



SEAS POLICY AND PROCEDURE # 2016.1

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Title: SEAS Department Chair Appointment/Reappointment Policy

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Applies to

Department Chairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science.

Reason for policy

The policy described here provides guidelines regarding the terms and the process of appointment and reappointment of department chairs.

Policy Statement

Each department in Engineering is led by a department chair whose authority is described in the Engineering policy:

<https://engineering.virginia.edu/sites/default/files/common/offices/deans-office/policies-bylaws/Responsibilities%20of%20Department%20Chairs%20in%20the%20School%20of%20Engineering.pdf>

SEAS Department Chairs serve for terms of up to five years. For departments that are joint with another school with a different standard term duration, the chair can negotiate with both deans an appropriate term, not to exceed five years.

The steps to be used when a department chair is to be appointed or reappointed are as follows:

- If the current department chair wishes to step down before the end of his/her term, he/she must inform the dean in writing, preferably one year before the desired end to the chair appointment. Otherwise, one year before the end of the current chair's appointment term, the current chair and the dean will meet to discuss whether the chair should seek reappointment.

The dean or the dean's designee forms a committee of faculty. This committee consists of



- a) three to four faculty from the department in question, b) one to two faculty from another SEAS department, including a department chair or former department chair, who will chair the committee, c) one staff member from the department, and d) one student or former student. A person external to UVA, such as a member of the department's advisory board, may also be included in the committee. The committee makeup should reflect the department's ratio of tenure-track and AGF faculty, when possible.
- If the current chair is seeking reappointment, the committee is responsible for making a recommendation to the dean on the reappointment of the current chair.
 - If the current chair does not wish to be reappointed or is not reappointed by the dean, the committee fulfills the role of a search committee for a new chair.
- If the current chair requests consideration for reappointment, the chair must provide the committee a complete CV and a written report including:
- A summary of the chair's accomplishments during the term as chair,
 - A plan describing goals and strategies to be undertaken in the following term of office.
- The chair should also indicate the length of term requested, up to five years. Following a faculty and staff interview of the chair, and with input from the faculty, staff, and representatives of other stakeholder groups (undergraduate students, graduate students, advisory boards, etc., as appropriate), the committee makes a recommendation to the dean concerning the reappointment of the current chair. The decision to reappoint rests with the dean.
- If a new chair is to be appointed, the committee, with input from the current Chair and the department faculty, determines if the search should be internal or external to the department. If the committee determines that an external search is desirable, a request must be made to the dean outlining compelling reasons for the external search. The decision to initiate an external search rests with the dean.
- Whether the search for a new chair is internal or external, the committee assembles a pool of candidates holding the rank of professor. All candidates must provide the committee a complete CV and a written report including:
- A summary of the candidate's leadership and administrative experience,
 - A description of the candidate's recent research, teaching and service activities (or a copy of the last two annual reports),
 - A plan describing goals and strategies to be undertaken during the term as chair.
- Once a short-list of two to three of the best candidates has been determined, these candidates are interviewed in person by the dean, faculty, and staff.



Following these interviews, and with input from the faculty and staff, the committee submits a report to the dean summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of the viable candidates. The selection of the new chair rests with the dean.

- If the search for a new chair is unsuccessful, the committee recommends to the dean a viable interim chair who can serve until the position can be filled.
- In exceptional cases, the dean may extend a chair's appointment for reasons such as: continuity of the leadership team, completion of an important project, short-term absence of the next chair, etc.

This policy was approved by Dean West and the Dean's Advisory Council on January 24, 2022.