

Policy Guide for Department Chairs and ~~Academic Program~~ School Directors¹

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Definition of Chair², Academic Program or School Director

Definition of Chair and Academic Program Director ([See Note #1](#))

A member of personnel class 210 (and directors of schools coded as personnel class 216) who functions as the chief representative and administrator of a department or an academic program and who reports to an academic dean or to an appropriate administrative officer is designated a chair or director. Appointments as chair or director are separate from the academic appointment an individual holds; alteration in an administrative contract does not affect the academic contract held by that person. The ~~"Handbook for Faculty"~~ Faculty Handbook ([Section II.I.4](#)) describes the position in additional detail.

Terms of Appointment of Department Chairs and Academic Program School Directors

Department chairpersons and school directors are appointed by the Provost and President and work directly with the Dean or appropriate administrator of the College. Departmental

¹ converted from the pdf of the website on 10/30/2025, **revisions started 2025**

² The term "chair" will be used throughout these documents to mean department chair and/or school director.

chairs and ~~academic-program school~~ directors are appointed to five-year terms to provide for ~~department and~~ program continuity and development. Chairs and academic program directors serve at the pleasure of the president, provost and dean.

Appointments as chair or ~~academic-program-school~~ director are separate from the academic appointment an individual holds; alteration in an administrative contract does not affect the academic contract held by that person. The "Handbook for Faculty" (Section II.I.4) describes the position in additional detail. Tenure, if held, is a separate right from the administrative appointment

A formal secret ballot vote of the faculty, within the affected unit (department, school, or program) is required for a dean to recommend the appointment or reappointment of a chairperson or equivalent administrator. Appointments or reappointments can be recommended by a dean only if the person under consideration has been deemed acceptable by a positive vote by at least a majority of those faculty in the unit who are eligible to vote as defined by the unit's bylaws. After the conclusion of the formal vote of the faculty, the numerical result(s) of the vote of the faculty must be communicated to all the faculty eligible to vote and then to the dean of the college and by the dean to the provost upon the occasion of any recommendation for appointment or reappointment. Chairpersons and their equivalents are renewed annually by the college dean and serve at the pleasure of the president, the provost, and the dean. Therefore, the president and provost have the authority to replace chairpersons or their equivalents at any time after consultation with the appropriate dean, if such action is in the best interests of the department, program, school, or the University. If an interim chair or equivalent position is to be recommended or appointed by a dean for more than one year, then a positive secret ballot vote by a majority of the faculty in the affected unit who are eligible to vote is also required, and the numerical results must be communicated to all faculty eligible to vote prior to the interim appointment.

When a department or school is seeking a chair or director, whether an internal or an external candidate is being selected, it is the current custom (2025-2026) that a formal search be initiated through the HR system, and that a search committee be formed, consistent with the faculty handbook searches for faculty.

Duties of Chairs and Academic Program Directors

These duties are intended to represent the typical obligations of every chair. Although some of the duties listed below may be assigned to other faculty members or to faculty committees, the chair is still the responsible agent.

Faculty and Personnel Development

- Chairs, are responsible for the recruitment, development, retention, and advancement of department faculty excellent in the three major areas of teaching, research/creative/scholarly activity, and service.
- Chairs are responsible for the proper administration of faculty workloads as based on individual abilities of faculty members and department, college, and University needs [FH 4.3.3]. ~~Periodic-Annual~~ appraisal and planning of workloads are required ~~at least annually~~ and must involve personal interviews with all faculty members in the department [CBA 11.5, 12.4; FH 2.1, 4.3.5].
- Chairs are responsible for the administration of the approved procedures of peer review in the department as well as the policies and procedures of promotion and tenure reviews. Furthermore, chairs are responsible for seeing that these policies

and procedures are publicized properly within the department and, whenever necessary, updated to conform with changes in college or University policy.

- Chairs provide advice and guidance to members of their department in all areas of their development as faculty. As far as possible, senior members of the department assist the chair in this important task.
- Proper administration of these responsibilities eventuates in recommendations to the dean for new appointments, reappointments, salary changes, promotions, tenure, sabbatical, and other **academic** leaves of absence, **contract renewals**, nonrenewals, and terminations.

Program Development and Departmental Planning

- Chairs are responsible for the planning and initiation of changes in the curricula (including Continuing Education and Summer/Winter curricula) of their department.
- Chairs oversee research programs carried out under departmental auspices or involving department resources, and are responsible for encouraging an appropriate and balanced program of research among the department faculty that involves both graduate and undergraduate students, as well as postdoctoral students, wherever possible.
- Chairs oversee service/outreach/extension programs carried out under departmental auspices or involving departmental resources, and are responsible for encouraging an appropriate and balanced program of service/outreach/extension activities among departmental faculty.
- Chairs prepare budget requests, allocate funds, and supervise departmental expenditures.
- Chairs work with the Director of University Libraries to enrich the collection, giving due attention to planned research and future growth of the department.
- Chairs work with the department, the dean, and appropriate administrative offices in planning physical facilities for the department.
- Chairs work with the department, the dean, and appropriate administrative offices in planning enrichment programs, such as lecture series and colloquia, for majors and other interested students, faculty, and members of the community.

Periodic Statement of Departmental Goals

To provide a continuing basis for development and evaluation of a department, each chair (by means of consultation with the appropriate committees within the department, or the department meeting as a committee of the whole) prepares, at least every five years, a statement concerning problems, long-range plans, and objectives. This statement of goals includes consideration of the adequacy of physical facilities, sufficiency of monetary support, and appropriateness of departmental organization and communication. The statement, sponsored by the department and agreed on by the dean, is submitted to the provost and the president for use as a planning document.

Organization and Communication

- Department chairs are responsible for communicating and administering the policies and procedure of the University [FH 2.1], College, and Department.
- The chairperson will be expected to consult in formalized ways with the appropriate departmental body on matters of faculty status [FH 2.1].
- The chair holds regular department meetings as seem most appropriate within the organization of the department, and as agreed on by the chair and the faculty.
- The chair appoints and oversees the responsibilities of any subordinate department administrator(s), such as assistant chair, chairs of standing committees.
- The chair communicates with the department for the dean, the provost, the president and other administrative offices.
- The chair communicates with the dean, the provost, the president and other administrative offices for the department.
- The chair represents the department before committees, councils, and other bodies.
- The chair orients new faculty members to departmental policies and procedures.
- The chair is responsible for implementing affirmative action policies and providing equal employment and educational opportunity at the departmental level.
- The chair supervises the use and assignment of allocated departmental space (excluding general classrooms), facilities, equipment, and supplies, and maintains an inventory of the latter two.
- The chair contributes to the formulation and execution of college and University policies and regulations.
- The chair is responsible for revision of copy for the catalogs and other bulletins. (needs updating)

Administration of Student Development

- The chair coordinates and makes recommendations concerning the advising of majors and the admission and advising of graduate students in the department or in special programs under department control and supervision.
- The chair provides recommendations for student aid at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
- The chair encourages student participation and involvement in departmental affairs.
- The chair ensures that a balanced and appropriate offering of courses at all levels is made each term and works closely with faculty and with other administrators toward appropriate enrollments.

Personal Responsibilities

The chair makes exemplary efforts in teaching, professional development, and service. Normally, each chair has teaching duties each term and is expected to pursue research and scholarly interests in the discipline.

Note #2: In April 1991, the Faculty Senate recommended "that the President of the Faculty Senate receive a one-course load reduction each semester and the President-elect receive a one-course per year reduction as long as these reductions do not result in the elimination of all classroom teaching duties for the individuals in question." Whether such reductions are appropriate in the context of a department's teaching needs for a given year should be

discussed at the time the faculty member and chair undertake conversations about the faculty member's workload for the upcoming year. The final decision rests with the chair who may find consultation with the dean valuable when making such a judgment.

Compensation of Chairs and Academic Program Directors

Compensation

- As compensation for expected summer presence and activity (typically 50% effort for two summer months), chairs and academic program directors on nine-month contracts receive an amount equal to one-ninth of their base salary incremented during the period of service.
- Upon satisfactory completion of the first term of service as chair or academic program director, the one-ninth shall be added to the base salary.
- A second term as chair or academic program director does not result in the permanent addition of a second ninth to the base salary, but one-ninth of the base salary is continued during the period of service.

Administrative Supplement for Departmental Chairs and School Directors

- Departmental chairs on nine-month contracts receive an administrative supplement of \$5,000 and those on eleven-month contracts an administrative supplement of \$5,500 during the period of service as chair.
- In addition to merit percent increases calculated on the base salary, the same percentage is applied annually to the chairs administrative supplement to determine a new base salary.
- The administrative supplement is pro-rated during any period of sabbatical leave or leave of absence from the position of chair and ceases upon return of the chair to the faculty.

Review and Evaluation of Department Chairs and Academic Program Directors

The performance of each chair is reviewed annually and evaluated in depth periodically. Chairs are evaluated in the context of their efforts to realize the specific goals agreed to by the department, the chair, and the dean. They are evaluated in terms of their meeting the responsibilities and duties summarized above, and they are evaluated specifically in consideration of the criteria of evaluation outlined below in this document.

Annual Review of Chair

- A regular annual review session with the department chair is scheduled by the dean. The annual review does not reach the degree of formality or the depth of analysis and study envisioned for the periodic evaluation, and there are no requirements for

extensive involvement of faculty, students, alumni, or persons external to the University for this review. If deemed helpful, however, the parties to the review may wish to expand the review to include some of these sources.

- The annual review provides a critique of the past year, the current status of the department, and the development of plans and the identification of needs for the future.
- The review provides the chair with useful insights and constructive criticism regarding the chair's performance, and an improved perspective on the department's development and mission in the college. Additionally, it should provide the dean with information and insights to represent the needs of the department most effectively to the provost. During the review, the dean may suggest to the chair new goals, priorities, policies, and procedures to help strengthen the department or improve its administration.

Periodic Evaluation of Chair

More intensive evaluations of chairs are scheduled at periods consistent with the five-year term of office. The time of evaluation is toward the end of the penultimate year of the term of office. An evaluation of the work of any department chair at other than the regular period may be initiated by the chair of the department, by the dean, by the provost, or by the president; in addition, such a review may be requested by a simple majority of the members of the department by petition to the dean.

Procedures for Periodic Evaluation

When the occasion of the periodic evaluation arises, the dean appoints an ad hoc evaluation committee. Members of this committee are chosen after consultation with the department chair and other appropriate faculty in the unit and consist of faculty from the department, faculty from related departments, and students majoring or doing graduate work in the department. The dean appoints the chair of the committee.

At its initial meeting, the ad hoc Periodic Evaluation Committee shall determine its specific mode of operation in light of these general guidelines and in conformity with the department's usual method of conducting such business. While the operation of each committee may therefore vary somewhat, certain activities are incorporated in the operation of all committees:

- A study of the periodic statement of department goals made by each department is undertaken.
- In-depth interviews with the chair, department faculty members, associate or assistant chair, and students are conducted. Where appropriate, the committee may solicit information from agencies or individuals outside the department, college, or campus.
- At the conclusion of the evaluation committee's review and just prior to the completion of its final report, a meeting involving the evaluation committee, the chair being evaluated, and the dean is held. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss questions, perceptions, etc., with the goal of rectifying errors of fact or clarifying misperceptions of important issues before written statements are formally distributed.

- The committee then submits a written report to the dean including specific recommendations and the evidence to support them. It makes available to the department chair a copy of the recommendations and a summary of the evidence it has presented to support them. The committee takes all necessary precautions to protect the confidentiality of the sources of information and accepts no information whose source it cannot establish and verify.
- The chair has seven days after receiving the copy of the recommendations and a summary of the evidence to comment in writing to the dean. It remains the responsibility of the committee to assure appropriate confidentiality of all statements it has received from everyone interviewed or otherwise polled in its review procedures.
- While the ad hoc committee is conducting its evaluation, the dean makes an independent evaluation of the chair based on previous annual reviews, consultations with other administrators and department chairs, and similar appropriate sources of information. Both reports are forwarded to the provost and the president for their consideration and discussion.
- After conferring with the provost and the president, the dean discusses the recommendations and the final report of the Periodic Evaluation Committee and the dean's evaluation with the department chair being evaluated. In the event of a decision of nonreappointment of a chair, a meeting is held to discuss the reasons for nonreappointment. The meeting usually includes the president, the provost, the dean, and the affected chair. This meeting can be waived by the affected chair. The final decision on reappointment comes from the president or, as customarily delegated, the provost.

General Criteria for Periodic Review and Evaluation Committees

In addition to any factors unique to the particular department, the evaluation and interpretation of the assessments supplied to the committee are to be made in light of consideration of the following categories and questions.

Leadership

1. What are the goals identified by the department, and to what extent have these goals been defined, planned for, or achieved by the chair's activities?
2. What plans have been formulated in the department for attaining these goals? Does the chair generate good departmental support for the goals?
3. How adequately has the chair guided the development of individual faculty members or otherwise provided for their guidance?
4. Is there evidence of the chair's concern for internal evaluations of change and of the ongoing programs of the department?
5. How are priorities for the allocation of resources determined? Is the chair instrumental in helping the department establish priorities and in fairly administering them?

Success with Departmental Affairs

1. Is the chair successful in maximizing program effectiveness in terms of resources available?

2. Is the chair effective in to improving the quality of teaching in the department?
3. Does the chair create and maintain an appropriate intellectual environment for the development of scholarship in the department?
4. Does the chair encourage and support efforts in research and publication (or their professional equivalent) by members of the department?
5. What evidence is there of improvement of quality of faculty, staff, and programs during the period being reviewed? What is the state of faculty morale?

Decision Making

1. Do faculty and students have adequate opportunity for participation in the development of academic policy, or academic programs, and in other appropriate activities within the department?
2. Within the context of (1) above, are the chair's decisions generally seen as fair and proper ones? Is full responsibility taken for decisions whenever appropriate?

Personal Qualities

1. Overall, how effectively does the chair communicate with others in the department?
2. What success (as departmental representative) has the chair had with administrative offices?
3. What is the quality of the chair's teaching?
4. What is the quality of the chair's scholarship?

Note #3: The specific assessment documents to be used are selected by the departments and colleges involved. They are distributed to the faculty in the department of the chair being evaluated; they are returned to the dean, and their confidentiality at the level of the dean is maintained.

Evaluation of Faculty

Purpose

Annual evaluations provide administrators, faculty, professionals, and staff an opportunity to meet with their immediate supervisors for a personal review of activities and accomplishments and a planning session for future objectives and goals. Leadership at the unit level can have a most direct and significant effect.

Peer evaluations, which come less frequently, attempt to put wider resources into the review processes, resources that are represented by one's colleagues and their collective experience and wisdom. Since promotion and tenure recommendations are heavily dependent on peer evaluations, it is essential that candidates have early indications from their colleagues regarding their progress in the areas of teaching, research/creative/scholarly activity, and service. The chair's role in these latter activities is to facilitate and coordinate the processes and to provide leadership wherever appropriate.

Categories of Faculty Activity

The three major areas of faculty activity are teaching, research/creative/scholarly activity, and service. Defining precisely the three major areas is often difficult and sometimes impossible; in any case, all activities of a faculty member must be considered as an integrated whole. Faculty activity in each of the areas may vary from year to year, or even semester to semester, according to the interests and abilities of the faculty member, and according to the needs of the department, college, or the University as agreed to by the chair and dean.

Departmental chairs should refer to the approved departmental **workload document** and the promotion and tenure policies for specific definitions of activities classified under teaching, research/creative/scholarly activity, and service.

Annual Evaluation of Faculty

The intent of the annual evaluation procedure is to:

- provide the faculty member and the chair with an opportunity for personal review.
- provide an accurate means of planning and evaluation of a faculty member's professional growth and development.
- provide each faculty member and the University with timely and documented information concerning the faculty member's achievements and goals.

In addition to the above, these appraisals form the basis for merit pay increase. Annual appraisals are not intended to take the place of either departmental or committee evaluations for promotion or tenure or of the periodic peer review of faculty.

~~Each year, the department chair meets with every faculty member in the department, including permanent part-time faculty, to discuss the faculty member's development during that year and plans for the coming year. The period covered in this meeting is the twelve-month period of time since the last appraisal.~~

the department chairperson reviews each full-time and part-time department member on a Faculty Appraisal Form. This review is discussed with the faculty member, and the form is signed by both the faculty member and the department chairperson. (Rev. 5/2025)
Prior to their annual meeting, the chair and the faculty member complete a draft of the Faculty Appraisal and Planning Form. During the discussion, the faculty member is shown a copy of the mid-ratings (median) for the entire department as established by the chair's preliminary evaluation of the department's faculty. In some cases, the rating of an individual faculty member may be changed as a result of this discussion. After all faculty have met with the chair, final mid-ratings (median) for the entire department are calculated and recorded on each faculty member's form. If the faculty member takes exception to any of the chair's ratings, the faculty member's rating for that item is also recorded on the form. After the interview has been completed, the chair and the faculty member sign the final copy. The faculty member's signature does not indicate agreement or disagreement with the appraisal, but simply that it was discussed in detail with the chair.

The data required at the top of the form are self-explanatory. Full-time is checked if the person is full-time with the University and if all University responsibilities are being evaluated in the appraisal and planning form even though the individual may not be 100 percent funded by the department. Part-time personnel, or personnel whose appraisals and planning form covers only part of their University responsibilities, are designated by indicating the proportion that is devoted to the department and is being appraised. For faculty with joint appointments, their appraisals and plans are combined on one form, after the evaluating chair has consulted with the second chair. Otherwise, two separate forms, based on separate evaluations and requiring separate interviews must be prepared.

For each of the three areas (teaching, research and creative activity, and service), the percent of the faculty member's workload assigned to that area is indicated. These percentages are very important because readers, in interpreting these appraisals, weigh each area according to the

percent of effort assigned to that area for the individual faculty member.

For each area or item, the chair writes a narrative appraisal of the faculty member's relevant activities and then rates the person's performance on that activity. The criteria to be used as the bases for these judgments are the criteria for performance of faculty members at each rank as codified under the promotion criteria accepted by the department, college, and University promotion and tenure committees, and by the Office of the Provost, and should take account of the individual faculty member's particular responsibilities.

A 9-point scale for the ratings anchored at the end points with the terms unsatisfactory and outstanding is utilized. N/A (Not Applicable) should be used only in those cases where there is no requirement for that individual to engage in that particular activity. In other cases, N/R (Not Rated) may be used. For example, a new Ph.D. might be given N/R in research and creative activity because that individual's research program is too new to be evaluated meaningfully but should not be given N/A because assistant professors, even new ones, are expected to engage in scholarly activity.

Faculty members may add other materials to support their ratings on their activities, especially where they believe that a different appraisal should have been given. Chairs also may add materials they consider appropriate. Along with a copy of the Faculty Appraisal and Planning Form, copies of additional materials should be provided to the faculty member, the chair/department, the dean, and the provost.

It is recognized that no chair or any single individual can duplicate the judgment of several committees, nor can performance during a single year determine one's promotion, nor can these procedures match the extensive and intensive evaluation that takes place when a person comes up for promotion. Faculty appraisal and planning sessions provide an opportunity: 1) for faculty members to inform their chairs more completely and accurately about their activities; 2) for chairs to give the faculty their best judgments on how well the faculty have fulfilled their responsibilities during the year prior to appraisal; and 3) for the faculty member and chair to discuss the faculty member's plans for the coming year. The intent is to determine mutually acceptable goals that develop the faculty member's strength or correct any weaknesses. (Rev 4/24/19).

Peer Evaluation of Faculty Members

Principles

- Faculty members at all ranks should be subject to periodic reviews at reasonable intervals of time.
- Reviews of individual faculty members normally will originate with the department. Such reviews should involve a substantial number of faculty members but not the chair.
- Faculty members under review have the right to supply such evidence that they feel may be necessary to a fair evaluation of their merits. This does not preclude departments or others properly involved in the review process from soliciting and using other evidence, but in every such instance the faculty member should be informed of the source of that evidence.
- Appropriate administrative officers may make independent evaluations within the review process. (This needs to be better defined)

Upon completion of the review, the faculty member should be apprised of the results. Faculty members shall be required to include their contract renewal reviews as part of their dossier for promotion and tenure; this should include the evaluations or reviews conducted by the established committees of the faculty and by the corresponding administrative office (e.g., department chair). (Rev. 5.10.07)

- Faculty members are entitled to the rights of appeal. Reviews of individual faculty are not a substitute for competency hearings of tenured faculty. They may serve, however, as a basis for instituting such hearings. In the event of a competency hearing, due process is observed, with the burden of proof residing with those instituting the hearing.

Credit by Examination (check to see if this still exists)

Overview

The University of Delaware provides to all currently matriculated students or registered Continuing Education non-degree students opportunities to obtain college credit by examination. The intent of the University's credit by examination policy is to provide students competence achieved through special learning situations such as professional experience or independent study, with the opportunity to demonstrate their competence. Credit by examination cannot be used when a student has previously enrolled in the University of Delaware course. It is not intended to allow students to take an exam on the chance of that they might pass it and thus earn credits toward graduation. A student may register only once for a particular examination under this program. Questions regarding specific courses that allow credit by examination should be directed to the appropriate department chairperson, dean, or director.

Procedure

The procedure for credit by examination is as follows:

1. The student completes the Student Section of the Credit by Examination form and takes it to the academic department where the credit is to be earned. At this time, the appropriate course title, alpha code and number, and the amount of credit hours should be completed on this form, along with the chairperson's signature indicating authorization to the question.
2. The student then takes the form to the Student Services Building and pays a fee per credit hour. Payment, which is not refundable, must be made in the semester in which the examination is authorized before the student is allowed to sit for an examination without submitting to the department the form indicating through the Cashier's stamp that the fee has been paid. No student is allowed to sit for an examination without submitting to the department the form indicating through the Cashier's stamp that the fee has been paid.
3. After the examination is taken, the Faculty Examiner enters the grade and the source of the evaluation on the form, which is then sent to the Registrar's Office for the appropriate course number, credit hours, and grade to be posted for the student.
4. The Registrar's Office enters credit by examination data in the student's record within 5-7 business days after receiving the grade.

Availability

Not all courses are eligible for credit by examination. Credit by examination for undergraduate or graduate courses can vary by academic department. Unless listed otherwise, credit by examination is not available for any seminar, experimental or independent study courses. A student interested in earning credit by examination for a specific course should contact the appropriate academic department.

Class Size

Class size is set by the Chair of the Department in consultation with the faculty of the department. Every effort must be made to insure an appropriate class size is maintained for all courses offered by a department. Absolute minimum size for undergraduate courses is ten students; for graduate courses (500-level and above) six students.

Exceptions to these minimums require the formal approval of the Dean in each case. (Rev. 5/2022)

According to University Faculty Senate policy (February 1975), "in those few cases where the number of either undergraduate students or graduate students does not permit adequate offerings, a graduate 600-numbered course may be combined with a separately numbered 400-level undergraduate course in the same section. (Check to see if this language is still in the handbook) The graduate component must then be offered with a graduate standard of expectation and grading" (emphasis added).

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