



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW ORLEANS

**ADMINISTERED BY:** Office of the Provost  
and Senior Vice President for Academic  
Affairs

**Policy No:** AP-AA-23.5  
**TITLE:** Academic Department/School  
Chair Responsibilities, Roles,  
and Authority  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 15, 2015\*  
(\*Policy Revised, see below)  
**CANCELLATION:**  
**REVIEW DATE:** Fall 2024

#### **PURPOSE**

To set forth responsibilities, roles and authority of Academic Department Chairs/School Chairs (hereinafter Department).

#### **AUTHORITY**

*Part Two, Chapter III, Section I of the bylaws and rules of the University of Louisiana System.*

#### **GENERAL POLICY**

Academic Department Chairs occupy a unique place in the continuum of academic administrators, as the facilitating link among department faculty members, students, and higher administration. All activities and roles of the Department Chair are undertaken in light of furthering the best interests of students and in support of faculty and staff of the Department for the overall progress of the University of New Orleans in achieving its mission and vision.

Chairs play five essential roles, serving as:

1. academic leaders of Departments;
2. representatives of their Department and faculty and staff members to the rest of the University, especially university administration;
3. representatives of higher administration to their faculty and staff members and Department;
4. managers of Department resources; and,
5. representatives of the Department to external bodies.

These five roles remain constant even though specific responsibilities and duties may vary according to the mission, size and complexity of the Department, or other factors.

The responsibilities of the Chair include, but are not limited to

- Working collegially with faculty, staff and administrators throughout the university to accomplish the Department, College and University mission, vision, strategic plans and priorities and to ensure that the collective good of the faculty, staff and students is attained
- Providing leadership in department activities and initiatives; serves as department representative and advocate in the College
- Working well with a diverse student population and acting as a spokesperson for student needs; facilitating recruitment of students and working toward student success (retention and graduation)
- Articulating a vision for the Department to campus and external constituencies
- Managing the fiscal operations of the Department to best meet needs while staying within allocations
- Maintaining openness about revenues and expenditures; allocating resources fairly and equitably within the Department; advocating for department needs balanced with effective understanding of the college-wide perspective
- Leading and coordinating Department strategic planning, curriculum development, and all applicable accreditation efforts
- Scheduling of Department course offerings, ensuring that schedule building is completed in a timely fashion and that the schedule addresses the needs of students, faculty and facility availability, and the need to generate SCH efficiently and effectively
- Assigning and assessing the distribution of faculty workload including instructional, research, and service responsibilities, according to approved university and system policies
- Assisting faculty and staff with attainment of their professional development goals; overseeing and leading department retention efforts, tenure and promotion criteria and procedures including post-tenure reviews; initiating recommendations for the appointment, reappointment, promotion, and other personnel actions for all persons within the department; establishing a positive and constructive tone in conducting faculty and staff evaluations, and completing them in a timely manner
- Uniformly enforcing all University, College and Department regulations and policies; overseeing all department committees to ensure work is completed in a timely fashion; managing department office operations
- Promoting excellence in instruction, scholarly and creative productivity, and service at the University of New Orleans
- Leading the processes of faculty selection and ensuring that the appointment of faculty follows university, college, and departmental policies. Working to achieve a diverse faculty and an inclusive department culture
- Providing recommendations to the Dean and Provost regarding sabbaticals and other leaves for faculty and staff
- Developing, leading, and encouraging outreach and public service efforts
- Assisting with fundraising, securing grants and contracts, and other activities related to increasing outside support for students and programs.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

Since Departments vary greatly in size and complexity, organization appropriate for one may be inappropriate for another. Each Chair, in consultation with the Dean, is expected to develop an operational process and structure that will assure appropriate participation of faculty in departmental matters.

1. In matters for which the faculty has primary responsibility (curricula, standards of instruction, requirements for degrees, admission requirements), action will be required by the faculty as a whole or by a representative committee of the faculty, the majority of whose members are elected. In transmitting recommendations on such matters the chair must certify that the action has been approved by the faculty or by such a committee.
2. In matters for which the Chair has primary responsibility (recommendations for appointments, reappointments, promotions, leaves, salary increases, budgetary allocations, and the general administration of the department), the Chair is expected to consult the faculty in an appropriate way before reaching decisions (including the recommendation of the Department RTP Committee). Advisory committees of one sort or another may be helpful, particularly in the larger departments. The formality of this advisory system is left to the discretion of the Chair, as is the makeup or method of selection of such committees. Even advisory committees, however, should include some elected members, and the Chair should make an effort to involve most, if not all, of the faculty in decision-making activities.
3. Faculty members should have ample opportunity to meet as a body to discuss departmental business. Departmental meetings should be scheduled regularly, at least once every month. In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings, a department meeting should be called at any time one-third of the faculty requests such a meeting. Opportunity should be given at any meeting for the discussion of new and old business without limitation except as the faculty in an ad hoc situation may establish.
4. Students have a vested interest in the functioning of departmental programs, and their perspective can add a valuable component to departmental planning. Chairs should devise standard procedures for allowing students to express their opinions, preferably by appointing some to standing committees or special advisory groups. Whatever the means, the student voice should be heard.

## **FACULTY STATUS**

At the time they assume their responsibilities, Chairs must possess academic tenure. Chairs hired from outside the University must be employed at the rank of Associate Professor or Professor, and must have credentials adequate for the award of academic tenure at the time of appointment. The recommendation on tenure for an incoming Chair will follow the established review procedures for determining tenure, but on a time schedule appropriate for hiring negotiations. Exceptions must be recommended by the Dean of the College and approved by the Provost. During their service as Chair, individuals retain their faculty rank and tenure; they continue to have the rights and responsibilities of other faculty.

## **ASSOCIATE CHAIR**

Associate Chair is not an official university position, but rather a special assignment of a faculty member (tenured or tenure-track) to support the Chair of a large department (see percentage of assignment in the table below). Presently, no department with less than 20 full time equivalent faculty (FTEF) is permitted to appoint an Associate Chair, and no Department is permitted to have more than one Associate Chair at a time. Under no circumstance, shall departments create other administrative positions in the Department that overlaps with the duties of the Chair or Associate Chair (e.g., coordinator of a “sub-department”).

An Associate Chair is appointed by the Chair of the Department, with consultation of the Dean, and works at the pleasure of the Chair and the Dean of the College. The duties of the Associate Chair parallels the duties of the Chair as described in this document. The details of the duties, however, should be clearly identified and communicated to potential candidates by the Chair, after consultation with the Dean.

## **COMPENSATION**

Chairs may receive an administrative stipend (Chair Stipend) determined by the Dean in consultation with the Provost during the term in which they serve as Chair. Upon the return to full-time faculty assignment, the Chair Stipend is revoked, and the salary reverts back to an academic year base salary ([see AP-AA-37-Transfer of Faculty to/from Administrative Appointment](#)).

Chairs are appointed at a specific administrative fraction of up to 100%. The Chairs fraction of appointment determines the amount of compensation as well as teaching and research duties. For example, a faculty member appointed on a .5 basis must teach half of his or her required teaching load<sup>1</sup> while performing the Chair’s duties. The administrative fraction shall be based on the number of full-time equivalent faculty (FTEF).

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<sup>1</sup> Note, required teaching load for UL System campuses is 12-credit hours per semester. Colleges and/or departments may have other minimum teaching requirements based on research or service.

FTEF for the purposes of Chair compensation is the total number of tenured and tenure-track faculty, full-time professors of practice, and full-time instructors.

- 5 or fewer FTEF: 0.25 Chair
- 6-10 FTEF: 0.4 Chair
- 11-15 FTEF: .67 Chair
- 16-20 FTEF: 1.0 Chair
- 21-30 FTEF: 1.0 Chair + 0.25 Associate Chair
- 31-40 FTEF: 1.0 Chair + 0.40 Associate Chair
- 41-50 FTEF: 1.0 Chair + 0.67 Associate Chair

The compensation for Chairs (and Associates, if applicable) shall be based on the academic base salary, administrative fraction, FTEF and full time equivalent students (FTES), which is SCH weighted by the number of undergraduate and graduate students. The compensation formula is as follows:

$$\$2,000 + (\text{Base Salary} \times \text{Admin Fraction} \times 9\%) + (\text{FTEF} \times \$75) + (\text{FTES} \times \$10)$$

For example, a faculty member, with an academic base salary of \$80,000 with 9 full-time faculty members in his or her department, with 358 FTES will be appointed at 0.40 Chair. The Chair would receive  $\$2,000 + (\$80,000 \times 0.4 \times 9\%) + (9 \times \$75) + (358 \times \$10) = \$9,135$  stipend for 9 months of services as Chair.

If the same department had 22 faculty members, then the Chair would be appointed at 100%, and his or her stipend would be \$14,430.

This particular department would also be assigned an Associate Chair at 0.25. The stipend formula for an Associate Chair is as follows:

$$(\text{Base Salary} \times \text{Admin Fraction} \times 9\%) + (\text{FTEF} \times \$50) + (\text{FTES} \times \$10)$$

In this example, the Associate Chair, assuming a similar academic base salary would receive:  $(\$80,000 \times .25 \times 9\%) + (22 \times \$50) + (358 \times \$10) = \$6,480$  for 9 months of services as Associate Chair.

### **LEAVES AND SABBATICALS**

During the course of the term as Chair, the faculty member will not be recommended or approved for extended leave or sabbatical, except under unusual circumstances.

### **DETERMINATION OF A VACANCY**

A vacancy will be declared by the Dean when a Chair is not reappointed, has elected not to continue in this role, is unable to continue due to health or other reasons, or has been removed by the Provost after consultation with the Dean. A declaration of an anticipated vacancy might also occur with the creation of a new academic Department or the merger of two or more existing Departments.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

No later than six (6) months before the completion of the term of service as the Department Chair, or as soon as it is clear that the position will become vacant due to any other reason, the Dean shall convene a department meeting to announce the position vacancy and to inform the department of the election criteria and procedures for formation of a search committee, and recommendation to the Dean and whether a decision has been made to recommend an outside search to the Provost. The Dean may appoint the search committee Chair, who can be a faculty member outside the department, in the case of small departments or for other reasons, at the Dean's discretion. At this meeting, the Dean will articulate the Chair's responsibilities, expectations, benefits, delegation, and resources such as the administrative fraction required.

Chair candidates will make formal presentations to departmental faculty and faculty. The search committee will conduct interviews with the candidates. The Dean may invite additional relevant UNO faculty and staff to participate in interviews in order to obtain the opinions of various stakeholders as needed. The search committee makes recommendations to the Dean regarding strengths and weakness of each candidate, and may also include rank ordering of the candidates.

- The candidates will be interviewed by the Dean as part of the selection process.
- Based on the Dean's interviews with the candidates and the search committee's recommendations, the Dean will make his/her recommendation to the Provost.
- After consultation with the President, the Provost may appoint one of the candidates as Department Chair.

For national searches, a search committee and faculty will interview candidates on campus along with the Dean, Associate Provost for Faculty and Diversity Affairs and the Provost. Selection of a new chair will follow the process listed above.

All Chair appointments will be for a three-year term subject to renewal based on satisfactory performance and recommendation of the Dean. There is no limit on the number of terms that any faculty member may serve as a Chair; however, it is highly recommended that no person should serve more than two consecutive terms. Chairs serve at the pleasure of the Dean and the Provost and may be removed from the position at any time by the Provost after consultation with the Dean. In such an instance, the individual will be reassigned to responsibilities as a full-time faculty member as per [AP-AA-37-Transfer of Faculty to/from Administrative Appointment](#).

## **DEPARTMENTS OUTSIDE OF ACADEMIC COLLEGES**

For departments that are not housed in academic colleges (e.g., departments in the library), the Provost, with consultation with the dean (when applicable), may appoint a chair on a 12-month basis at 100% administrative fraction with the terms of the appointment exceeding three years.

### **ACTING/INTERIM CHAIRS**

Acting/Interim Chairs may be appointed by the Provost upon the recommendation of the Dean, when, in the Dean's assessment, such an appointment is in the best interests of the Department, its programs, students, and faculty members. Acting/Interim Chairs shall have the same responsibilities and authority as all other Chairs, but will not serve more than one academic year or parts thereof without the explicit approval of the Provost.

### **PERIODIC REVIEW OF CHAIRS**

To ensure quality and effectiveness of Chairs and to maintain the confidence of the faculty, each Chair must be formally reviewed during the fall semester of the third year of each term. The department faculty or an elected department committee, in consultation with the Dean, will develop procedures, criteria, and necessary instruments, such as survey questionnaires and/or feedback forms for evaluating the Chair's performance. A college may elect to use a standard procedure for the review of all its Chairs. The Dean will also provide his or her individual review and shall report the results of the reviews of performance to the Provost by January 15.



John W. Nicklow  
President  
University of New Orleans

*\*Policy Updates:*

*Revisions: 08/25/2021  
01/01/2020  
10/04/2017*