



## Campus Administrative Policy

**Policy Title: Roles and Responsibilities of Department Chairs**

Policy Number: 1020                      Functional Area: Academic and Faculty Affairs

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Applies to: CU Anschutz  
CU Denver

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### A. INTRODUCTION

This policy describes the responsibilities, appointment procedures, terms of appointment, evaluation, orientation, and compensation for chairs of academic departments within a School or College. School and Colleges are not required to have departments and by extension, this policy does not apply to those units without departments.

### B. TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. Introduction.....	1
B. Table of Contents.....	1
C. Policy Statement .....	2
1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair .....	2
2. Appointment.....	4
3. Evaluation.....	6

## C. POLICY STATEMENT

### 1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Chair

Regent [Policy 4.A.1](#) delegates the development of the working structure of a department to the department in consultation with the appropriate dean. Each college and school have a process to select the department chair and to define the specific roles and responsibilities. In all instances, it is recognized that the department chair is first and foremost a member of the faculty, a teacher and scholar of the highest order, contributing to the academic and scholarly missions of the department. As chair, the faculty member is also the designated administrative leader of the department and the leader of the faculty, staff, and students who comprise the department.

#### a. Leader of the Department

- 1) The chair is responsible for providing leadership toward the achievement of the highest possible level of excellence in the clinical activities, teaching, scholarly/creative work, and leadership and service activities of the department. The chair is expected to articulate the goals of the department, both within and outside the department, to articulate the department's actions or requests in pursuit of these aims, and to maintain a climate that is collegial, respects diversity, treats faculty, staff and learners fairly, and supports creativity and innovation. The chair is responsible for informing the department of the stances and actions of the dean and other administrators that might affect the department.
- 2) As the chief administrator for the department, the chair is the essential link between the administration and the department in representing departmental views on matters of educational and research policy and academic ethics.
- 3) The chair is responsible for the recruitment, selection, and evaluation of both faculty and staff in the department. In consultation with colleagues, and in compliance with the appropriate departmental procedures, the chair recommends appointments, promotions, merit increases, and terminations. The chair has the explicit responsibility to ensure that faculty members are aware of the departmental, college, and campus criteria prescribed for appointment, reappointment, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review, and to make appraisals and recommendations in accordance with the procedures and principles stated in department, school/college, or campus policy and in Regent Policy 5.D, [CU System Administrative Policy Statement \(APS\) 1022, Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review](#), and [Campus Administrative Policy 1004, Reappointment, Tenure, and Promotion Review](#). The chair also has the explicit responsibility to ensure that adequate faculty mentoring programs are in place and that faculty performance reviews are conducted regularly, in accordance with the

procedures and principles stated in Regent Policy 5.C, APS 1022, [APS 5008, Performance Ratings for Faculty](#), Campus Administrative Policies 1028, [Non-Tenure Track Faculty Performance Reviews](#), [1005, Faculty Compensation – CU Anschutz](#), [1006, Faculty Compensation – CU Denver](#).

The chair shall be familiar with the state personnel system, and ensure that staff members are aware of departmental expectations and of state personnel system criteria for appointment, reappointment, job classification, and promotion.

- 4) The chair shall hear questions, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from members of the department, including faculty, staff, and students. The chair has the responsibility to take appropriate action.

b. Administrator of the Department

As the head administrator of the department, the chair has the following responsibilities, with other duties and responsibilities as assigned:

- 1) Assignment of teaching and other duties within the department consistent with appropriate FTE levels and college/school workload expectations, recognizing that the appropriate mix of teaching, scholarly/creative work, scholarship, professional practice, clinical work and leadership and service may differ from person to person, and from time to time in the career of an individual.
- 2) Preparation of the schedule of courses.
- 3) Arrangement and assignment of duty for mentoring of students and for training and supervision of teaching assistants and other student teachers and teacher aides.
- 4) Preparation of the budget and administration of the financial affairs of the department, in strict accordance with dollar and FTE allocations and in accord with University rules and procedures.
- 5) Recommendation of sabbatical assignments and leaves of absence to the dean, and confirmation that scheduling is consistent with departmental needs.
- 6) Prompt reporting of the resignation or death of any member of the department to the dean's office.
- 7) Custody and authorized use of University property charged to the department, and assignment of departmental space and facilities to authorized activities in accordance with University policy and campus rules and regulations.

- 8) Departmental observance of proper health and safety regulations, in coordination with the campus environmental health and safety officer.
- 9) Maintenance of records and faculty and staff personnel files, and preparation of reports in accordance with the University and college procedures.
- 10) Reporting on faculty compliance with the "one-sixth" rule ([see Regent Policy 5.C and APS 1044](#)) or other policies specific to the college or school regarding outside consulting and other professional activities.
- 11) Assisting the dean, or appropriate administrators, in ensuring compliance with all existing conflict of interest management plans.
- 12) Reporting to the dean, or appropriate administrators, whenever the problem cannot be expeditiously resolved at the departmental level, any failure of a member of the department to carry out responsibilities, and recommending appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action.

While assuming the responsibilities listed above, the chair is expected to seek the advice of departmental faculty colleagues in a systematic way, to provide for the conduct of department affairs in an orderly manner through department meetings and the appointment of appropriate committees, and to keep department members informed of actions in a timely manner. The chair is also expected to seek student advice on matters of concern to students enrolled in the department's programs. In large departments, the chair may be assisted by a vice chair or other colleagues in carrying out their responsibilities and, when necessary, by an executive committee chosen in accordance with unit bylaws.

## 2. Appointment

### a. Criteria

The appointment of department chairs should be based on the following criteria:

- 1) Ability to provide intellectual leadership in the development of departmental faculty and programs;
- 2) Ability to provide administrative leadership in the effective functioning of the department; and
- 3) Personal skills to permit effective interactions with faculty, staff, and students in the department, as well as school/college and campus administrators.

### b. Procedures: CU Denver and the College of Nursing

- 1) Prior to initiating search and nomination procedures for a department chair, the faculty of the department should meet with the dean of the

school or college to discuss the needs and expectations of the department as they relate to the appointment of a new chair, the role of the chair, and the type of search (i.e., internal or external) that will most likely assure that an appropriate candidate is recommended, and to discuss any budgetary considerations related to the search for and appointment of a new chair.

- 2) A search and nominating process will be carried out by the faculty of the department in accordance with department procedures. The faculty will subsequently submit its recommendation to the dean.
  - 3) If the dean does not concur with the department faculty's recommendation, the dean will meet with the department faculty to discuss the reasons for disagreement.
  - 4) The campus chancellor, or the chancellor's designee has appointment authority for all department chairs.
  - 5) It will be the responsibility of the deans and the chancellors to assure that recruitment and appointment procedures for department chairs reflect the University's commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination, as articulated in [Regent Law](#) (Article 10) and [Regent Policy 10.A](#).
- c. Procedures: School of Medicine, School of Dental Medicine, Skaggs School of Pharmacy, and Colorado School of Public Health.
- 1) Prior to establishing a search committee for a department chair, the dean will meet with the faculty of the affected department to discuss the needs and expectations of the department as they relate to the appointment of a new chair, the role of the chair, and the type of search (i.e., internal or external) that will most likely assure that an appropriate candidate is recommended, and to discuss any budgetary considerations related to the search and appointment of a new chair.
  - 2) A search committee will be appointed by the dean, and will include departmental representation. At the School of Medicine, the search committee will be appointed by the dean, after consultation with the Faculty Officers. The dean will determine whether the search committee will include departmental representation.
  - 3) The search committee will recommend to the dean one or more candidates in accordance with school procedures. At appropriate times during the search process, the dean will discuss the candidate pool with the faculty in the department.
  - 4) The campus chancellor, or chancellor's designee, has appointment authority for all department chairs.

It is the responsibility of the deans and the chancellors to assure that recruitment and appointment procedures for department chairs reflect the University's commitment to equal opportunity and non-discrimination, as articulated in [Regent Law \(Article 10\)](#) and [Regent Policy 10.A](#).

d. Terms of Appointment

- 1) The position of chair is an at-will administrative appointment.
- 2) Department chairs receive an administrative stipend. The amount of the stipend should be based on the size of the department, the functions of the chair, and other types of support that will be provided to the chair.
- 3) A differentiated workload for the department chair should be agreed upon between the dean and the department chair and reviewed and updated yearly.
- 4) New chairs are required to participate in an orientation program to prepare them for their roles and responsibilities.

3. Evaluation

- a. All department chairs will undergo regular performance evaluations by the dean of the college or school. A comprehensive performance evaluation, which includes faculty input, shall be conducted periodically, in accordance with the rules of the college or school.
- b. Formal input from other department constituencies (i.e., staff and students and other departments) will be obtained as part of the evaluation process.

**Notes**

1. Dates of official enactment and amendments:  
July 1, 2020: Adopted / Approved by the Chancellors
2. History:  
July 1, 2020: The original version of this policy was a University of Colorado System Administrative Policy (1026) that grew out of a 1984 study of department chairs and their roles conducted by University and campus faculty and administrators. A similar document was included as an appendix to the [Laws of the Regents](#), to be used in conjunction with article 4 as a vehicle for articulating the roles and responsibilities of department chairs. In 2018, the appendix to the Laws of the Regents was rescinded, and in 2020, the system administrative policy was rescinded. At that time, a campus policy was created. The rescinded APS became the genesis for this policy.
3. Initial Policy Effective Date: July 1, 2020
4. Cross References/Appendix:

- Regent Article 10
- Regent Policy 4 (4.A.1)
- Regent Policy 19 (10.A)
- APS 1022, Standards, Processes and Procedures for Reappointment (to a tenure-track position), Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review
- APS 1019, Degree Program Review
- APS 1044, Faculty Consulting and External Professional Activities
- Campus Policy 1004, Reappointment, Tenure and Promotion Review
- Campus Policy 1028, Non-Tenure Track Faculty Performance Reviews
- Campus Policy 1005, Faculty Compensation – CU Anschutz
- Campus Policy 1006, Faculty Compensation – CU Denver