OP 8. Protocols Regarding Department Chairs

OP 8.1. The Role of Chair: The Chair is a member of the Academic Affairs leadership team supporting the broad mission of the university serving in an administrative at-will appointment [FH 8.5]. Chairs report to their College/School/ Libraries dean and are hired by the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor. Chairs are responsible for leading and managing their department and working closely with their faculty on matters of teaching, scholarship, and service, supporting student success, and offering direction and management over departmental resources. The Chair's duties are outlined in their contract upon hire/renewal.

OP 8.2 Department Chair Searches

OP 8.2.1 Functions of the Department Chair Search Committee. The functions of Department Chair Search Committees include, but are not limited to: creating the position description in consultation with the dean, job posting, review rubrics, and recruiting plan; advertising the position; reviewing applications; conducting reference checks and initial interviews; making determinations regarding candidates chosen for on-campus or final interviews; conducting on-campus visits or final interviews; recommending a candidate or candidates; and documenting the search process. In creating the job posting, it should be noted that a Department Chair must be a tenured faculty member or be appointed with tenure, and that while the appointment as Department Chair is an at-will appointment, a Chair will typically serve for at least five years.

OP 8.2.2 Composition of Department Chair Search Committees. Departments shall establish in their foundational documents a standard method for creating Department Chair Search Committees and appointing a chair. These methods shall specifically address the following:

OP 8.2.2.1 Size of the Department Chair Search Committee. The size of the committee from among the voting-eligible (see OP 10.2) members of the department with the following restrictions:.

1. No matter how many faculty are on the committee, the ratio of tenured faculty to tenure-track or special faculty from the department shall be 2:1, whenever possible.
2. The committee shall also include a voting member (typically a Department Chair) of an allied department appointed by the Dean of the college/school. The Dean shall solicit recommendations from the faculty of the Department prior to appointing that voting member.
3. When the department consists of six or fewer tenured or tenure-track faculty members, all shall be invited to serve on the committee, except the current Department Chair.

OP 8.2.2.2 Representation of Disciplines, Fields, Programs on the Department Chair Search Committee. Departments with multiple

academic disciplines, fields or programs shall strive to have all areas fairly represented and be inclusive.

OP 8.2.2.3 Representation of Graduate Faculty on the Department Chair Search Committee. If the department offers a graduate degree or degrees, at least one committee member shall be a member of the Graduate Faculty.

OP 8.2.3 Training of the Department Chair Search Committee. See OP 7.4.

OP 8.2.4 Chair of the Department Chair Search Committee. Departments shall specify if the Department Chair Search Committee Chair shall be appointed, elected by the department's faculty, or elected by members of the Department Chair Search Committee and how that appointment or election shall be carried out. The Department Chair Search Committee shall be chaired by a faculty member with tenure.

OP 8.2.5 Department Chair Search Committee Procedures

OP 8.2.5.1 Calling Meetings of the Department Chair Search Committee. The Department Chair Search Committee Chair shall call and schedule all Department Chair Search Committee meetings. Department Chairs (or Unit Supervisors, hereinafter "Department Chair") shall not attend these meetings.

OP 8.2.5.2 Location and Type of Department Chair Search Committee Meeting. All Department Chair Search Committee meetings shall be held on campus, via electronic access on a University approved platform, or shall combine these two options. If the meeting is conducted electronically (in whole or in part), the Department Chair Search Committee Chair shall host the meeting. Any Appalachian State University employee participating in a Department Chair Search Committee meeting electronically is responsible for securing a setting that maintains the confidentiality requirements (see below).

OP 8.2.5.3 Electronic Recording of Department Chair Search Committee Meetings. Because of the confidentiality required for consideration of personnel matters, electronic recording of Department Chair Search Committee meetings is not permitted.

OP 8.2.5.4 Conduct of Department Chair Search Committee Meetings. All Department Chair Search Committee meetings shall be conducted using procedures outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, as currently revised.

OP 8.2.5.5 Recusals from Department Chair Search Committee . No member of a department contemplating applying for chair should be on the Department Chair Search Committee. A Department Chair Search Committee member who has a relationship with an applicant as described in the Professionalism in Personnel Decision policy (see OP 2.1), shall indicate such at the earliest possible stage of consideration. The Department Chair Search Committee Chair, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, shall determine if recusal is required. Departments should consider including in their procedures for creating department chair search committees whether to include alternate(s) and make clear when and how those alternates will participate as members.

OP 8.2.5.6 Keeping of Department Chair Search Committee Meeting Minutes. At each meeting, the Department Chair Search Committee shall select someone from its membership to keep minutes (see also OP 8.4.5.12).

OP 8.2.5.7 Confidentiality of Department Chair Search Committee Meetings. Confidentiality must be maintained for department chair searches. Confidentiality means not sharing or discussing any of the following outside of the Department Chair Search Committee: any materials submitted, reference or external reviewer comments, Department Chair Search Committee deliberations, and Department Chair Search Committee recommendations. The names and materials of applicants for the purposes of reference checks and campus presentations shall not be shared with individuals outside of the Department Chair Search Committee without written permission of the applicant. No discussion of Department Chair Search Committee members about a personnel matter shall take place outside the confines of a Department Chair Search Committee meeting.

OP 8.2.5.8 Storage of Department Chair Search Candidate Materials. All candidate materials shall remain in a secure location or in a secure University electronic server file with access provided by the Department Chair Search Committee Chair. All Department Chair Search Committee members shall have access to review these materials. With written permission of the candidate, some finalist materials (e.g. a candidate's curriculum vitae, letter of application, teaching and/or research philosophy, published articles) may be made available to other members of the department or allied faculty, via the search site maintained by the Office of Human Resources.

OP 8.2.5.9 Solicitation of Feedback on Department Chair Search Candidates. If Department Chair Search Committees plan to solicit

feedback on candidates (e.g. presentations, interviews, sample classes, etc.), a policy in the department's foundational documents must indicate how feedback will be collected from faculty, staff, and students outside of the Department Chair Search Committee. Any Department policies on feedback shall ensure that the department's mechanism is applied consistently for every candidate and that all feedback mechanisms shall be designed to provide a fair and equitable assessment of each applicant's skills, knowledge, and abilities to perform the functions of the job. Any policy shall specify that:

1. feedback shall be through paper and/or electronic forms;
2. all paper and/or electronic forms shall include an option for anonymous feedback;
3. all forms will be collected, collated, and provided by the Department Chair Search Committee Chair to committee members prior to meetings where deliberations regarding the candidates will take place.

OP 8.2.5.10 Deliberation of Department Chair Search Committee. Deliberation among Department Chair Search Committee members is a crucial part of the faculty review of candidates being considered for hire. All members of the Department Chair Search Committee are required to be present (in-person or virtually) for any deliberations on candidates (e.g. initial review of candidates, making an interview list, determining finalists, making recommendations for hire). The Department Chair Search Committee Chair, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources, shall determine if an absence of a search committee member due to extenuating circumstances requires a re-scheduling of the meeting. Departments should consider including in their procedures for creating Department Chair Search Committees whether to include alternate(s) and make clear when and how those alternates will participate as members.

OP 8.2.5.11 Voting and Ballots in Department Chair Searches. Departments shall develop procedures in their foundational documents regarding how Department Chair Search Committee ballots shall be cast, including whether those ballots shall be anonymous. If paper ballots are used, they shall be secured, scanned, and uploaded into a secure electronic file for the record.

OP 8.2.5.12 Department Chair Search Committee Minutes. The minutes of the Department Chair Search Committee shall record:

1. all persons in attendance at the meeting and excused and unexcused members of the committee absent from the particular meeting;
2. any business under discussion;

3. any action considered. All motions shall be stated in the affirmative. The record shall state that the Department Chair Search Committee formally considered a candidate and shall state the permissible criteria that were considered, but the record shall not include individual comments;
4. all votes (the number of affirmative votes and negative votes) on each action, but not the votes of individual members of the committee.

OP 8.2.5.13 Official Record of All Department Chair Search Committee Business. All minutes of the Department Chair Search Committee shall be approved and, if necessary, modified by a majority of the assembled committee. Such action will normally take place at the next meeting of the committee except that, following the last meeting of the committee in a given academic year, the recorder shall be responsible for gaining the approval of the minutes in writing from the members of the committee. A file of all minutes of the Department Chair Search Committee shall be maintained with the Department Chair Search Committee file (see Appalachian State University Policy Manual 601.8, Section 4.10). Nothing in these guidelines shall violate the confidentiality of the Department Chair Search Committee minutes.

OP 8.2.5.14 Materials Forwarded by the Department Chair Search Committee. The Department Chair Search Committee Chair shall forward all recommendations within five (5) calendar days of the vote to the Dean. The recommendations shall be accompanied by all supporting materials and documents submitted to the Department Chair Search Committee.

OP 8.2.5.15 Department Chair Searches and APT Consideration. If necessary and prior to acting on any recommendations, the Dean shall notify the Chair of the APT Committee to convene a meeting for the consideration of the credentials of any external candidates with regard to rank and tenure. The Department Chair shall ensure the APT Meeting is called in a timely manner and the Chair of the APT shall follow all APT procedures in considering the candidates' materials and forwarding its recommendation.

OP. 8.2.5.16 Department Chair Search Committee Materials to the Office of Human Resources. The Department Chair Search Committee Chair shall request all materials (i.e. copies of letters, interview notes, etc.) from members of the Department Chair Search Committee and shall forward those materials to the Office Human Resources as soon as the work of the Department Chair Search Committee has concluded.

OP 8.3 Periodic Reopening of the Department Chair Position. If a Department Chair continues as Department Chair for five consecutive years (including service as acting or interim Department Chair), the position shall be opened by the Dean for nominations in September of the fifth year of that individual's service as Department Chair and every three years thereafter.

OP 8.3.1 Process for Periodic Reopening of the Department Chair Position. At the beginning of September in the final year of a Department Chair's term, the Dean shall inform the faculty and the Department Chair by email that the opening of the position is taking place. The Dean shall coordinate with the Chair of the APT Committee to call a meeting or meetings before the end of September that shall be open to all department faculty and staff, except the Department Chair, to discuss the future of the department and its leadership.

OP 8.3.1.1 Department Faculty & Staff Feedback to the Dean on the Department Chair Position. Departments shall, in their foundational documents, determine how to provide feedback to the Dean (e.g., formal vote, discussion, etc.) as to whether the current Department Chair should continue or if a search should be opened.The Department faculty may also forward a recommendation to the Dean as to whether any search should consider internal candidates only or be open to external candidates.

OP 8.3.1.2 Communication of Faculty & Staff Feedback on the Department Chair Position. The APT Committee Chair shall forward the department's feedback and any recommendations to the Dean of the College.

OP 8.3.1.3 Communication of Administrative Feedback on the Department Chair Position. The Dean shall share the feedback with the Department Chair. The Dean, in consultation with the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, shall determine how to proceed and shall communicate that decision back to the Department Chair privately and in an email to all the faculty of the Department no later than October 15.

OP 8.4 Protocol for Meeting About Faculty Concerns Regarding Department Chair Performance. A department's faculty (by a petition of more than 50% of the voting-eligible (see OP 11.2) faculty in a department), may call for a meeting between the Dean and the department's faculty members to discuss concerns pertaining to the Department Chair's performance. The "more than 50%" voting-eligible faculty requirement is not to be construed that the petitioning faculty members have decided one way or the other on the merits of the issues that might be discussed.

OP 8.4.1 Dean's Responsibility to Schedule Meeting About Faculty Concerns Regarding Department Chair Performance. It shall be the responsibility of the Dean to schedule that meeting with the Department's faculty, excluding the Department Chair, as soon as is practicable after receiving the request.

OP 8.4.2 Administrative Communication About Faculty Concerns Regarding Department Chair Performance. Within five (5) calendar days after this meeting, it shall be the Dean's responsibility to communicate the information from the meeting to the Department Chair. The Department Chair shall be given the opportunity to respond within five (5) calendar days to the Dean. If necessary, the Dean, in consultation with the Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor, shall determine if any action with regard to a Department Chair is warranted.

OP 8.4.3 Communication to the Faculty Regarding Completion of Consideration of Faculty Concerns Regarding Department Chair Performance. The Dean shall inform the faculty by email when the process as outlined above has been completed.