

College of Arts and Sciences

Selection and Reappointment of Unit Administrators

Policy

University policies and procedures govern the granting of permission to staff a position, the recruiting for the position from an appropriate candidate pool, and the hiring of an individual to fill the position. The selection of unit heads or directors is a joint endeavor between the faculty concerned and the Dean. The faculty shall be responsible for selecting from the appropriate applicant pool one or more candidates generally acceptable to them. The Dean, in conjunction with the higher administration, will decide whether or not to make the offer of the position to a candidate after extensive input from those in the department. If the Dean finds acceptable none of the candidates identified as acceptable by the unit, or if none of the candidates offered the position accept the offer, the Dean shall meet with the faculty to discuss options for moving forward.

The unit head will be selected for a term of between 3 to 5 years and may be reappointed for subsequent terms according to the policy of each department. During a current unit head/director's term before its normal (expected) completion, a special meeting may be called by 1/3 of the unit's faculty, at which time a vote to approve or disapprove the continuation of the current unit head/director may be taken by a secret ballot; the results of this vote shall be communicated to the Dean. If a vote for the current unit head/director not to continue results from this meeting, the Dean shall meet with the faculty to discuss options for moving forward.

Procedure for Appointment

Each department will be involved extensively in the appointment process for unit head or director, and shall determine, in consultation with the Dean, its own policies regarding appointment, reappointment, and the length of term of its unit head or director. These policies shall be on file in the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

1. **Preliminary Activities:** At the time a sitting department head/director announces his or her intention to leave the position, or sometime prior to the expiration of a term of a unit head/director, the Dean shall assume the responsibility for conferring with the faculty and administrators to determine whether there should be any major changes in the organization or direction of the unit, as well as whether the search should be an open or internal one.

2. **Search Committee:** In the event of a vacancy, a chairperson, who normally would be a department head of another department, shall be selected by the Dean following consultation with the faculty of the unit. The committee shall contain a minimum of three faculty members from the department or school. The committee normally shall be composed of four to five members, the majority of whom would normally hold tenure. An effort must be made to afford representation on the committee with respect to sex, race,

and rank. The department, in consultation with the Dean, shall determine appropriate procedures for selection of the Search Committee Members.

3. Job Description: The development of the job description shall be the responsibility of the Search Committee and shall be approved by the personnel committee of the academic unit. The job description shall be submitted to the Associate Dean for Instruction and Personnel, as College Affirmative Action Officer, for approval. The job description is of particular importance, for it determines the “applicant pool” as defined by affirmative action guidelines. In the case of an open search (where candidates are sought who may or may not be OSU employees) the Associate Dean for Instruction and Personnel will ensure that the position description is advertised as widely as possible nationally. In the case of an internal search the position description will be posted on the departmental web site, and copies sent to all members of the department.
4. The Search: The Search Committee will be responsible for receiving applications and nominations for the position. The committee then will select a group of finalists for the position. The files of those candidate(s) identified as finalists shall be made available to faculty members of the unit concerned. Faculty will be expected to respect the confidentiality of the applicants unless the candidate has given his/her permission to release information about his or her candidacy outside Oklahoma State University. The list of finalists will be presented to a faculty meeting and the Search Committee will continue the process, if necessary, until a list of finalists acceptable to the majority of the tenured and tenure-track faculty is identified.

The finalists will be interviewed in a process that shall provide all faculty members of the hiring unit with the opportunity to meet with the finalists individually. The interview process also will include meetings with the Dean and the Search Committee. The tenured and tenure track faculty members will conduct a secret ballot on the acceptability and ranking of the finalists. The Chair of the Search Committee will count the votes and report the results of the vote to the Dean.

5. Selection of the Unit Head/Director: Upon receipt of the results of the vote, the Dean will meet with the Search Committee and will consider input from other sources, such as departmental staff and students. The Dean will consider the list of acceptable candidates and normally will appoint a person from that list. Should the Dean deem it necessary to make an appointment that does not reflect the departmental ranking, he or she will meet with the department faculty and inform them of the rationale for the choice.

Procedures for Reappointment

Each department will be involved extensively in the reappointment process for unit head or director, and shall determine, in consultation with the Dean, its own policies regarding reappointment and the length of term of its unit head or director. These policies shall be on file in the office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Within 6-8 months prior the last day of a head's term of appointment, the dean's office will inform the department or school's personnel committee chair (PCC) that the head's current term is ending. If the dean would not be supportive of a reappointment, the procedure for appointment of a new unit head should be followed in place of the following process¹. If the dean would potentially be supportive of a reappointment, the PCC will contact the head about her/his willingness to serve another term. The PCC will subsequently contact all faculty members to report on the current head's willingness to serve another term, and request nominations or self-nominations among other faculty who may be interested in serving as head. Nominations and self-nominations will be open for a period of 10 working days. During this time period and either prior or post to accepting a nomination or self-nomination, faculty members interested in the position may schedule a confidential meeting with the Dean to discuss the position and its responsibilities. Following the 10 working-day period, the PCC will inform department or school faculty about the slate of candidates, and arrange for each candidate not currently holding the head position to meet with the following A&S representatives as part of an interview process; A&S associate & assistant deans, and OSU Foundation. Each candidate will present a written vision statement and current vita to the dean, faculty, and staff. Following these meetings, the PCC will arrange an open forum (which may be attended by faculty, students, staff, and college administrators) for all candidates to present her/his vision for the department or school. Within five working days following the last forum a faculty meeting will be arranged by the PCC for a discussion and distribution of ballots (absentee ballots will be accepted from faculty unable to attend; candidates will not attend this meeting but will participate in the vote). A returning officer² appointed by the Dean will distribute ballots at the conclusion of the meeting. Ballots must provide space for written feedback (strengths and weaknesses) and a vote of "acceptable" or "unacceptable." The returning officer will also distribute non-ballot input sheets to students and departmental staff. All ballots and non-ballot input sheets must be received by the returning officer within five working days of the faculty meeting. After receiving ballots and input sheets from the returning officer, and using this input to inform his/her decision, the Dean will inform the department or school of her/his decision after informing the candidates of the outcome.

Notes:

¹ Under some circumstances the department or school and dean may pursue a national search for a department head.

² The returning officer is a department head or faculty member who is not a member of the department where an election is taking place.

Supported by unanimous vote of the Arts and Sciences Faculty Council September 2, 2015.