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**TO:** Richard Koubek, President

**FROM:** Andrew Storer, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs 

**DATE:** July 11, 2023

**SUBJECT:** Senate Proposal 37-23

Attached is Senate proposal 37-23, "Proposal to Modify Senate Procedure 506.1.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND SCHOOL DEANS," and a memo stating the Senate passed this proposal at their April 19, 2023 meeting. I have reviewed this memo and recommend not approving this proposal.

Major concerns with the proposal include (but are not limited to):

- Length of the term of department chairs.
- Addition of an annual formative review process.
- Incomplete consideration of situations where the number of faculty or staff in a unit are limited and the need to protect the identify of respondents when reporting survey results.
- Viewing and discussion of survey results and comments is not in the purview of the charter, but are set forth in this procedure.

I concur  X  do not concur \_\_\_\_\_ with the provost's recommendation as stated in this memo.



Richard Koubek, President

July 11, 2023

Date



**Michigan Tech**

*University Senate*

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**DATE:** April 20, 2023  
**TO:** Richard Koubek, President  
**FROM:** Michael Mullins  
University Senate President  
**SUBJECT:** Proposal 37-23  
**COPIES:** Andrew Storer, Provost & Senior VP for Academic Affairs

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At its meeting on April 19, 2023, the University Senate approved Proposal 37-23, "Proposal to Modify Senate Procedure 506.1.1 EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS AND SCHOOL DEANS". Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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# The University Senate of Michigan Technological University

Proposal 37-23

## **Proposal to Modify Senate Procedure 506.1.1: Evaluation Procedures for Department Chairs and School Deans**

### **Procedure 506.1.1**

EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

( [Proposal 16-92](https://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/92/16-92.htm): (<https://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/92/16-92.htm>) ) (

[Proposal 6-11](https://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/11/6-11.htm): (<https://www.admin.mtu.edu/usenate/propose/11/6-11.htm>) )

( [Proposal 7-16](/senate/policies-procedures/proposals-year/2015-16/07-16/): (</senate/policies-procedures/proposals-year/2015-16/07-16/>) ) (

[Proposal 3-17](/senate/policies-procedures/proposals-year/2016-17/03-17/): (</senate/policies-procedures/proposals-year/2016-17/03-17/>) )

### **Senate Procedures 506.1.1**

#### **I. Introduction**

This is the common procedure for the evaluation of the department chairs.

#### **II. Standard Term Length for a Departmental Chair**

The standard term of service for a departmental chair is four years.

#### **III. Types and Frequencies of Review**

A **reappointment review** will take place in the **fourth** year of each term of appointment and will be initiated within the last seven weeks of the fall semester. The evaluation process may also be initiated by the college dean or the entire department voting constituency as defined in the departmental charter, by a simple majority vote at any time earlier, but not more than once per calendar

year, and not during the department chair's first year of their contract. It should be noted that the college dean can recommend to the university president that a department chair can be removed at any time for cause.

Once a reappointment review is initiated, at any point in the evaluation process, the department chair may decide not to seek reappointment. In this case, the review process ends, and the review committee will destroy all material related to the review process.

In the years when there is no reappointment review, there will be a formative review process. The purpose of this yearly assessment (other than years of reappointment) is to strengthen the two-way communication between faculty and staff and the department chair. The process will be scheduled over a five week period in either the fall or spring semester, with the designated five week period stated in the department charter. The intent is to enable faculty and staff to have an open and honest discussion with the departmental chair to voice concerns over the direction the department is taking under the department chair's leadership. A starting point for the **Department Chair's Formative Review** will typically be the charge that the college dean has given to the departmental chair. That set of accomplishments should frame at least part of the discussion. The departmental chair likewise may indicate the reasons for certain directions of their leadership. On the converse side, the chair will give their assessment of the current status of the department and on goals for the following academic year along with the enabling rationale. The process the department follows for the **Department Chair's Formative Review** must be detailed in the departmental charter.

The specifics of how the formative review process will be implemented are the responsibility of the faculty and staff of the department. There is no expectation of a report that leaves the department in any form. The only form of reporting is that the department chair must include in their annual report to the college dean the existence of the formative review process, and that it ran in the year being reported - or not.

#### **IV. Constituency and Department Reappointment Review Committee**

The department charter shall specify the department constituency and who is eligible to participate in the evaluation process and vote, as well as the structure and selection of the committee for the review of their department chair. The department charter shall further define whether the survey and ballot will be done for the entire department constituency or separately for faculty and staff. If

there are fewer than three staff members in the department, then only one survey instrument may be used.

The committee will not include the current department chair or any faculty or staff member with a conflict of interest regarding the current department chair's review. The college dean will resolve any conflict of interest if it concerns any individual's eligibility to serve as a review committee member.

The committee also includes a member from outside the [department](#) appointed by the college dean. This external committee member only functions as an observer who ensures the integrity of the review process. The external member also acts as a liaison to the college dean.

The review committee follows senate procedures 506.1.1 (this procedure) and 507.1.1 to conduct and complete an evaluation of the department chair. The voting process shall follow the [department](#) charter and senate procedures. In case of inconsistency, the intent of the senate procedure takes precedence.

The entire university community recognizes the effort that service on a review committee requires. Everyone involved with the process must be vigilant in maintaining collegiality and professionalism. It is also important that the confidential nature of the process be respected to protect the [department](#) constituency, the review committee, and the individual under review. The review of a chair is an important task; the strength and integrity of the institution depend upon it being conducted in a way that encourages continuous improvement of the university as a whole.

Any questions about implementing or interpreting this procedure should be directed to the college dean through the chair of the reappointment review committee.

## **V. Review Process Initiation**

The college dean will ask the department chair to establish the chair evaluation committee per the department's charter; the committee should be established within two weeks of the dean's request. The college dean will appoint a member from outside the department to serve on the committee. The college dean will also ask the department chair to write their self-evaluation report (Section VI. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation) and provide it to the college dean within two weeks.

## **VI. Department Chair's Self-Evaluation**

The department chair should prepare a written document evaluating [their](#) performance for the evaluation period. This document should include but is not limited to:

- a. Addressing each of the charges given at the time of [their](#) appointment,
- b. Achieving the department's goals for the period of review,
- c. Budgeting and [budget](#) management,
- d. Growth and quality of academic programs,
- e. Future needs and directions of the department, [and](#)
- f. Any issue that the department chair thinks is controversial in the [department](#) and the effort [they](#) made to address the controversy.

The department chair is [strongly](#) encouraged to provide comparative quantitative data in this report where relevant.

## **VII. First Meeting of the [Department](#) Review Committee**

The college dean shall call the committee's first meeting and 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 XIX. 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. [The](#) electronic copy of the self-evaluation report of the department chair,
- c. [Results](#) of the previous evaluation if the department chair is seeking another term, [and](#)
- d. [A](#) set of survey questions that is common to all [departments](#) in the university.

The review committee shall decide if additional material is 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 this structure, as well as the purpose and membership of the review committee.

The department chair will provide their self-evaluation to the review committee. [In an electronic form](#), this self-evaluation will be forwarded by the review committee to the entire [department](#) constituency.

A meeting of the department constituency [will follow the distribution of this report](#). The purpose of this meeting will be for the department chair to respond to questions and clarify the report.

## **VIII. Survey Instrument**

The survey instrument will have the following **first two** components:

- a. **A set of questions provided by the college dean in an electronic file, and**
- b. **A set of questions that the review committee chooses.**

The survey instrument should address (but not be limited to) the following to assist the dean in responding to the specific questions required by the senate:

1. **Definition of goals within the department and progress of the department toward these established goals;**
2. **Management and guidance of personnel within the department, including professional growth and retention;**
3. **Guidance and management of the quality and growth of the academic programs within the department;**
4. **Guidance and support of research activities within the department; and**
5. **The practice of sound financial management within the department.**

Additional survey questions used in the past by various **departments** can be useful guides and are found here: <https://www.mtu.edu/senate/evaluations/forms/>.

In the special case of fewer than three staff in the department, one survey will be used for both faculty and staff. If there are three or more staff in the department, whether one form will be used for staff and a second for faculty is a departmental decision that must be codified in the departmental charter.

The survey instrument will have the following last two components

- c. **The department chair may provide up to two questions if they choose to, and**
- d. **Insertion of one box for free-form, written comments that can only be viewed by the college dean.**

## **IX. Department Constituency Input**

The department chair's self-evaluation report, the redacted letter of appointment describing the charge, and the survey instrument should be made available electronically to the entire **department** constituency. **Subsequently, there will be a** meeting of the **department** constituency without the

department chair present, the purpose of which is to discuss, change, and approve the survey instrument. At this meeting, past evaluation results may also be shown for comparison.

If there are three or more faculty in the department, and the department charter requires that survey results and ballots be tabulated separately for faculty and staff, faculty and staff in the department constituency will meet separately to discuss their respective survey instruments. In all other cases, faculty and staff will meet together to discuss their surveys.

The survey results and comments must be treated with confidentiality and viewed and discussed only by people authorized in this procedure as prescribed in the department charter.

## **X. Conduct of Survey**

Senate Procedure 507.1.1 describes the conduct of the survey. It is the responsibility of the chair and the external member of the review committee to maintain the security of these files and the information they contain.

## **XI. Survey Report**

The review committee will prepare a survey report that includes:

- a. Tabulated survey results,
- b. ~~A summary of the survey comments from the "seen by all" box, and~~
- c. Summary statements of the major accomplishments throughout the period of evaluation and areas for improvement of the department chair. This part of the survey report should be grounded in the charge given to the departmental chair by the college dean.

## **XII. Department Chair's Response**

The review committee will give the department chair the survey report, except for the part containing the written comments intended only for the college dean. (Section XI. Survey Report).

The review committee will encourage the department chair to respond to the survey report before it is presented to the department constituency. The department chair will have five working days to provide a written response to the review committee's report.

The survey report, along with the department chair's response (if a response is supplied), combined with the chair's self-evaluation report, will be called the "Department Evaluation Report."



If the college dean informs the review committee that the department chair has decided not to seek reappointment, then the review committee [will destroy all review material](#). The college dean will dissolve the review committee. The college dean will inform the [department](#) constituency about the department chair's decision at the time of the dissolution of the review committee.

### **XIII. Presentation of Department Evaluation Report:**

The review committee will arrange a closed faculty and staff meeting to circulate the Department Evaluation Report. Copies of the Department Evaluation Report will not be taken outside the meeting room. All the circulated copies of the Department Evaluation Report will be destroyed after the meeting. The purpose of the meeting two-fold: (a) the presentation of the Department Evaluation Report by the Reappointment Evaluation Committee and (b) as a final chance for the faculty and staff to discuss in closed session elements of the Department Evaluation Report and/or other topics thought to be relevant to the evaluation. The arbiter determining if a subject is relevant is the Department Reappointment Review Committee.

For the review period, the review committee will ensure two copies of the Department Evaluation Report are available for viewing by the [department](#) constituency at two secure sites where no copies can be made, as unauthorized copying compromises the integrity of the process. One site will be situated in the office of the college dean. The other site will be situated in the [department](#).

### **XIV. Balloting:**

The final ballot goes to the constituency identified in the [department](#) charter; the Senate Administrative Assistant (SAA), on request from the review committee chair, conducts the actual online process for balloting through the procedure outlined in [Procedure 507.1.1](#). [As outlined in Procedure 507.1.1, the ballot will read:](#)

(Name of department chair) should be reappointed and continue as the department chair of the department.

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Abstain \_\_\_\_\_

The SAA will return the balloting [results](#) (two sets of ballots [if](#) faculty and staff vote separately) to the chair and the external member of the review committee. The review committee chair will inform the SAA of the receipt of the [ballot](#) results and ask the SAA to delete all the voting results in the senate

office. The department chair (first) and the department constituency (second) will be informed of the ballot results by the review committee.

## **XV. Department Evaluation Report to the College Dean**

A file containing a copy of the Department Evaluation Report and the ballot results will be forwarded to the college dean. Upon receipt of this file, the college dean will notify the review committee to destroy any remaining copies of the Department Evaluation Report and any other material related to the review process.

The review committee will write a memo to the senate president and the college dean with recommendations for changes in the evaluation procedure (if any) to support continuous process improvement.

## **XVI. Final Report by the College Dean**

The college dean must prepare a written final report of the evaluation of the department chair, including but not limited to the following areas:

- 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. The practice of sound financial management within the department,
- d. Management and guidance of personnel within the department,
- e. Definition of goals within the department and progress of the department toward these established goals, and
- f. A confidential appendix is allowed that is not shared with the department in cases where the college dean feels the need to formally document progress, problems, or advice with only the department chair. This appendix is included with the final report and forwarded through the administrative structure to the President.

The college dean will meet with the department chair to discuss the final report of the evaluation, ballot results, and the reappointment recommendation.

## **XVII. Implementation of the Results**

The college dean will forward the final report and their recommendation through the administrative structure to the university president.

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

If the administration decides to reappoint a department chair contrary to the majority vote of the department constituency of either faculty or staff (or both combined if a single ballot was conducted for the entire department constituency), the college dean will provide a written explanation of the reasons for that decision to the members of the academic [department](#).

At a meeting with the [department](#), the college dean shall present the administration's decision and discuss the contents of the final report. The department chair will not be present at this meeting. [Not including the confidential appendix](#), the final [evaluation](#) report by the college dean will be shared with the [department](#) and form the basis for the discussion in the meeting.

## **XVIII. Closure and Storage of Evaluation Material:**

All evaluation material will be kept in the college dean's [office](#) and supplied to the next review committee (Section [VII](#). the First Meeting of the department Review Committee). All evaluation material, except that required by the office of human resources, will be destroyed once the department chair leaves the position.

## **XIX. 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 timeline for conducting the review [promptly](#). The evaluation process should be done with expediency - the recommended timeline is as follows:

**Weeks 1 & 2:** The college dean requests the department chair to form the review committee and write the self-evaluation report. (Section V. Review Process Initiation, and Section VI. Department Chair 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 on the review committee's structure, purpose and membership. (Section VII. First Meeting of the Department Review Committee). [The review committee shares the chair's self-evaluation report with the department constituency, and then schedules a meeting of the department constituency following the distribution of this report.](#)

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

**Week 5:** The department constituency approves the survey instrument(s). (Section IX. Department Constituency Input)

**Weeks 6-7:** The review committee sends the survey instrument(s) and list of email addresses to the SAA who conducts the survey and returns the results. (Section X. Conduct of Survey, and Senate Procedure 507.1.1)

**Week 8:** The review committee writes the survey report. (Section XI. Survey Report)

**Week 9:** The review committee sends the survey report to the department chair and solicits [their](#) response. The review committee compiles the [department](#) evaluation report. (Section XII. Department Chair's Response)

**Week 10:** The review committee calls a meeting of the [department](#) constituency to present the [department](#) evaluation report and to establish a secure site where the [department](#) constituency can view the report. (Section XIII. Presentation of [Department](#) Evaluation Report).

**Week 11:** The ballot for the reappointment is conducted (Section XIV. Balloting and Senate Procedure 507.1.1).

**Week 12:** The review committee sends the [Department Evaluation Report](#) and the ballot results to the college dean. The college dean informs the review committee of the receipt of the [Department Evaluation Report](#) and ballot results. The review committee destroys all evaluation-related material. (Sections XV. [Department Evaluation Report](#) to the college dean).

**Week 13:** The college dean writes the final report and meets with the department chair to discuss the final report and the recommendation for reappointment. (Section XVI. Final Report by the college dean).

**Week 14:** The college dean calls the [department](#) constituency meeting to discuss the final report and the administration's decision on the reappointment. (Section XVII. Implementation of the Results).