of the department-or to the vision and mission of the University, the Provost, in consultation with the respective Dean, may ~~immediately suspend or remove the individual at any time during the current term.~~ begin the process of removing the chair. ~~The cause and reasons for the chair's removal should be clearly articulated in writing, and the chair should have an opportunity to~~

Commented [BRJ5]: Timeline for notification of a wish for appointment.

Timeline for selection of a new Chair. Lame duck Chair vs. shadowing opportunity for incoming Chair.

Clear policy for what incoming Chair should do in cases where there is an opportunity to shadow.

Commented [BBD6R5]: Yes, I agree that the shadowing experience needs to be clearly defined here.

Commented [KN7]: This instrument needs a redesign. Current evaluation tool is poorly constructed (e.g., N/A = 0; faculty may have no way of assessing chair teaching, research or service; some items do not pertain to chair duties; some items are poorly worded, etc.).

~~respond to the removal. If an appeal is necessary, the appeal should follow the same appeals process as defined for personnel actions involving tenured faculty members. The removal of a chair should take effect at the end of the academic term in which the removal process is resolved.~~

~~Upon the removal of a chair, the Provost and Dean shall remove that chair without any lengthy formal process and appoint an interim chair for the department to serve until a new chair can be appointed through the usual procedure described earlier in this policy. If a chair is removed at any time during their administrative term and returns to the faculty, their administrative stipend ends; however, they should retain the appropriate level of course release they received as chair, until the end of the current full academic term.~~

~~If a removed chair wishes to serve in the role of chair again, they must wait one full term (4 years) from the date they were removed before they are eligible to again apply run again for the position chair.~~

Administrative and Instructional Responsibilities

1. Department Administration: Participate in the development of strategic initiatives aligning with the institution, college, and departmental mission, vision and goals; set strategic goals and objectives for the department; articulate policies and procedures to faculty and staff; coordinate meetings and schedules, address other administrative tasks as assigned and delegated by the University and College Leadership.
2. Budgeting and Outreach: Manage, allocate, and balance the department's multiple budgets to best address the needs and goals of the department; articulate and advocate for departmental funding, resource, and staffing needs; strategically allocate departmental resources; partner with the Dean and university leadership in fund-raising efforts for the department; serve as a liaison with local and regional businesses, industries, government agencies, school systems, and other institutions related to the department and its programs.
3. Personnel Management: Coordinate and facilitate the day-to-day operations of the department; manage faculty and staff workloads; recruit faculty and staff, including adjuncts in accordance with University policy; conduct faculty and staff

Commented [KN8]: This phrase is troubling. There should always be some form of due process, an opportunity for a chair to appeal a decision, particularly if there is department support for the chair. And to Rob's comment above, a decision to remove a chair mid-term should be based on cause – egregious behavior that is not amenable to remediation through an improvement plan.

Commented [BRJ9]: From John Phillips:

I also agree that the chair removal process needs greater attention. I can understand that the Deans and Provost would like maximum discretion. However, removing a chair midsemester could be very disruptive to all kinds of department operations. I would be in favor of language that allows the Dean to remove the chair effective at the end of the current semester or during an intercession when their behavior is counterproductive to the vision and mission of the university. Furthermore, immediate suspension or removal could be justified if there is a personnel issue or conflict that impedes the department's functioning. Finally, the policy should be clear that the chair policy does not supersede more general policies about faculty employment. (If a chair commits a firing offense, the chair policy does not protect the chair.) In short, the chair removal process should be written so as to protect the academic unit from both problematic chairs AND intemperate Deans/Provosts whose conflicts of personality or vision with a chair certainly can justify removal, but maybe not immediate removal in the middle of a semester to the detriment of department operations.

The policy is also notably silent on what happens if the department chooses to return a fired chair to their position through the regular process and in defiance of the Provost. Since chairs are appointed by the Provost, the Provost ... [1]

Commented [KN10]: If removal is mid-academic year I recommend no change to the stipend. It can be a hardship to have a change in income with no time to prepare.

Commented [BRJ11]: More concrete removal process. Evaluation/meeting with Dean as part of process. Based on performance, not personality.

Clear documentation in writing. Chair evaluation policy. Use of discipline policy.

Commented [BBD12R11]: Again, this needs to be very clear and perhaps find a way to include more about faculty voice instead of just dean's voice. Needs to also demonstrate that the chair was notified of any issues and provided the opportunity to make changes. This should not be a surprise situation.

Commented [KN13]: In the past, chairs had more autonomy and flexibility when it came to managing workloads. It would be wonderful if this was restored so that this policy was an honest reflection of workload decisions chairs were empowered to make.

evaluations and merit pay increases; work with university leaders to formulate and administer faculty and staff performance improvement plans when needed; make recommendations for retention, tenure and promotion; encourage faculty and staff professional development; promote effective working relationships, [including a positive collegial environment](#), among faculty and staff; ~~provide an effective work environment for faculty and staff~~; [serve as a role model for faculty and staff](#); mediate faculty and staff grievances.

Commented [KN14]: Consider removing this since we are no longer utilizing a merit pay model.

4. Curriculum and Enrollment: Prepare and manage the department's course offerings and academic schedules to best meet the needs of students; support coordinators for academic programs housed in the department; coordinate curriculum changes and updates; coordinate recruitment of students; represent the department (or assign designees) at recruitment events; oversee student advising; approve course substitutions in the department's major programs; coordinate graduate placement efforts with Career Services; mediate student grievances.

5. Compensation: Academic chairs will have duties and responsibilities throughout the calendar year. They will receive nine monthly stipends from August through April to cover their service during the academic year. In addition to their regular academic year chair assignment, all chairs will have compensated summer duties and will receive stipends paid in May, June, and July. [During these months, they will work hours as specified in their chair appointment letters.](#)

Commented [SL15]: Confirmation is needed from HR that the schedule of payments to chairs can change from its current schedule of September - May for the regular stipend to August - April.

Department chairs maintain a faculty appointment, but may take [ten \(10\)](#) business days away from campus, with pay, during their summer assignment (summer assignments reflect APSU's academic calendar and typically span 10 weeks). A short-term summer chair will be appointed to cover the [ten \(10\)](#) days away from campus. [Additional days away during the summer will decrease the department chair's summer stipend at a rate defined in the chair compensation policy.](#)

Commented [KN16]: The chair compensation policy allows for additional days away but any additional days beyond the 10 would result in a \$100 per day decrease in stipend.

Chair appointments typically commence on [August June](#) 1st, but the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs may provide exceptions for atypical circumstances related to chair assignments.

Revision Dates

APSU Policy 2:049 – Rev.: May 19, 2022
APSU Policy 2:049 – Rev.: March 24, 2020
APSU Policy 2:049 (previously 5:029) – Rev.: April 20, 2017
APSU Policy 2:049 – Rev.: July 26, 2016
APSU Policy 2:049 – Rev.: January 14, 2016
APSU Policy 2:049 – Rev.: August 14, 2013
APSU Policy 2:049 – Issued: August 10, 2012

Subject Areas:

Academic	Finance	General	Human Resources	Information Technology	Student Affairs
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Approved

President: signature on file

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The policy is also notably silent on what happens if the department chooses to return a fired chair to their position through the regular process and in defiance of the Provost. Since chairs are appointed by the Provost, the Provost could ignore the department vote, but it might be better to simply bar the removed chair from running again for a term (4 years). This removes the temptation for departments to embarrass the university administration.
