OP 32.22: Selection of Endowed Chairs and Professorships

DATE: January 9, 2018

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to ensure understanding and a standardized approach in the selection process for endowed faculty positions.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in October of even-numbered years by the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs with substantive revisions forwarded to the Provost and Senior Vice President (PSVP) by November 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Endowed Faculty Positions

   a. Endowed Chair

      An endowed chair is a named faculty position established by a donor or donors with a funded endowment of one million dollars or more. Chairs may be named for the donor or a person or other entity of the donor’s choosing. A purpose of such a position is to provide a salary supplement, or in some cases an entire salary, from the earnings on the endowment sufficient to attract and retain faculty members of exceptional quality and significance in their fields. Other allowed uses of endowment earnings include support of the chair’s research or creative activity.

   b. Endowed Professorship

      An endowed professorship is a named faculty position established by a donor or donors with a funded endowment of one million dollars or less. Endowed professorships may be named for the donor or a person or other entity of the donor’s choosing. A purpose of such a position is to provide a salary supplement from the earnings on the endowment sufficient to attract and retain faculty members of exceptional quality and significance in their fields. Other allowed uses of endowment earnings include support of the professor’s research or creative activity.

   c. The qualifications and quality of faculty selected to hold endowed faculty positions directly affect the national and international reputation of Texas Tech University and the university’s educational mission. Therefore, the President shall approve those faculty members to be granted endowed faculty positions upon recommendation by the PSVP.
2. Search, Selection, and Nomination Procedure

a. General

Documents associated with endowed faculty positions may establish selection criteria agreed to between the donor and Texas Tech University or the particular college in which the endowed position is established. It is Texas Tech policy to honor the intentions of the donor as agreed to in the endowing documents; however, as a matter of law, only an authorized university official can actually select a member of the university faculty.

b. External vs. Internal Selection Process

In preparing to fill a vacant endowed position, the dean of the college, in consonance with the endowing documents, may decide to limit the applicant search to external candidates or to internal candidates or may open the search to both internal and external candidates. In the case of an endowed chair, a dean considering limiting the search to internal candidates should first discuss her/his rationale for such a limitation with the PSVP.

c. Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Regardless of the selection process chosen, the college dean will ensure that the selection process encompasses both the law and the spirit of university diversity and equal opportunity policies as stated in OP 32.16, Faculty Recruitment Procedure. The methodology used to comply with these policies will be sufficiently detailed in the packet the dean forwards nominating a person for approval by the PSVP and the President to allow them to accurately evaluate the openness and fairness of the selection process.

d. Procedure

(1) To the extent not prohibited by law or university operating policies, colleges seeking to fill endowed faculty positions may initially follow those search and selection procedures appropriate to a particular college or academic field as guided by the endowing documents, if any. Whatever the procedure used, the goal should be to identify one or more persons whose qualifications and quality will bring significant distinction in terms of academic ability, scholarship, and overall contribution to the reputation and educational mission of Texas Tech University.

(2) The names of the nominees selected by the college will be forwarded by the dean with her/his endorsement to the PSVP. The forwarded packet will include an explanation of the selection process used, including those methods employed to ensure equal opportunity as described in section 2.c above, and a description of the endowed faculty position, including the amount of the endowment and the prior holders of the position, if any. The packet will also include a complete dossier for the nominee or nominees and any other material or information deemed relevant to the selection process.

(3) After receiving the nomination packet, the PSVP will appoint an ad hoc advisory committee to evaluate the nominee or nominees. The advisory committee may consist of five or seven persons, including at least one dean and one faculty member holding an endowed position. A member of the advisory committee may come from the nominating college. The PSVP will designate one member as chair. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that all persons selected for endowed faculty positions are
persons of academic and scholarly distinction who will bring both significant talent and significant credit to Texas Tech. If the person nominated is nominated to a position established in support of a university-wide theme of excellence, the committee will also make a recommendation concerning the ability of the nominee to contribute to that theme. Evaluation criteria the committee may consider include:

(a) The publication of books, articles, reviews, works of art, and other evidence particular to the field of scholarly achievement. Publications shall be in scholarly journals or sources customary to the field of interest.

(b) Awards and prizes from professional organizations and foundations;

(c) Grants in support of research, study, or creative works;

(d) Offices and memberships held in learned societies;

(e) Papers read before learned societies;

(f) Lectures or performances delivered at other academic, industrial, or professional venues;

(g) Services such as expert, consultant, etc., to business, industry, governmental agencies, and educational organizations;

(h) Indicia of teaching distinction; and

(i) Examples of extraordinary service to the university or community.

(4) Following full consideration of the nominee or nominees, including, if practical, a personal appearance before the committee, each member of the advisory committee will vote “yes” or “no” on each candidate. Based on the committee vote, the chair will list the candidates by order of the number of “yes” votes received and forward the vote tally and recommendation to the PSVP.

(5) The PSVP will consider the recommendation and vote of the advisory committee and, following her/his own evaluation of the nomination packets, will recommend to the President whether or not the position should be offered to a nominee. The President will then approve the PSVP’s recommendation or direct another action.

(6) The PSVP will inform the nominating dean of the President’s decision.