

SEARCH PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND SCHOOL DEANS

([Proposal 16-92](#))

([Proposal 6-11](#))

Senate Procedures 805.1.1

Background:

The Senate has the responsibility and authority to establish procedures for the selections of Deans, School Deans and Department Chairs ([Senate Constitution Article III.F.1.a.10](#)). Following the adoption of the departmental governance policies defined by [Senate Proposal 16-92](#), university units established revised procedures for searching for new Chairs.

Over the last twenty years, the University administration has come to believe that these procedures should be defined by University-wide policy and not on a unit-by-unit basis. Among the rationales for this change is the fact that Chairs and School Deans are administrative officers and thus serve at the discretion of the president, but units have rights of appeal as defined in the grievance policy outlined by [Senate Proposal 23-00](#). As an extension of this fact, units have the power of review and comment during searching, hiring, and evaluating/reviewing.

Academic units and members of the administrative team have disagreed whether an individual unit can direct a search to be for internal or external candidates. This proposal mandates an **open** search for a School Dean and grants the authority to resolve this issue to the appropriate **College** Dean or the Provost in consultation with the department for a Chair search.

This proposal contains language duplicated from current, approved charter procedures for both School Deans (i.e., Forestry) and Department Chairs (i.e., Chemical Engineering). Editorial and other changes have been made to the material which afford the following differences:

1. All School Dean searches will be open in scope.

Proposal Text:

This policy applies to Departmental Chairs and Deans of Schools only. Search provisions for Deans of Colleges and the Dean of the Graduate School are governed by [Proposal 19-07](#) (**Senate Procedures 802.1.1**) and [Proposal 17-07](#) (**Senate Procedures 803.1.1**) respectively.

I. Searching for School Deans and Associate School Deans

The School Charter shall specify who is eligible to vote at all stages of the search process.

A. Searching for a School Dean and Appointing an Associate School Dean

1. In the event of a vacancy in the School Dean's position, the Provost shall appoint a search committee consisting of at least five faculty members from the School. The Provost will consult with the faculty of the School on these appointments. The search committee will include the following persons:

- i. At least four of these faculty members must be tenured.
- ii. One faculty member from another unit on campus
- iii. A member of the advisory board
- iv. The Provost in consultation with the faculty of the School will also appoint a staff representative.
- v. One student (chosen by the School's undergraduate student organizations).
- vi. One graduate student member (chosen by the School's graduate students).

2. The search committee shall conduct an open search, in accordance with all applicable State and Federal laws and University policies and guidelines. For guidance regarding procedures and methods of deliberation, the committee

will consult **Senate Procedures 802.1.1** pertaining to the search procedures for College Deans. The committee will identify the best-qualified individual. The Provost will make final selection of the new School Dean. Approval of the Board of Control is also necessary if the appointment includes tenure.

3. If the school has an Associate School Dean position, and in the event of a vacancy in this position, the School Dean shall appoint an Associate School Dean from the tenured/tenure-track members of the School faculty. The School Dean's choice for Associate School Dean must be confirmed by a secret ballot of the voting members of the School (as defined in the School's Charter) within 60 days. In the event the faculty does not confirm the Associate School Dean, a new Associate School Dean will be chosen by the School Dean from the tenure-track members of the School faculty and confirmed by another secret ballot vote.

4. **Appointment of Interim or Acting School Dean:** When it is evident that the School Dean will be unable to perform his/her duties for more than one semester or a search for a School Dean has failed, the Provost will appoint an Interim School Dean. If a search has failed, a new search will begin at the earliest possible opportunity.

II. Search Procedure for Department Chairs

A. Searching for Department Chairs

1. The Department Charter shall specify who is eligible to vote at all stages of the search process.

2. Procedure for Determination as to Internal or Open Search: When a new Chair must be selected, the Dean of the College will visit the department and discuss whether the search will be open or restricted only to internal candidates. The College Dean will consider the will of the faculty, and after consultation with the Provost, will determine if the search will be an internal only or open search. Both external candidates and current Michigan Tech faculty are encouraged to apply for any open search, since the distinction is made here only in reference to publication and marketing of the search.

3. Search Committee: The Search Committee for the Chair will be elected through a secret ballot organized by the Senator of the department and one other faculty member selected by the department's faculty. The number of members on the Search Committee will depend on the number of faculty in a department. Departments with twelve members or fewer will have a committee of at least three members. Departments consisting of more than twelve faculty members will have a committee of at least four faculty members. In each case, one additional person from outside of the department will be appointed by the College dean. If the department has professional staff, one staff member should be elected by the staff to be on the committee. The chair of the search committee will be elected by the committee at its first meeting. At least one person on the search committee has received training in recruiting strategies to improve diversity and on the legal aspects of faculty hiring. At the first convening of the Search Committee, a representative from Human Resources will be invited to review appropriate hiring procedures. Following this consultation and review, the committee will determine the process for evaluating and voting upon candidates after they visit campus. The procedures must comply with Human Resources policy that promotes best practices ensuring equal opportunity to all interviewed candidates. No committee member can be under consideration as a candidate.

4. Search Procedure: The Search Committee, with input from the present Chair, the Dean, and the Affirmative Action Officer, will produce the first draft of the position description and position advertisement. The Search Committee will complete the Request for Posting Memo and send it to the Human Resources Office. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the search conforms to current legal requirements, and for maintaining the applicant flow log. Applications for the position are made to the Chair of the Search Committee. Departmental faculty may nominate candidates. In the case of an open search, the position will be advertised in appropriate professional journals, and faculty should distribute position descriptions to their professional colleagues.

5. Short List of Candidates: The Search Committee will review the applications to produce a short list of candidates. These candidates will be invited for an interview. For each candidate who accepts the interview invitation, the committee should attempt to obtain independent assessments from referees not listed by the candidates and should solicit faculty help in identifying these referees. If the search is only internal, all applicants will be on the short list of candidates. The committee is expected to obtain faculty input during the screening process. No committee member can be under consideration as a candidate.

6. Candidate Interviews: The application materials of each candidate on the short list will be available to all departmental faculty and staff. The letters of recommendation will be accessible to members of the department, but the letters cannot be copied. The candidates will be informed of this requirement, and will be furnished with copies of the position description, departmental charter, statements of departmental goals, and recent annual departmental report.

While each candidate is on campus, the Search Committee will make arrangements for each individual to make two presentations:

1. A technical presentation in his/her field of specialization that includes trends, directions and opportunities for research in the field. (In the case of an internal search, this presentation can be waived.)
2. A presentation that may include, but is not limited to the following issues: the candidate's administrative philosophy and plans for meeting short and long term goals; The direction of undergraduate and graduate education in the department; Resources needed to attain the goals.

The Search Committee will arrange the candidate's schedule and set up appointments with appropriate administrators and other persons outside of the department (Dean, VP for Research, Provost, other department chairs if overlapping research interest).

7. Selection of Chair: After the candidates have completed their interviews, the Search Committee will arrange a meeting of faculty and staff to discuss the candidates. The Search Committee will solicit the opinions of graduates and undergraduate students. The Search Committee will conduct a vote by secret ballot to determine if the candidates are acceptable or unacceptable to serve as Department Chair. The staff vote takes place first, and will be advisory to the faculty vote. The search committee will tabulate the votes. The search committee will prepare recommendations based on ballot results and strength and weaknesses of the acceptable candidates and meets with the Dean to discuss the recommendations. No candidate will be deemed acceptable for department chair who does not obtain a majority vote of the faculty. The Dean has the final responsibility for making the appointment subject to the approval of the Provost and President.

8. Failed Search: If the Department finds no acceptable candidates following the interviews or the Dean is unable to hire a chair from the list of finalists advanced by the Search Committee, the search is considered to have failed. The Dean will appoint an Interim Chair as provided by II.A. 9.

9. Appointment of Interim or Acting Chairs: When it is evident that the Department Chair will be unable to perform his/her duties for more than one semester or Chair search has failed, the Dean will appoint an Interim Chair. Interim Chairs serving more than two years must be evaluated as detailed in Section B. If a search has failed, a new search will begin at the earliest possible opportunity.

An Interim Chair is different from an "Acting Chair" or someone serving as "Next In Charge." If a Department Chair expects to be absent from campus or otherwise unable to perform his or her duties for a period of time, they appoint another individual to serve as "Next In Charge." For somewhat longer absences, they can appoint someone as Acting Chair. "Next In Charge" appointments are intended only for very brief periods, generally lasting a few days. A serving Chair can appoint an Acting Chair to cover medium-term absences lasting up to one semester. If a Chair will be absent for more than one semester, he or she should step down and allow the Dean to appoint an Interim Chair.

III. How to conduct a Secret Ballot Procedure

Secret ballots will be conducted using a double envelope process. The marked ballot will be placed into a small sealed envelope. This envelope must be sealed into a larger envelope, which must be signed by the voter across the flap. The Committee (Promotion and Tenure in the case of a School or the Search or Evaluation Committee in the case of a Chair) must be present when the votes are separated from the large outer envelope by the School Dean's or Chair's Administrative Associate. The School Dean's or Chair's Administrative Associate also will record the names of the voters. Finally, the School Dean's or Chair's Administrative Associate will mix the smaller envelopes and give them to the appropriate Committee for vote counting. The department or school can decide if the counting is conducted with a quorum of faculty members present or if the committee can count the votes.

IV. Confidentiality

Proposal 16-92:

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Proposal 6-11:

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Section IV amended to match University Confidentiality

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