

**Approval Date: February 6, 2012**
**Most Recent Approval Date: June 19, 2020**
**Parent Policy: [Recruitment Policy](#)**

## Department Chairs Selection Procedure

<b>Office of Administrative Responsibility:</b>	Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
<b>Approver:</b>	General Faculties Council Executive Committee
<b>Scope:</b>	Compliance with this University policy extends to all academic, support and excluded staff, postdoctoral fellows, and academic colleagues as outlined and defined in the Recruitment Policy (Appendix A and Appendix B: Definitions and Categories).

### Overview

The University of Alberta ("University") is committed to appointing the best-qualified candidates for its Department Chair ("Chair") employment opportunities and aspires to achieve an **equitable, diverse and inclusive** community of **senior administrators and employees** consistent with the mission set out in *its Strategic Plan for Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity* ("EDI Strategic Plan"). By adopting EDI principles and practices into its Department Chair search process, the University hopes to achieve diversity in the workplace and correct employment disadvantages experienced by **persons historically under-represented at the University**. These principles and practices are designed to ensure that access to the University's employment opportunities is equitable and inclusive by removing employment-related barriers - particularly those based on **protected grounds**. This will require periodic assessment of demographic, intellectual, and other aspects of diversity when contemplating a search. Committees must consider any diversity-related issues that exist with respect to the relevant employee group and must consider what steps it may reasonably take to address those issues.

With respect to the procedures for the selection of Department Chairs, the Board and GFC delegate their approval authority to the GFC Executive Committee for all matters of a routine editorial nature. For matters of a substantive nature, the GFC Executive Committee shall recommend to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC). The Provost and Vice-President (Academic) will determine what is of a routine/editorial or substantive nature.

### Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to:

- provide a general outline of the Chair selection process
- describe the composition of the Chair Selection Committee, how potential conflicts of interest are addressed and the requirements for quorum
- set out the Committee's Chair selection procedures.

## PROCEDURE

### 1. GENERAL OUTLINE OF CHAIR SELECTION PROCESS

- a. Where a Faculty is divided into Departments, for each Department there shall be appointed a Department Chair
- b. For Department Chairs, selection procedures (rather than review procedures) will be used in all cases unless a Faculty Council has adopted regulations that review or other procedures be used in that Faculty and such regulations have been approved by GFC. Notwithstanding the two basic procedures - selection and review - a certain amount of flexibility may also be permitted. For example, a Faculty may propose using selection

procedures in some cases and review in others. Some Faculty Councils have adopted an alternate procedure, approved by GFC, whereby Department Chairs are appointed for an initial term with consideration of renewal by review for one additional term before search and selection procedures are invoked. This is the case in the following Faculties:

- i. Faculty of Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences
  - ii. Faculty of Arts
  - iii. Faculty of Education
  - iv. Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry
  - v. Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine
- c. Additionally, Faculties should review the demographic diversity of their entire group of chairs when undertaking a Chair selection to assess equity and inclusion. When necessary, they should take proactive measures in Chair selection to ensure that overall, the composition of the entire group of Chairs is inclusive of persons historically under-represented. Such measures should be designed in consultation with the Provost and General Counsel and should be consistent with this Policy and its associated Procedures.
- d. The letter of appointment must specify whether reappointment is to be by selection or review. The conditions of employment and criteria for future evaluation of the person selected must be specified fully at the time of the appointment if these differ from statutory duties or standard expectations. Acceptance of an appointment is taken as indicating acceptance of the procedures and criteria to be used at the end of the term. The letter of appointment is binding on both the Board and the person being appointed.
- e. The term of office for a Department Chair will not exceed five (5) years.
- f. The process of selection or review at the end of a term is initiated by the Dean of the Faculty concerned. The process must be initiated at least six (6) months prior to the end of the incumbent's term. The Dean shall be responsible for ensuring that recruitment and decision-making processes within their respective areas of accountability are equitable, appropriately documented, and contribute to an equitable, diverse and inclusive community of employees.

## 2. THE CHAIR SELECTION COMMITTEE

### General Composition of Selection Committees

- a. The Committee will normally consist of the following voting members:
  - Dean of the Faculty concerned, or designee, Chair.
  - Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, or designee.
  - Provost and Vice-President (Academic), or designee.
- b. Three (3) Academic Faculty Members from the Department concerned, elected by the Academic Faculty Members of the Department.
  - i. In practice, among the departmental electorate there will be both declared and undeclared candidates for the Chair's position at the time of the election. Declared candidates may not be elected as departmental representatives; however, these Academic Faculty Members should be included in the electorate. The actual election could be conducted by one of the following methods:
    - The Dean of the Faculty or designee convenes and chairs a special departmental meeting.
    - The Dean arranges for a secret ballot.
    - The Dean approves election procedures proposed by the Department.No Academic Faculty member of the Department in question should be excluded from voting in this election, because of a part-time appointment.
  - ii. Academic Faculty Members cannot serve as representatives on selection and review committees for Department Chairs if they are on leave during the time the committee will meet.

- c. One (1) academic faculty member, normally not a member of the Faculty of which the Department concerned is a part, will be selected from a panel which will consist of fifteen (15) members from Categories A1.1, A1.6, or their counterparts in A1.5 and A1.7, who shall be elected by GFC.
  - Membership on the panel shall be for three years staggered. (The first such panel under this clause shall consist of five members with a one-year term, five members with a two-year term, and five members with a three-year term.)
  - The Chair of a Committee shall notify the Office of the Provost when a Selection Committee is being formed and the Office of the Provost shall then notify the Chair of the Committee which member of the panel will be serving on the Committee.
  - The Office of the Provost will designate the member of the panel for a particular Committee after consultation with the Chair of the GFC Nominating Committee. Committee members designated by the Provost should, to the extent possible, take into account the need for the Committee to be inclusive of persons historically under-represented.
  - Determination of the staff member to serve on a particular Committee shall be by rotation with the proviso that a member who has a conflict of interest may decline to serve on a particular Committee.
  - If a Committee has not completed its activities when the term of a GFC-elected representative on the panel finishes, that individual shall continue to be the GFC representative on that Committee until the selection procedure is complete.
- d. One (1) full-time member of the support staff (Category S1.0 and S2.0) from the Department concerned
  - i. The support staff Committee member shall be elected by the full-time support staff (Category S1.0 and S2.0) in that Department.
  - ii. The Dean's Office shall be responsible for directing the election of any support staff member serving on the Committee.
- e. Undergraduate student
  - i. All Departments that enroll undergraduate students must include one undergraduate student on their Committees, as selected by the appropriate Department Student Association using whatever method the Association deems suitable.
  - ii. If the Department Student Association does not exist, then the appropriate Faculty Student Association will be responsible for selecting the undergraduate student from the Department.
  - iii. Once selected, the name and contact information of the student representative must be forwarded by the appropriate Department or Faculty Student Association to the Department Office, and the Students' Union.
  - iv. If the Department Student Association (or the student Faculty Association) is unable to find an undergraduate student, the Students' Union will be responsible for the selection of the undergraduate representative from the Department.
- f. Graduate student
  - i. All Departments that enroll graduate students must include a graduate student on their Committee, as selected by the Department Graduate Students' Association by whatever means the Association deems suitable.
  - ii. Once a student is selected, the name and contact information of that student must be forwarded to the Department Office and Graduate Students' Association.
  - iii. If the Department Graduate Student Association is unable to find a graduate student, or if there is no Department Graduate Students' Association, then the Graduate Students' Association will be responsible for the selection of the graduate student representative from the Department.
  - iv. If the Department enrolls fewer than ten (10) graduate students, the department may request permission to waive graduate student representation from the Provost.
- g. For members designated by a Dean or by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic), such designations should, to the extent possible, seek to ensure that the committee composition is inclusive of persons historically under-represented within the discipline, field, and Department.
- h. The Provost may approve exceptions to this procedure and may consult with the GFC Executive.

## Special Cases for General Composition of Selection Committee

## a. Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

Instead of the three (3) Academic Faculty Members described in 2.a.iv., the Committees in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry will normally consists of the following voting members:

- i. Three (3) full-time Academic Staff members (A1.0) or full-time Management and Professional Staff (Excluded) (D1.2) from the Department. At least two (2) must be from the Academic Faculty Members (A1.1 and/or A1.6). Of note, part-time Academic Faculty Members from the Department (members from categories A1.5 and A1.7) are eligible to elect to, but not sit on Committees.
- ii. In addition, Committees in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry will normally include the following:
  - a. In Clinical Departments: Two (2) Academic Colleagues from the categories of Special "Continuing" (C1.1) and/or Clinical Academic Colleague (C1.2) from the department elected by these groups.
  - b. In Clinical Departments: One Resident, if the Department has five (5) or more residents elected by the residents in the Department.
  - c. In departments with ten (10) or more Academic Teaching Staff Career Status, Academic Teaching Staff Term 12, and/or Trust/Research Academic Staff (A3.1): up to two (2) full-time academic staff members elected from and by these groups. For Departments with less than ten (10) members in these categories, one (1) member elected from and by these groups.
  - d. One (1) member of the Faculty Learning Committee (FLC) as selected by the Chair of FLC.
  - e. The Alberta Health Services Edmonton Zone Medical Director unless the Dean, in discussion with the Edmonton Zone Medical Director, accepts a delegate. If a concurrent selection process is occurring as per 3.b.ii, below, this position will remain vacant.

## b. Faculty of Engineering

- i. Only Selection Committees are formed at the end of an incumbent's term.
- ii. The term of a Department Chair shall be five years and at the end of that term the office is considered to be vacant.
- iii. There shall be the addition of one (1) Academic Faculty member elected by Engineering Faculty Council from another Department within the Faculty.
- iv. There shall be one (1) undergraduate student member, chosen by and from the undergraduate students of the Department concerned, and one (1) graduate student member, chosen by and from the graduate students of the Department concerned.
- v. The Provost shall not be a member.

## c. Department of Psychology (Faculty of Arts)

- i. Both the Dean of Arts and the Dean of Science shall serve on the Selection Committee for the Chair of the Department of Psychology, with the Dean of Arts in the Chair.

## d. Small Departments

- i. For Departments with fewer than six (6) Academic Faculty Members, two (2) of the three (3) Committee members referred to in 2(b) above will be replaced by two (2) Academic Faculty Members elected by the Academic Faculty Members elected by the Faculty Council concerned.
- ii. For Departments with six (6) to ten (10) Academic Faculty Members, inclusive, one (1) of the three (3) committee members referred to in 2(b) above will be replaced by one (1) Academic Faculty member elected by the Academic Faculty Members of the Faculty Council concerned.
- iii. The slate of candidates put forward to Faculty Council should, to the extent possible, be considerate of relevant diversity-related issues. Specifically, the pool should be inclusive of persons historically under-represented relative to the discipline, field, and Department.

## e. Department of Biomedical Engineering

- i. The Provost or designee shall be a member.
- ii. The Committee shall include the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering or their designees.
- iii. The Committee shall be chaired by the Dean or designee of one Faculty decided by mutual

agreement between the Deans of the Faculties, or in the event of no agreement, by the Provost or designee.

- iv. The selection of Academic Faculty Members from the Department must be such that at least one Full-time Member shall be from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry and one from the Faculty of Engineering or, if this is not possible, from Part-time or Cross Members.
- v. The selection of Members shall, to the extent possible, seek to ensure that the Committee composition is inclusive of persons historically under-represented at the University.

#### Changes in Committee Composition

- a. In the event that the majority of the statutory members of a Committee, or the Dean, is of the opinion that divisions within the Department are such that the normal composition of the Committee is inappropriate, the statutory members, or the Dean, shall recommend to the Provost that a Committee with a different composition be established. The Provost is authorized to establish a revised composition of the Committee, bearing in mind the principles underlying the normal composition.

#### Responsibilities of Committee members

- a. The Committee Chair is responsible for
  - making Committee members aware of their obligations under applicable University policy, in particular, the *Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy*, the University's *Employment Equity Statement* and the EDI Strategic Plan all as may be amended from time to time and documenting and confirming these efforts
- b. providing Committee members with applicable resources, including but not limited to, training offered by the Disclosure, Assurance and Institutional Research and Human Resource Services (HRS).
- c. Committee members are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the principles of equity, diversity and inclusivity concepts of bias awareness and discrimination the obligations under applicable University policies, in particular, the *Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy*, the University's *Employment Equity Statement* and the EDI Strategic Plan all as may be amended from time to time.

#### Conflict of Interest

- a. Notwithstanding the above, an incumbent shall not be eligible to vote in the election of Committee members.
- b. In no instance shall the membership of a selection committee include
  - a current candidate for the position of Chair
  - the outgoing Chair
  - any person with an apparent conflict of interest as determined by the Provost.
- c. All Committee members shall complete conflict of interest declarations, and any identified **conflict** of interest must be managed in accord with University's Conflict Policy and its associated procedures.
- d. The Provost in consultation with Faculty Relations shall determine whether a conflict can be managed.
- e. Where a conflict can be managed, the management of it shall be approved by the Provost in consultation with Faculty Relations.
- f. Where a conflict cannot be managed to the satisfaction of the Provost, a Committee member may be dismissed and replaced through the selection processes outlined above.

#### Quorum

- a. No more than one (1) member of a Committee can be absent from any meeting at which a final decision is made.
- b. To participate in a final decision and ensure fairness, Committee members must have been present at all sessions where all candidates were considered.

### 3. CHAIR SELECTION PROCEDURES

#### 1. General Selection Procedure

*Soliciting applicants*

- a. The Committee shall invite suggestions concerning possible candidates from the members of the Department concerned and encourage the nomination of persons historically under-represented at the University and the Department.
- b. In addition to accepting applications from qualified candidates a Committee may actively solicit applications from apparently qualified persons including persons historically under-represented at the University.
- c. The Committee should ensure, to the extent possible, that the applicant pool is inclusive of persons historically under-represented and may continue the solicitation of applications and extend any applicable deadline for submitting applications for this purpose.

*Advertisement*

- a. All vacancies must be advertised within the University.
- b. Advertisements will appear simultaneously or later than postings on University of Alberta Careers website.
- c. If a vacancy could, potentially, be filled by an appointee from outside the University, then the vacancy must be advertised in accordance with the *Academic Staff Posting Procedure*, including media accessed by persons historically under-represented at the University.

*Evaluation of qualifications and selection of candidate*

- a. The Committee may consult with the incumbent Chair and/or other sources in the Department where it requires additional information concerning the duties, responsibilities, authorities, *et cetera* of the Department Chair position in question.
- b. The Committee will establish the required qualifications, skills, abilities, competencies and credentials for the Chair position in an objective, equitable and inclusive way.
- c. The Committee should have regard to inclusive and explicit criteria for the Chair position in reviewing and evaluating applications.
- d. The Committee Chair should
  - Ensure the Committee documents practices for ensuring the equitable assessment of candidates
  - Employs equitable and inclusive indicators for determining the best-qualified candidate
  - Ensure that Committee evaluations are supported by evidence and that each candidate's strengths and weaknesses are evaluated equitably and consistently.
- e. All candidates selected for an interview should be provided with a common set of instructions, including relevant expectations, protocols, and evaluation criteria.
- f. The Committee will fulfil the university's duty to accommodate by giving candidates the opportunity to ask for reasonable accommodation during the application and interview process.
- g. Where the candidate is from outside the University, the Committee shall serve as both the selection committee in relation to the administrative appointment and the advisory selection committee in relation to the academic staff appointment.
- h. If the incumbent is a candidate, past performance must be considered by the Committee.
- i. The Committee shall explicitly address any career path choices or interruptions as they might affect the assessment of the candidate.
- j. At each stage of the selection process the Committee members should be allocated sufficient time to consider all materials, information, and candidates in an equitable manner.
- k. The Committee should ensure, to the extent possible, that the pool of shortlisted candidates is inclusive of persons historically under-represented relative to the discipline, field and the pool of Department Chairs.
- l. Where candidates are determined to be similarly qualified for the Chair position, the final selection/recommendation decision will favour achieving diversity in the workplace and correcting employment disadvantages experienced by persons historically under-represented at the University.
- m. When the Committee has made its decision, the Dean of the Faculty has the authority to accept or reject the committee's recommendation. If the Dean accepts the recommendation, the Dean offers the appointment to the candidate and, following the candidate's acceptance, advises the Provost. The Provost formally advises the candidate on behalf of the University.

- n. If the Dean of the Faculty doesn't accept the Committee's recommendation, the Dean will explain their reasons to the Committee and the Committee will then discuss whether another candidate should go forward, or whether to terminate the search and begin again.

## 2. Special Cases for Selection Procedures

### a. Engineering Chairs

- i. The Committee shall recommend one (1) candidate as the proposed Chair.
- ii. The full-time academic staff of the Department concerned shall, by a simple majority vote, indicate acceptance or rejection of the Committee's recommendation. The ballot paper shall read:

I accept the Committee's recommendation for Chair.

I reject the Committee's recommendation for Chair.

- iii. In the event of rejection, the committee shall recommend another candidate.
- iv. The vote, by secret ballot, shall be conducted by the Committee in accordance with the procedures laid down by the Faculty of Engineering.
- v. The Dean, as Chair of the Committee, shall make the vote known to the successful candidate, including abstentions.

### b. Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

- i. For Clinical Departments where it is possible that the Department Chair and the Zone Clinical Department Head (Alberta Health Services (AHS)) could be the same individual, a concurrent committee (led by AHS) will be formed, that will meet, shortlist, and interview jointly with the University's selection committee.
- ii. The final vote will be a preferential ballot with University and AHS votes counted separately. The total University vote represents the committee's recommendation for Department Chair to the Dean. The total AHS vote represents the AHS committee's recommendation for Zone Clinical Department Head to the Zone Medical Director. The Dean and the Zone Medical Director will then discuss whether or not to offer both roles concurrently to one candidate.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use. [▲Top](#)

<b>Equity/Equitable</b>	In the context of this policy, equity is about fair access to employment and the opportunity to succeed in this domain. Employment equity principles, policies, and practices promote [or facilitate] access, representation, opportunities, and meaningful participation of persons historically under-represented.
<b>Diversity</b>	In the context of this policy, diversity refers to the demographic and identity difference and-variety within the University's workforce, including that based on the protected grounds. More broadly, within the University, diversity also encompasses difference or variety in education, ideas, perspectives, opinions, heuristics, disciplines, methodologies, epistemologies, faculties, skills, and learning opportunities.
<b>Inclusion/Inclusivity</b>	In the context of this policy, inclusion is a principle and practice that values and cultivates the full and meaningful participation and representation of persons historically under-represented in the University's workforce.
<b>Employee(s)</b>	A person employed by the University and defined under <i>Recruitment Policy (Appendix A) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff, Postdoctoral Fellows, Academic Colleagues and Excluded Academic</i>

	<i>Staff or Recruitment Policy (Appendix B) Definition and Categories of Support Staff.</i>
<b>Persons historically under-represented</b>	Women, Indigenous persons (First Nations, Métis, Inuit), members of visible minority groups, persons with disabilities, persons who identify with under-represented sexual orientations, gender identity or expression.
<b>Senior Administrators</b>	President, Vice-Presidents, Deputy Provost, Associate Vice-Presidents, Vice-Provosts, Deans, Directors and Chairs.
<b>Protected Grounds</b>	Refers to those grounds set out and defined in the <i>Alberta Human Rights Act</i> and in the University's <i>Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy</i> (UAPPOL) which are: race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry, place of origin, marital status, source of income, family status, sexual orientations or political beliefs.
<b>University Employment Equity Statement</b>	"The University of Alberta is committed to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workforce. We welcome applications from all qualified persons. We encourage women; First Nations, Métis and Inuit; members of visible minority groups; persons with disabilities; persons of any sexual orientations or gender identity and expression; and all those who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas and the University to apply."
<b>Conflict</b>	<b>Conflict</b> Conflict of interest, conflict of commitment, or institutional conflict as defined in the University of Alberta Conflict Policy – Conflict of Interest and Commitment and Institutional Conflict Policy.

## **FORMS**

There are no forms for this Procedure. [\[▲Top\]](#)

## **RELATED LINKS**

Should a link fail, please contact [uappol@ualberta.ca](mailto:uappol@ualberta.ca). [\[▲Top\]](#)

[Academic Staff Posting and Advertising Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Appointment of Faculty Procedure](#) (UAPPOL)

[Recruitment Policy \(Appendix A\) Definition and Categories of Academic Staff, Postdoctoral Fellows, Academic Colleagues and Excluded Academic Staff](#) (UAPPOL)

[Recruitment Policy \(Appendix B\) Definition and Categories of Support Staff](#) (UAPPOL)

[Selection of Department Chairs Procedure \(Appendix A\): Roles and Responsibilities](#) (UAPPOL)

[Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Best Practices in Faculty Recruitment and Hiring](#) (University of Alberta)