

Marywood University

Policies and Procedures

Academic Unit Leadership Policy

Policy Statement:

The Department Chair is a full-time faculty member who is responsible for leadership and administration of their academic department and is accountable to the academic Dean of college that oversees that department. Larger units may be organized into Schools, led by a director, either a full-time administrator or faculty member, who assumes all Department Chair duties plus additional responsibilities related to the unit's size, complexity, off campus programs, or accreditations.

To be designated as a School, an academic unit typically meet most of the following criteria below:

- Composed of multiple academic programs with a significant student population;
- Offer multiple degrees;
- Report to multiple accrediting bodies;
- Manages complex facilities, technology, and equipment;
- Other discipline-specific factors that increase administrative complexity.

Appointment of Chairs and Directors

- A. The term of office for the Department Chair and School Director is three years.
- B. A person may serve in the role of Department Chair or School Director for no more than three consecutive terms except in extraordinary circumstances aligning with the temporary solution described in "H" of this section.
- C. After serving as Department Chair or School Director for three terms, a person is not eligible to serve in the role again for a period of at least three years.
- D. The following are eligible to recommend candidates for the Department Chair or School Director:
 1. Faculty serving full-time in the University who are assigned to the department, except those working under a non-renewable contract;
 2. Pro-rata faculty who are assigned to the department, except those working under a non-renewable contract.
- E. Faculty members who are assigned full-time to the department (or one of the departments/programs within the school) shall be eligible for service as Department Chair

or School Director. In December of the appropriate year, the Dean will request the names of those willing to serve as candidates. Priority consideration will be given to tenured faculty and faculty of practice who have attained at least the rank of Associate Professor of Practice.

F. When there is an election for the Chair or Director, the Dean will send to the department the list of candidates as determined above.

G. In the case of School Directors, the faculty from the School will elect the Director from among those nominated according to voting procedures outlined in the governing documents of the School.

H. In the case of Department Chairs: each department member will send a recommendation and reasons for the recommendation to the Dean. Alternatively, the department may meet to collectively recommend a Chair to the Dean.

I. A faculty member must be recommended by a majority of those submitting recommendations.

J. Following the department majority recommendation, The Dean will appoint the Department Chair or School Director.

K. If no faculty member receives a majority recommendation after the reconsideration, the Dean will appoint one person from among the candidates.

L. If no full-time faculty member is able or willing to serve as Chair or School Director, a temporary solution, (no more than one year) will be constructed by the administration. The department will enter into receivership under the leadership of the Dean or the Dean's designate. At the end of that year, the situation will be reviewed and if possible remedied.

M. The Dean appoints Department Chairs and School Directors.

N. Department Chairs and School Directors serve at the pleasure of the Dean and the Dean holds the right to remove them from office.

Duties of Chairs and Directors:

While certain duties are common to all Department Chairs and School Directors, it is recognized that other responsibilities are determined by the nature and activities of the department.

A. Department Governance includes activities such as:

1. Develop and maintain governing documents including bylaws, strategic plans, and handbooks;

2. Conduct meetings and disseminating minutes;
3. Establishing committees;
4. Develop and/or implement long-range programs, plans, goals, and policies that are aligned with the University policies and priorities;
5. Prepare for accreditation and evaluation.
6. Monitor library acquisitions;
7. Assign and oversee appropriate administrative responsibilities to individuals and committees;
8. Review and catalog copy and other publications;
9. Maintain records, such as student records and course syllabi.
10. Other related duties as assigned by the Dean.

B. Instruction includes activities such as:

1. Schedule courses;
2. Supervise off-campus programs;
3. Develop and evaluate programs of study;
4. Monitor textbook orders.

C. Department Faculty Affairs includes activities such as:

1. Orientation of the new faculty;
2. Recruit and recommend faculty appointments;
3. Assign faculty responsibilities, such as teaching, research and non-departmental committee work;
4. Evaluate faculty and department staff performance;
 5. Initiate and/or participate in dismissal and progressive discipline proceedings;
 6. Keep faculty informed of department/school, college, and University plans, activities, and expectations.

D. Student Affairs includes activities such as:

1. Recruit, and retain students;
2. Assign and monitor students academic advising;
3. Work with student organizations.

E. External Communication includes activities such as:

1. Enhance and maintain the department/school's image;
2. Maintain liaison with external agencies and institutions.

F. Budget and Resources Stewardships includes activities such as:

1. Tracking resource allocation and usage of resources in collaboration with the Office of Business Affairs;
2. Encouraging faculty proposals for contracts and grants;
3. Prepare and manage department/school budgets;
4. Set priorities for use of resources;
5. Prepare and deliver required and requested reports;

6. Manage facilities and equipment.

G. Professional Development includes activities such as:

1. Maintaining disciplinary expectations for peer review and communicate to the Rank and Tenure Committee;
2. Fostering faculty development, teaching, research, and publications;
3. Encourage participation in professional meetings at regionally, nationally, and internationally;
4. Represent the department or school at learned and professional societies.

Method of Evaluation for Chairs and Directors:

The Dean is responsible for evaluating the performance of Department Chairs and School Directors based upon established University, college, and/or department/school strategic goals and expectations outlined in this policy. Faculty input will be solicited, as-needed, through the use of an anonymous survey to inform the evaluation process.

Absence of Chairs and Directors:

In cases of short-term absence, (one semester or less), the Dean may appoint an activity Chair or Director to manage the unit's affairs. For long-term absence (more than one semester), a selection process for a new permanent Department Chair or School Director will be initiated. Service as an acting Chair does not constitute a formal term of office.

Compensation of Chairs and Directors:

Department Chairs and School Directors will receive course releases appropriate to the size and complexity of the department/school to support the duties outlined in their role description. In addition, they will receive a stipend commensurate with the unit's size and complexity, which may include equivalent compensation to a 12-month salary conversion for year-round, full-time service in the position.

Normally, a review of criteria and compensation with the Dean will coincide with the term of office for each Department Chair and School Director.

Availability

In addition to faculty office hours, the Department Chair or School Director is expected to be available to perform the administrative duties of the role during the academic year. Summer duties must also be carried out as required. The Minimum summer availability for the Department Chair/School Director is 10 hours per week. Chairs and Directors on a 12-month faculty contract are expected to maintain full-time availability throughout the summer.

Other Departmental Leadership Appointments:

Some Departments and Schools require additional administrative appointments within the academic unit. These administrative appointments are made according to procedures outlined in the governing documents of the academic unit. The number, type, and compensation of additional administrative appointments are determined annually in consultation with and approved by the Dean. All such appointments report to and serve at the pleasure of the Chair or Director, who retain the authority to remove them from the office. The Dean must be consulted prior to removal of that appointment.

Examples of Additional Leadership Roles

- Program Director – Assists the Department Chair or School Director in managing and overseeing a specific, accredited program within the academic unit.
- Associate Director – Supports the School Director with significant aspects of School governance. Specific duties are defined by the organizational structure of the School and outlined in the School’s bylaws. (Not applicable to a stand-alone department)
- Program Coordinator – Assist the Department Chair or School Director with operational tasks such as scheduling or recruiting adjuncts within a specific program.

Policy History:

07/01/89 - Reaffirmed with publication of Faculty Manual

7/01/03 - Editorial changes made to reflect academic restructuring

07/01/05 - Introduction expanded by Vice President for Academic Affairs Department Chair Policy

10/21/21 – The President of the University approved the revisions to this University Policy as recommended by Academic Council at their 10/13/21 meeting. These revisions included the change in the title of this University Policy from Department Chairperson Policy to the Department Chair Policy.

4/02/2026 - President Lisa Lori approved revisions to the policy which the Academic Council recommended at their March 18, 2026 meeting.

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