

APPOINTMENT, EVALUATION, ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the selection, evaluation, and the roles and responsibilities of school directors and department chairs.

B. Persons Affected

This policy applies to faculty of The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

C. Policy

The identification, recruitment and retention of qualified, talented and diverse School Directors and Department Chairs for all academic areas is a primary goal of UTRGV. The selection, roles and responsibilities, and evaluation process is defined through shared governance.

D. Procedures

1. *General* - Each academic school or department or equivalent unit shall have a director or chair who is a member of and serves as the academic leader of the school or department faculty and the designated administrator of the school or department. The school director or department chair reports to a dean and serves at the pleasure of the dean, with the concurrence of the appropriate Executive Vice President (EVP).
2. *Eligibility* - To be eligible to serve as a school director or department chair, an individual shall hold a tenured position in the respective department, hold an earned doctorate or other recognized degree in an area related to the school or department's academic program(s), and have demonstrated leadership, managerial, and administrative abilities.
3. *Selection* - The school director or department chair shall be selected by the dean with the concurrence of the appropriate EVP after an appropriate and inclusive search committee process. School or department faculty need to be involved in the selection process, which includes engaging with the dean on the needs and expectations of the school director or department chair. The selection process needs to incorporate a search process to identify the best leader for the school or department.
4. *Appointment* - The school director or department chair shall be appointed by the dean with the concurrence of the appropriate EVP.
 - a. *Term* - The term of appointment for a school director or department chair is flexible, with standard terms being three years. Terms may be renewed without limit as long as the school director or department chair continues to exceed expectations as defined by the department (Sec. D 6a). School directors and department chairs are appointed on the basis of a fiscal year (12 months).

- b. *Compensation* - Compensation for school directors and department chairs shall be based on the number of faculty and programs supervised and is set for the fiscal year – 12 months. Institutional guidelines should clarify adjustments to a department chair’s salary upon return to faculty status.
 - c. *Vacancies* - Vacancies in the position of school director or department chair shall be filled at the earliest possible date. After consultation with school or department faculty, interim directors or chairs may be appointed as interim director or chair for up to one year to temporarily fill a vacancy. On an exceptional basis, interim appointments may be extended by the dean with concurrence of the appropriate EVP.
 5. *Roles and Responsibilities* - The school director or department chair is responsible for consulting with and representing the interest of school or department faculty on policies, plans, and procedures that affect the school or department and is responsible for the overall leadership, management, and administration of the school or department, including:
 - a. Pursuing and achieving departmental excellence in teaching, research, and service;
 - b. Strategic planning and goal setting aligned with similar efforts at the college and university level;
 - c. Developing strategic initiatives and programming to help ensure student success;
 - d. Management and professional development of faculty members and staff;
 - e. Preparation and management of school or department budget;
 - f. Recruitment, retention, evaluation and promotion of faculty;
 - g. Development of curriculum;
 - h. Communication with faculty and administration;
 - i. Enforcement of applicable regulatory policies;
 - j. Maintaining an environment of collegiality and shared governance;
 - k. Addressing questions, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from faculty, staff, and students; and
 - l. Performing other duties as assigned by the dean.
 6. *Evaluation* – School directors and department chairs shall be evaluated by deans as part of the regular annual evaluation process. A school director or department chair’s performance should be reviewed relative to the assigned roles and responsibilities in Section 5 of UT Systemwide Policy 182 (UTS182).
 - a. *Evaluation Criteria* - Each school or department shall establish criteria to be used for evaluating the school director or department chair. The school director or department chair being reviewed shall be placed in one of the following categories:
 - i. exceeds expectations;
 - ii. meets expectations;
 - iii. does not meet expectations; or

- iv. unsatisfactory.
- b. At the beginning of the final year of their term, a department chair shall undergo an in-depth review process, including input from department faculty and staff.
- c. In addition to annual reviews, deans shall conduct periodic meetings with school directors and department chairs to ensure that roles and responsibilities are being met and areas of school/department, college, and institution priority are being addressed.
- 8. *Training* - UTRGV shall provide a program of orientation for new school directors and department chairs, as well as ongoing professional development on administrative processes and effective management and leadership practices for the benefit of all department chairs.
- 9. *Removal* - The school director or department chair may be removed from the administrative position at any time for reasonable cause at the discretion of the dean, and the concurrence of the appropriate EVP.

E. Definitions

1. *College* – An academic unit organized within the university, which is usually comprised of many departments or provides programs in multiple academic specialties/professional instruction. This academic unit may be referred to as a college or school, and is led by a dean reporting to a designated EVP.
2. *Department* – An academic unit organized within a college, usually devoted to a particular academic discipline. This academic unit may be referred to as a department, school, or center, and the unit's head (usually a chair or director) reports to the dean of the college.
3. *Department chair* – administrative leader of an academic unit appointed by the dean with the concurrence of the appropriate Executive Vice President; may refer to the chair of a department, the director of a school, or other equivalent academic unit.
4. *School director* – administrative leader of an academic department appointed by the dean with the concurrence of the appropriate Executive Vice President

F. Related Statutes or Regulations, Rules, Policies, or Standards

The University of Texas System Board of Regents' Rules and Regulations Rule 20102, Appointment of Institutional Administrative Officers

The University of Texas Systemwide Policy 182, Selection, Appointment, Roles and Responsibilities, Evaluation, and Training of Department Chairs at Academic Institutions

G. Dates Reviewed or Amended

Amended on July 15, 2019