Texas Tech University
Operating Policy and Procedure

OP 32.03: Academic Deans, Associate or Assistant Deans, and Department Chairpersons

DATE: TBA

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to define the responsibilities and promote understanding of the academic deans, associate or assistant deans, and department, division, or area chairpersons, and to outline procedures for the appointment of interim or acting deans and chairpersons.

REVIEW: This OP will be reviewed in March of even-numbered years by the senior vice provost for academic affairs with recommended revisions presented to the provost/senior vice president(PSVP) by April 15.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

1. Appointments for academic deans, associate or assistant deans, and department chairpersons (the latter including school directors and area coordinators) follow the same procedure as appointments of professors being granted tenure at initial appointment, with the exception that the appointment of a dean is initiated by the PSVP, and the appointment of a chairperson or an assistant or associate dean is initiated by the dean of the school or college involved. Appointments of academic deans and associate/assistant deans will be made after the faculty of the college have had reasonable opportunity to provide input on the suitability of the proposed candidate(s), and such feedback will be conveyed to the dean (in the case of assistant/associate deans) and to the PSVP (in all cases).

   Appointments of chairpersons will be made after the faculty of the department have had reasonable opoportunity to provide input on the suitability of the proposed candidate(s). This input, which is particularly important, should be collected in a means whereby all departmental faculty may advise the dean, anonymously if preferred, regarding the strengths and weakness and acceptability of the candidate(s). Such input may also take the form of a secret-ballot vote by the department, in which case the tally will only be advisory and will remain confidential. All input from individual facutly and/or the vote tally will be conveyed to both the dean and the PSVP.

   Administrative appointments are held at the discretion of the immediate administrative supervisor of that assignment and may be terminated at any time.

2. In cases where the incumbent dean departs or will be absent for an extended period (three months or longer), the PSVP will solicit nominations from the departing dean, chairpersons, and tenured faculty for persons to be considered for appointment as the interim dean. For periods less than three months, an acting dean will be directly appointed by the PSVP in consultation with the incumbent dean. For either interim or acting dean appointments, preference will be given to nominees with administrative experience who can ensure effective administration of college functions during the absence of a permanent dean. Nominees may be from another college at TTU. The PSVP will interview up to three persons from the list of nominees who would be

willing to serve as interim dean. The PSVP will select an interim dean from those interviewed. Before making the appointment, the PSVP will communicate the decision to the president, who will coordinate notification of the chancellor and the TTUS Board of Regents. The Office of the PSVP will then communicate the selection to the faculty, staff, and administrators of the college. Interim (and acting) deans serve at the pleasure of the PSVP.

3. Likewise, in cases where the incumbent chairperson departs or will be absent for an extended period (three months or longer), the dean will solicit nominations from the departing chairperson, the tenured faculty, and faculty holding continuing appointment for persons to be considered for appointment as the interim chairperson. For periods less than three months, an acting chairperson will be directly appointed by the dean in consultation with the incumbent chairperson. For either interim or acting chairperson, preference will be given to nominees with experience who can ensure effective administration of department functions during the absence of a permanent chairperson. Nominees may be from other departments within the college or another college in the university. The dean will interview up to three persons from the list of nominees who would be willing to serve as interim chairperson. Input from the faculty regarding proposed candidate(s) should be obtained as described in Section 1. The dean will select an interim chairperson from those interviewed. Before making the appointment of either an interim or acting chairperson, the dean will communicate the decision to the PSVP, who may discuss the decision with the president. The offer of the interim or acting appointment will be made by the dean with the approval of the PSVP. The dean will then communicate the selection to the faculty, staff, and administrators of the department and then to the college faculty. Interim and acting chairpersons serve at the pleasure of the dean.

4. The positions of academic dean, associate or assistant dean, and chairperson are defined below:

   a. Academic Dean

      The deans are the principal administrative officers of the colleges of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, Architecture, Arts and Sciences, the Jerry S. Rawls College of Business Administration, Education, the Edward E. Whitacre College Engineering, Honors, Human Sciences, the Graduate School, the School of Law, Media and Communication, the J. T. and Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts, and the University Libraries.

      A dean's chief responsibility is the development, supervision, and operation of the academic programs of the college or school. The academic dean and staff serve as consultants on all academic matters such as course changes, choice of major, and degree requirements. Since all degrees given by Texas Tech University are granted through these colleges and schools, the respective dean and the faculty members of a specific college or school establish their own degree requirements. Deans serve in their administrative capacities without tenure and at the discretion of the PSVP. Each dean has an annual performance conference with the PSVP and a comprehensive review (no later than after 5 years of service) involving faculty, staff, and other constituents of the college.

   b. Associate and Assistant Dean

      Associate and assistant deans aid in the administrative work of the colleges and schools. These individuals serve in their administrative capacities without tenure and at the discretion of the dean. Each associate or assistant dean is to report on her/his performance at least annually through a conference with the dean.

c. Department Chairperson, School Director, and Area Coordinator

Instructional departments or areas are administered by chairpersons (or school directors in the J.T. and Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts and area coordinators in the Jerry S. Rawls College of Business) who normally are appointed for three-year terms by the PSVP on the recommendation of the dean of the appropriate college. The chairperson, in cooperation with the faculty, is responsible for supervising activities of the department/school/area, scheduling classes, assisting in faculty evaluations, preparing budget requests, initiating appointment recommendations, and developing the curriculum.

Each chairperson is to report on her/his performance at least annually through a conference with the dean.

These individuals serve in their administrative capacities without tenure and at the discretion of the dean. Before a chairperson's term expires, the dean initiates an extensive review with the faculty, and input from the faculty regarding reappointment of the chairperson should be obtained as noted in Section 1. Reappointment of an individual as a chairperson may be recommended by the dean to the PVSP. Further, the dean may appoint an interim chair, per Section 3 above, should the decision be made not to reappoint the incumbent.

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