

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

(Proposal 16-92)
(Proposal 6-11)
(Proposal 7-16)
(Proposal 3-17)

Senate Procedures 506.1.1

I. Introduction

These are the procedures for the evaluation of department chairs. Department chairs, like all academic administrators, serve at the pleasure of the president. Department chairs report directly to a college dean, who in turn reports to the provost, who in turn reports to the president.

All materials related to an evaluation, including any recommendations, are considered confidential and are shared only with those in the chair's supervisory chain of command.

II. Frequency of Review

In no case should a chair be reviewed more than once per calendar year.

Mandatory review - The normal term of appointment for a department chair is six years. A mandatory review will take place during the third year of a chair's term. The department chair will need to successfully complete the third-year review to serve the full six-year

appointment. The review will be initiated within the first seven weeks of the fall semester.

Optional (Unscheduled) interim review - A review may also be initiated by the college dean or by the department's constituency (by a simple majority vote) at any time. Reviews may be initiated by a department's constituency during the first year of a chair's term only if the review is approved by a two-thirds majority vote.

At any point in the review process, the department chair may decide to discontinue the review process. In this case, the review process ends, and all material related to the review process will be destroyed. In the event that the chair discontinues the review process, the end of that same semester will mark the completion of that chair's appointment.

During the first two weeks of year six the Dean of the college will conduct a survey all the faculty and staff in the department deemed eligible by the unit's charter to participate in the chair review and selection processes. Survey question 1 will ask the faculty member whether or not they would like to be nominated as a chair candidate. Question 2 will list all eligible faculty in the department and ask faculty to indicate anyone they wish to nominate as a candidate for the chair position. The Dean and department search committee will meet with nominees to confirm their willingness or unwillingness to apply for the chair position. In the event eligible and willing nominee(s) are identified in addition to the incumbent, a search will be conducted.

The decisions to conduct a review, or search and to limit the search to internal candidates only (meaning those who are currently employed by Michigan Tech) will be made by the dean in consultation with the provost. Individuals who have formerly served or are currently serving as chair of the department will be eligible to apply in either case. As is the case for all chairs, a reappointed chair will undergo a mandatory review at the beginning of the third year of their appointment.

III. Constituency and Chair Review Committee

The department shall specify the constituency, who is eligible to participate in the review process, who is eligible to vote, the structure of the review committee, and the selection of review committee members. The department shall specify the constituency for whom the survey and ballot are directed. The committee may not include the current department chair or any faculty or staff member who has a conflict of interest regarding the current department chair's review. The college dean will address any conflict-of-interest situation that arises with respect to any individual's eligibility to serve as a member of the review committee.

The College Dean will appoint a member from outside the department to the review committee. This external committee member functions as an observer who ensures the integrity of the review process. The external member also acts as a liaison between the committee and the college dean.

The review committee will be charged with following senate procedures 506.1.1 (this document) and 507.1.1 to conduct and complete the review. The voting process shall follow senate procedures using a process agreed upon by the department. In case of inconsistency, the intent of the senate procedures will take precedence.

The review committee shall appoint a chair from within the department, who will act as a liaison between the department and the college dean. Any question related to the implementation or interpretation of this procedure should be directed to the college dean through the chair of the review committee.

The entire University community recognizes the effort that service on a review committee requires. It is important that everyone involved with the process be vigilant in maintaining collegiality and professionalism. It is also important that the confidential nature of the process be respected in order to protect the constituency, the review committee, and the individual being reviewed. The review of a chair is an important task, and the strength and integrity of the institution depends upon it being conducted in a way that encourages continual improvement of the University as a whole.

IV. Review Process Initiation

The college dean will initiate the review process. The review committee will be established based on the guidance provided in the department's charter and/or bylaws. The committee should be established within two weeks of the dean's request. The dean will appoint a member from outside the unit to serve on the committee. The dean will also ask the department chair to write their self-evaluation report (Section V. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation) and provide it to the dean within two weeks.

V. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation

The department chair should prepare a written document evaluating their performance for the period of evaluation. This document should include but need not be limited to:

- a. addressing each of the charges given at the time of their appointment

- b. achieving stated goals of the department for the period of review
- c. budget and personnel management
- d. quality of academic programs
- e. quality of departmental research and scholarship
- f. research and scholarship of the chair, if applicable
- g. future needs and directions of the department
- h. any issue that the department chair thinks is controversial in the department and the effort they made to mitigate the controversy

The department chair is encouraged to provide comparative quantitative data in this report where relevant.

VI. First Meetings of the Chair Review Committee

The college dean shall call the first meeting of the chair review committee to review its charge, the procedures it should operate under, and the deadlines it should meet. A suggested timetable for the review committee's activities is provided in Section XVI. Sample Timeline of the Review Process. The college dean will give the following documents to the review committee:

- a. redacted copy of the letter of appointment describing the charge given to the department chair
- b. copy of the self-evaluation report of the department chair (see Section V. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation)
- c. the set of survey questions (see Section VII. Survey Instrument)

The review committee shall decide if additional materials are needed (for example, comparative data from institutional analysis) and seek to procure such material.

The review committee shall elect its chair, establish its structure and inform the college dean and the entire department constituency of the structure, purpose, and membership of the

review committee.

The review committee will forward the chair's self-evaluation to the entire department constituency. Distribution of the self-evaluation will be followed by a meeting of the department constituency. The purpose of this meeting will be for the department chair to respond to questions and provide clarification about their self-evaluation.

VII. Survey Instrument

The survey instrument will have the following components.

- a. a set of questions provided by the college dean
- b. a set of questions provided by the review committee

The survey instrument must address (but not be limited to) the following issues:

- a. guidance and management of the quality and growth of the academic programs within the department
- b. guidance and support of research activities within the department
- c. practice of sound financial management within the department
- d. management and guidance of personnel within the department, including professional growth and retention
- e. definition of goals within the department and progress of the department toward those established goals

Survey questions that have been used in the past by various units can be a useful guide and are found here: <http://www.mtu.edu/senate/evaluations/forms/>

If the department requires the tabulation of survey results and the conduct of the ballot to be done separately for the faculty and staff in the department's constituency, two separate instruments are required. The two instruments may be different (see section VIII. Unit Constituency Input).

The survey instrument(s) may also include the following:

- a. up to two questions that the department chair may provide if they choose
- b. an opportunity to provide additional written comments that will only be viewed by the review committee and those in the chair's supervisory chain of command. Comments will remain confidential and will not be viewed by the reviewee.

VIII. Unit Constituency Input

The department chair's self-evaluation report, redacted letter of appointment, and the survey instrument should be made available to the entire department constituency. This should be followed by a meeting of the department constituency without the department chair present. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss, potentially change, and approve the survey instrument.

If the unit requires that survey results and ballots be tabulated separately for faculty and staff, then faculty and staff in the unit constituency will meet separately to discuss their respective survey instruments.

The constituency will be advised by the committee that in all cases, the survey results, including comments, must be considered confidential, and will be viewed and discussed only by the review committee and people in the chair's supervisory chain of command. At the end of the review process the college dean will meet with the department constituency to discuss the outcome of the review (see also Section XIV. Final Report by the College Dean).

IX. Conduct of Survey

Senate Procedures 507.1.1 pertain to the conduct of the survey. It is the responsibility of the chair of the review committee (including the external member of the review committee) to maintain security of these files and the information that they contain. Upon completion of the survey period, the results of the survey will be delivered to the dean and provost. The dean will inform the chair of the review committee and the external member of the review committee that the survey results were received. The chair of the review committee and the external member of the review committee will then destroy any survey information to which they have access.

X. Review Committee Report on Evaluation

The review committee will produce a summary report for distribution to the department (before balloting). This summary report will not disclose any confidential information, nor

will it include any verbatim comments made by constituents during the review process, but should include:

- a. tabulated results of the survey
- b. a summary of the survey respondents' comments (not in verbatim form)
- c. summary statements of the major accomplishments over the period of evaluation and areas that need improvement

XI. Balloting

The final ballot goes to the constituency identified by the department. The Senate Administrative Assistant (SAA), at the request of the chair of the review committee, conducts the actual online process for balloting through the procedure outlined in 507.1.1.

The ballot should request one of three responses (yes, no, abstain) in response to the question: "(Name of department chair) should continue as the chair of the (department name). The SAA will return the results of the balloting (two sets of ballots if faculty and staff vote separately), to the dean and provost. The dean will inform the SAA of the receipt of the results of the ballot and ask the SAA to delete all information related to the review process to which they have access.

If an incumbent chair is reappointed as the result of a search conducted at the end of their six-year term, balloting will not be conducted as part of the review performed at the start of their new term.

XII. Dean's Report on Evaluation

Once the survey, summary report, and ballot information are submitted to and received by the dean, the review committee will be disbanded. The dean will then prepare a report for the provost and president with the outcome of the review.

The report to the provost and president should include:

- a. tabulated results of the survey
- b. the survey respondents' comments

- c. summary statements of the major accomplishments over the period of evaluation and areas that need improvement
- d. summary report from the review committee
- e. the dean's perception of the chair's success to date and potential for future success in:
 - i. guiding and managing the quality and growth of the academic programs within the unit
 - ii. guiding and supporting research activities within the unit
 - iii. practicing sound financial management within the unit
 - iv. effectively managing and guiding personnel within the unit
 - v. defining goals for the department and measuring the department's progress toward those goals
- f. the dean's recommendation to the provost regarding continuation of the chair's appointment.

XIII. Executive Review

Upon completion, the dean will forward their report to the provost. The provost will review the dean's report, including the dean's recommendation regarding the chair's continuation. Following this review, the provost will make an independent recommendation to the president regarding potential continuation of the chair. The provost will then forward the report, the dean's recommendation, and their own recommendation to the president. The president will review all materials and make a decision. The president's decision will be communicated to the provost who will in turn communicate the decision to the dean.

If the unit constituency of either faculty or staff (or both combined, if a single ballot was conducted for the entire unit constituency), by a two-thirds majority votes against the continued appointment of the department chair, the administration will normally honor the decision of the unit.

When the administration decides to reappoint a department chair dean contrary to the

majority vote of the unit constituency of either faculty or staff (or both combined, if a single ballot was conducted for the entire unit constituency), the college dean will provide written explanation of the reasons for that decision to the members of the unit.

If at any time during the process, the department chair informs the dean that they wish to discontinue the review process, all material related to the review will be destroyed. The college dean will also inform the department constituency about the department chair's decision.

XIV. Communication to the Chair

Following the executive review, the college dean will meet with the department chair to discuss the decision made regarding continued appointment.

XV. Final Report by the College Dean

At a meeting with the unit, the college dean shall present the final decision and discuss the main points explored in the evaluation materials. The department chair will not be present at this meeting. The dean's evaluation report will not be shared with the department although it will form the basis for the discussion during the meeting.

Once the process is complete, members of the review committee may write a memo to the senate president, college dean, and provost with recommendations for changes in the evaluation procedure (if any) to support continuous improvement of the process.

XVI. Closure and Storage of Evaluation Material

Any evaluation material that must be retained according to Human Resource's guidelines will be retained by the Human Resources office. All other materials will be destroyed at the conclusion of the review.

XVII. Sample Timeline of the Review Process

The timeline below is suggestive and not prescriptive. It is possible to reduce the total time for the review process by doing some activities simultaneously. It is recommended that the review committee establish its own timeline for conducting the review in a timely manner.

Weeks 1 & 2: The college dean initiates the review process. The dean directs the department

to form a review committee and directs the chair to write their self-evaluation report. (Section IV. Review Process Initiation, and Section V. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation)

Week 3: The college dean appoints the external member of the review committee, calls the first meeting of the review committee, defines the charge, and provides the review committee with all relevant documents. The review committee elects a chair, decides and informs the college dean and the department constituency of the review committee's structure, purpose, and membership. (Section VI. First Meeting of the Unit Review Committee)

Week 4: The review committee develops survey instrument(s) for the constituency. (Section VII. Survey Instrument)

Week 5: The department constituency approves the survey instrument(s). (Section VIII. Unit Constituency Input)

Weeks 6-7: The review committee sends the survey instrument(s) and list of email addresses to the Senate Administrative Assistant who conducts the survey (Section IX. Conduct of Survey) and ballot (Section X. Balloting). The review committee compiles and sends summary report to department constituents and dean.

Week 8: The dean prepares a report for the provost and president summarizing the outcome of the review and providing their recommendation regarding the chair's continued appointment. (Section XI. Dean's Report on Evaluation)

Week 9: The provost reviews the dean's report and provides their recommendation to the president and the president makes a decision regarding continued appointment of the chair. (Section XII. Executive Review)

Week 10: The dean communicates the administration's decision to the department chair being reviewed. (Section XIII. Communication to Chair)

Week 11: The dean meets with the department to discuss the review and its outcome. (Section XIV. Final Report by the College Dean)

XVIII. Document History

Proposal 16-92:

Adopted as Amended by Senate: 29 September 1993

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Proposal 6-11:

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Proposal 7-16:

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