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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Chair Search Process

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College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Chair Search Process

Limitations and definitions:

- 1. This process is intended for the selection of candidates who are already UMaine faculty members. It will not apply when a chair is sought as a new hire.*
- 2. For the purpose of the search process as described in this document, “department faculty” consists of regular faculty members with ongoing sole or joint appointments in the department. At minimum, the search committee is expected to consult with regular faculty members as stipulated. If a department’s governance policies entail inclusion of others, such as adjunct faculty, it is the responsibility of the incumbent department chair to notify the dean before nominations are invited (step #2 below).*
- 3. Faculty members whose family or doctoral mentoring relationship with an identified candidate could constitute a conflict of interest are encouraged to be aware of that possibility and to consider recusing themselves from aspects of the process in which they feel that they might have difficulty acting objectively.*
- 4. Although the term “chair” is used exclusively throughout, the search process applies also to directors whose role is functionally equivalent to that of a chair. Similarly, the term “department” is understood to include schools or divisions that function as departments.*

Constituting the search committee

The department elects three members, at least two of whom are tenured in the department. Two additional tenured or tenure-track faculty members from related disciplines are then appointed by the dean. In the event that a department is unable to elect the requisite three members, the dean appoints replacement members in coordination with the department faculty. The dean or his/her designee chairs the committee but has no vote; ordinarily, the designee will be an individual with a faculty appointment in CLAS. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to notify the department faculty of the committee roster.

Identifying the candidate(s)

1. The dean consults with the incumbent to determine whether he/she intends to seek reappointment.
 - Per the AFUM contract (as of September 2015), chairs normally would not serve more than two consecutive terms.
2. The dean notifies the department and the search committee of the incumbent’s intention and invites additional nominations, including self-nominations, from the department by a specified deadline.
3. The search committee chair contacts each candidate to confirm that he/she is willing to be considered and to invite him/her to meet with the dean. Willing candidates submit to the committee chair a written statement and CV. In the statement, the candidate should present his/her qualifications for the position, vision and intentions as chair, and plans to address the department’s most significant challenges and opportunities as he/she identifies them.

4. The search committee chair provides the written statement(s) and CV(s) to the department faculty and the committee.

Evaluating the candidate(s)

Both the department and the search committee evaluate candidates. For convenience, the two review processes may proceed simultaneously. However, departmental review must conclude first so that the department faculty's input is provided to the search committee in a timely fashion and can contribute to the committee's recommendation. In the case of a single candidate, the evaluation procedure below is modified accordingly but should remain thorough and deliberate.

1. The department faculty members review the application materials (statement and CV), confer amongst themselves, and, if they so choose, meet collectively with each candidate. Department faculty who are members of the search committee may participate in these deliberations as observers in order to gather information from their colleagues. To maintain the integrity of the search process, they should refrain from expressing opinions about any candidate. Candidates are not to participate in the deliberations except when asked by their colleagues to speak about their own candidacy.
2. The search committee reviews the application materials, consults with department faculty, selects one or more candidates to interview, and conducts interviews. Interviews use a script to ensure equitable treatment of all candidates. Every department faculty member is provided with an opportunity to express opinions of the candidates' credentials and suitability by a specified deadline.

Recommendation and appointment

1. Based on its review of the application materials, interview(s), and departmental input, the search committee recommends a candidate to the department faculty. The committee chair invites comment on the recommendation by a specified deadline. A meeting of the search committee with the department faculty is held if any member of the faculty so requests.
 - Initial appointments are to be made for a minimum of 3 years per the AFUM contract (as of September 2015). Reappointments and interim or external appointments may be made for shorter periods. The presumptive term for a new CLAS chair is 3 years, although the committee may offer a rationale for a different length of term on the advice of the department.
2. The search committee submits its final recommendation to the dean.
3. The dean meets with the recommended candidate to discuss the possibility and terms of appointment.
4. If the dean approves the committee's recommendation and reaches agreement on terms with the candidate, he/she recommends the appointment to the provost and notifies the department accordingly.
5. If the dean does not approve the committee's recommendation or is unable to reach agreement with the candidate, the committee is asked to recommend an alternate.

Approved by majority vote of the CLAS faculty February 26, 2016