

POLICY #6.2

SUBJECT: Academic Officers

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is to define and describe academic units and academic officers, and to provide for their appointment, duties, and evaluation.

II. REFERENCES

- A. Southern Utah University [Policy 6.0 Definition of Faculty](#)
 - B. Southern Utah University [Policy 6.1 Faculty Evaluation, Promotion, and Tenure](#)
 - C. Southern Utah University [Policy 6.38 Faculty Hiring](#)
 - D. Southern Utah University [Policy 8.1 Classified Staff Personnel System](#)
 - E. Utah System of Higher Education [Policy R220 Delegation of Responsibilities to the President and Board of Trustees](#)
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III. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Academic Department:** An Academic Department is a subcomponent of an Academic Unit with an identifiable teaching and scholarly/creative activity. To be designated an Academic Department, the group of faculty must
 - 1. offer or administer a degree, certificate, or some other official credential of the University;
 - 2. have an identifiable curriculum and formal description in the current University General Catalog or other publication(s);
 - 3. have a separate identifiable budget; and
 - 4. be designated an academic department by decision of the President, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Higher Education.
- B. **Academic Units:** An Academic Unit is an organizational unit of more than one (1) person whose operating head reports to the Provost or designee. To be designated an Academic Unit, the group must
 - 1. have a separate, identifiable budget and
 - 2. be designated an academic unit by the President, the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Higher Education.

- C. **Eligible Faculty and Staff:** Eligible Faculty and Staff are faculty and staff defined as classified and professional staff who are at least 3/4 time or 0.75 FTE employees or benefit eligible. They may complete the annual feedback survey and formal evaluations of academic officers.
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IV. POLICY

A. Academic Officers

1. Policies of the Utah State Board of Higher Education provide that Presidents appoint officers, faculty, and staff of the University. In academics, these officers are administratively responsible and report to those designated in a line of authority for the functions and duties of their offices. They serve at the discretion of the President.
2. Academic officers under this Policy are the University Provost, Associate Provosts, Deans of Academic Colleges/Schools, Associate Deans, Department Chairs, and Associate Department Chairs.
3. Academic officers are appointed consistent with procedures outlined by Human Resources and may include either national searches or internal searches. In the case of the Provost and Deans, a national search is required. Further, SUU [Policy 6.1](#) describes tenure and academic rank that may be associated with such positions. When needed, academic officers can be appointed on an interim basis with approval by the Dean, Provost, and President, as appropriate.
4. Academic officers are formally evaluated every three (3) years using objective measurement tools. Evaluative criteria and standardized procedures for conducting evaluations are described in this Policy.
5. All formal evaluations of academic officers are administered electronically by a third party (e.g., SUU Human Resources or Information Technology Department) in a manner to ensure anonymity and to document that only appropriate personnel are allowed to complete the evaluation with a one-time submission. Associate Provosts, the Provost, and the University President have access to the evaluative documents. These documents are stored in a secure repository for three (3) years following their completion and review.
6. In February of the years between regularly scheduled formal third-year evaluations, all Eligible Faculty and Staff will be asked to complete an anonymous, standardized survey of their Associate Department Chair (if applicable), Department Chair, Associate Dean (if applicable), and Dean, as well as the Associate Provosts and Provost. These surveys will be used to provide feedback and facilitate the professional development of academic officers.
 - a. The annual feedback surveys are administered electronically by a third party (e.g., SUU HR or IT Department) in a manner to ensure anonymity and to document that only appropriate personnel are allowed to complete the survey with a one-time submission.

- b. The results obtained through the annual feedback survey will be made available to the academic officer's supervisor(s) and the academic officer to which the survey pertained. Together, they will review the feedback to identify any areas of concern and ways in which these concerns may be addressed. Feedback from these surveys is not required to be attached or otherwise appended to an academic officer's annual review from their supervisor, or to their scheduled third-year formal evaluation, unless the academic officer under review requests it.

B. The University Provost (hereafter Provost)

The Provost is the chief academic officer of the University. The Provost is responsible to represent the University in such a manner as to ensure the orderly and efficient conduct of University academic affairs, when the President delegates appropriate authority.

1. Procedure of Appointing the Provost:

- a. The search for a Provost will originate with the President who will arrange for faculty input. A search committee will be established with representation from Academic Units and other areas of the University.
- b. The search committee will evaluate and screen the candidates, and submit an unranked list of acceptable candidates to the President.
- c. Before an offer is extended, the tenure review and recommendation process is made pursuant to SUU [Policy 6.1](#) and constitutes a legal review. The selected candidate is offered the appointment, tenure, and academic rank.

2. Specific responsibilities and functions of the Provost are to:

- a. Develop, administer, and promote the academic programs and academic support functions of the University;
- b. Recommend to the President appointments, reviews, and promotions of the University's academic personnel, including the recruitment of faculty; the development, tenure, and promotion of faculty; University assessment and accreditation; and issues related to faculty morale;
- c. Coordinate and promote academic proposals, changes, reviews, and other academic matters with the Board of Trustees, the Board of Higher Education, the Utah System of Higher Education, and other institutions and groups;
- d. Coordinate the University Colleges/Schools, Library, Continuing Education, academic support offices, and other academic activities;
- e. Coordinate educational policies and academic planning functions;
- f. Provide pertinent academic guidance and input on physical facilities planning and utilization; and

- g. Serve as Chair of the Deans' Council and as Chief Executive Officer of the University in the absence of or upon delegation by the President.

3. Qualifications of the Provost:

- a. Earned doctorate or terminal degree in an academic field offered within the University's curriculum and qualified for tenure in an Academic Department;
- b. Administrative experience at the level of Dean or above;
- c. Demonstrated leadership ability and communication skills;
- d. Demonstrated organizational and management skills;
- e. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people;
- f. Demonstrated success in teaching and scholarship at the college or university level;
- g. Honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency and related positive character traits; and
- h. Commitment to the academic and educational goals included in the University's philosophy, planning, and mission statements.

4. Evaluation of the Provost:

- a. The President will evaluate the Provost annually. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., every three (3) years the President will conduct a formal evaluation with input from all University Deans and Department Chairs, as well as other administrators, Eligible Faculty and Staff who report directly to the Provost, and individuals with whom the Provost has had regular contact (e.g., committee members, faculty senators) during the period of time under consideration. Evaluative components include those responsibilities and functions listed under Section IV.B.2.a.-g. and qualifications listed under Section IV.B.3.a.-h.

C. Associate Provosts

Associate Provosts participate in formulating academic strategy and policy.

1. Specific responsibilities and functions of the Associate Provosts include:

- a. Assisting the Provost in promoting and coordinating all University academic programs and academic support functions;
- b. Supervising academic support functions as directed by the Provost;
- c. Supervising academic assessment, program and curriculum changes, and other duties as assigned;

- d. Working closely with Deans of the University to ensure a smooth and unified working relationship between the Colleges/Schools and the Provost's office;
- 2. Qualifications of the Associate Provosts:
 - a. Earned terminal or other graduate degree in an academic field offered within the University's curriculum;
 - b. Years of experience in higher education sufficient to demonstrate competence and knowledge of higher education issues;
 - c. Excellent communication and human relations skills;
 - d. Honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency and related positive character traits; and
 - e. Commitment to the academic and educational goals included in the University's philosophy, planning, and mission statements.
- 3. Evaluation of Associate Provosts:
 - a. The Associate Provost is accountable to the Provost who evaluates individual performance annually. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., every three (3) years the Provost will conduct a formal evaluation with input solicited from all academic officers, as well as Eligible Faculty and Staff who report directly to the Associate Provosts and individuals with whom the Associate Provosts have had regular contact (e.g., committee members, faculty senators) during the period of time under consideration. Evaluative components include those responsibilities and functions listed under Section IV.C.1.a.-d. and qualifications listed under Section IV.C.2.a.-e.

D. Dean of Academic Units:

- 1. Recommended by and responsible to the Provost, the College/School Dean has responsibility for all programs related to the College/School, including academic, scholarly/creative, and student activities, as well as credit-bearing continuing education curricula. Where appropriate, a College/School may administer specialized Academic Units that would report to the Dean of that College/School or designee. A Dean will administer each College/School and is the chief executive officer of the College/School.
- 2. Procedure of Appointment for Deans:
 - a. The search for a Dean will originate with the Provost, who will meet with faculty to develop a position description. A search committee will evaluate and screen the candidates, and submit an unranked list of acceptable candidates to the Provost.
 - b. The Dean will serve without tenure as Dean, but may receive tenure and rank as a faculty member in an academic discipline of a department and/or College/School pursuant to SUU [Policy 6.1](#).

3. Specific responsibilities and functions of the Deans are to:

- a. Develop, administer, and promote the academic programs and academic support functions of the School/College;
- b. Develop recommendations for the nomination, retention, promotion, tenure, and compensation of faculty, Department Chairs, and staff members in departments and units assigned to the College/School (the Provost may delegate to the Dean authority to offer employment or initiate a dismissal within the College/School);
- c. Coordinate and promote academic proposals, changes, reviews, and other academic matters with the other Deans of the University, and other institutions and groups;
- d. Coordinate the departments and programs within the School/College;
- e. Develop and coordinate educational policies, planning functions and physical facilities planning and utilization of the School/College;
- f. Provide leadership and conduct strategic planning;
- g. Develop external relationships for the purposes of enhancing student placement opportunities, providing meaningful community outreach opportunities for students and faculty, and cultivating additional fund-raising opportunities for the University; and
- h. Manage and monitor College/School budgets and allocations and have oversight of department/unit budgets.

4. Qualifications of Deans:

- a. Earned doctorate, terminal degree, or graduate degree in an academic field appropriate to the unit's mission;
- b. Administrative experience at the level of Department Chair or higher is preferred;
- c. Demonstrated leadership ability and communication skills;
- d. Demonstrated organizational, management, and fiscal skills;
- e. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people;
- f. Honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency and related positive character traits;
- g. Commitment to the academic and educational goals included in the College/School's and University's philosophy, planning, and mission statements; and

- h. Demonstrated success in teaching and scholarly efforts at the college or university level.

5. Evaluation of Deans:

- a. The Provost will evaluate each Dean annually. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., every three (3) years the Provost will initiate a formal evaluation of the Dean with evaluative input from all Eligible Faculty and Staff affiliated with the Dean's College/School, and individuals with whom the Dean has had regular contact (e.g., other Deans, committee members, faculty senators) during the period of time under consideration. Evaluative components include those responsibilities and functions listed under Section IV.D.3.a.-h. and qualifications listed under Section IV.D.4.a.-h.

E. Associate Deans

- 1. Associate Deans may be authorized in some Colleges/Schools. Associate Deans assist with the administration of a College/School. Specific responsibilities and functions of the Associate Deans are to assist the Dean with:

- a. Development, administration, and promotion of academic programs and academic support functions of the College/School;
- b. Development of recommendations for the nomination, retention, promotion, tenure, and compensation of faculty, Department Chairs, and staff members in departments and units assigned to the College/School;
- c. Coordination and promotion of academic proposals, changes, reviews, and other academic matters with the other Deans of the University, and other institutions and groups;
- d. Coordination of departments and/or units within the school/college;
- e. Development of educational policies, planning functions, and physical facilities planning and utilization of the College/School;
- f. Leadership and conduct of strategic planning; and
- g. Development of external relationships for the purposes of enhancing student placement opportunities, providing meaningful community outreach opportunities for students and faculty, and cultivating additional fund-raising opportunities for the University.

- 2. Qualifications of Associate Deans:

- a. Earned doctorate, terminal degree, or other graduate degree in an academic field appropriate to the unit's mission;
- b. Administrative experience within the academic area is preferred;
- c. Demonstrated leadership ability and communication skills;

- d. Demonstrated organizational, management, and fiscal skills;
- e. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with people;
- f. Honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency and related positive character traits;
- g. Commitment to the academic and educational goals included in the College/School's and University's philosophy, planning, and mission statements; and
- h. Demonstrated success in teaching and scholarly efforts at the college or university level.

3. Evaluation of Associate Deans:

- a. The Associate Dean is accountable to the Dean who evaluates individual performance annually. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., every three (3) years the Dean will initiate a formal evaluation of the Associate Dean with evaluative input from that College/School's academic officers, Eligible Faculty and Staff who report directly to the Associate Dean, and individuals with whom the Associate Dean has had regular contact (e.g., committee members, faculty senators) during the period of time under consideration. Evaluative components include those responsibilities and functions listed under Section IV.E.1.a.-g. and qualifications listed under Section IV.E.2.a.-h.

F. Department Chairs

1. Appointment of Department Chairs:

- a. The Department Chair is the leader of the Academic Department. Deans recommend Department Chairs with input from the faculty and the approval of the Provost, President, and Board of Trustees. It is preferred that the Department Chair be selected from the list of tenured faculty in the Department. Where tenured faculty are unavailable, are unwilling to serve, or do not garner the support of the faculty and administration, other faculty (including non-tenure-track faculty) in the Department, College/School, or University could be considered on an interim basis. Budget permitting, an externally recruited Department Chair who garners faculty and administration support could be considered in accordance with SUU [Policy 6.38](#).
- b. Procedure for Outside Search for Department Chair:

The search for Department chairs will originate with the Dean of the Academic Unit. The Dean will meet with all full-time faculty of the affected Academic Department to develop a position description. The draft position description will be sent to the Provost for approval.

- c. Each College/School will develop search procedures that provide for faculty input.
2. Specific responsibilities and functions of the Department Chairs include:
- a. Providing leadership for the department in all professional matters, particularly in developing program plans, coordinating assessment, and maintaining high-quality performance in teaching, scholarship/creativity, and service;
 - b. Developing, administering, and promoting the academic programs and academic support functions of the department;
 - c. Recommending to the Dean appointments, reviews, and promotions of the department academic staff, including the recruitment of faculty; the development, tenure, and promotion of faculty; department assessment and accreditation; and the development and maintenance of faculty morale;
 - d. Coordinating and promote academic proposals, changes, reviews, and other academic matters within the department;
 - e. Coordinating educational policies, planning functions, and physical facilities planning and utilization of the department;
 - f. Making specific teaching and other appropriate assignments to individual faculty and staff members of the department, supervise and evaluate the work and performance of each staff member; and participate in the evaluation, promotion, and tenure process for faculty.
 - g. Ensuring that curricula in the department are current and of the highest quality; and
 - h. Managing and monitoring department budgets.
3. Evaluation of Department Chairs:
- a. Deans will annually evaluate each Department Chair based on the responsibilities and functions above in Section IV.F.2.a.-h. Honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency, and related positive character traits will also be considered.
 - b. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., after every three (3) years of service in the position, the Dean will initiate a formal evaluation of the Department Chair with evaluative input from that department's Eligible Faculty and Staff. Evaluative components include those listed in Section IV.F.3.a. above.
 - c. In the event the annual review or a three-year formal evaluation identifies deficiencies in the Department Chair's ability to effectively fulfill the responsibilities and function of the position, the Dean will work with the Department Chair to create and implement a performance improvement plan to address specific deficiencies before the next annual evaluation. If at the time of

the annual evaluation the Department Chair is unwilling to continue, the selection process as described above will commence with the new Department Chair expected to take office at the beginning of the next academic year. Every three (3) years the formal evaluation will include an anonymous poll of faculty to determine whether they wish the Department Chair to continue in their position.

G. Associate Department Chairs

1. Where Associate Department Chair positions are authorized, the positions will assist in the administration of the department. Associate Department Chairs should be faculty within the unit, and normally not have evaluation, promotion, and tenure responsibilities.
2. Chairs will determine the responsibilities of Associate Department Chairs who will be accountable to their respective Department Chair.
3. Associate Department Chairs will be evaluated annually by the Department Chair. As part of that evaluation, honesty, integrity, reliability, courtesy and respect for others, consistency, and related positive character traits will be considered.
4. Using the procedures outlined in Section IV.A.5., after every three (3) years of service in the position, the Department Chair will initiate a formal evaluation of the Associate Department Chair with evaluative input from that department's Eligible Faculty and Staff. Evaluative components include those listed in Section IV.G.3.

H. Exceptions

Exceptions to qualifications and appointments at the level of Associate Provosts, Deans, Department Chairs, and Associate Department Chairs shall be allowed by approval of the Provost.

V. RELEVANT FORMS/LINKS

N/A

VI. QUESTIONS/RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

The responsible office for this Policy is the [Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs](#).

VII. POLICY ADOPTION AND AMENDMENT DATES

Date Approved: June 17, 2005

Amended: [March 22, 2007](#); [June 11, 2010](#); [May 6, 2011](#); [March 24, 2016](#); April 28, 2022