

Responsibilities of Department Chairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science

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Oversight Executive: Dean

Applies to: Department Chairs in the School of Engineering and Applied Science

Reason for Policy

This policy clarifies the roles and responsibilities for individuals who hold the administrative appointment of department chair in the School of Engineering and Applied Science (SEAS).

Definitions (*cf. Glossary*):

Policy Statement:

1. **Overall responsibility, authority and reporting relationship.** The responsibilities and authority of the department chairs are established by the Dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science (further referred to as the Dean). All department chairs serve at the discretion of the Dean and report directly to the Dean. Important collaborative relationships include (but are not limited to) the Executive Director of the University of Virginia Engineering Foundation, other department chairs, research center directors, and associate deans.
 - Department chairs are responsible for strategic planning for the department, taking into consideration the University and SEAS goals, such as the SEAS Strategic Plan and the Commission for the Future of the University (COFU). Responsibilities of the chair span the full calendar year.
2. **Faculty.** The chair is responsible for recruitment, management, compensation and retention of departmental faculty in consideration of the University of Virginia and the School of Engineering and Applied Science strategic plans and of the balancing of the multiple missions of the University. Initial approval by the Dean is required prior to the initiation of any search process for new faculty. In accordance with SEAS and University policies and procedures, the chair nominates all faculty for initial appointment, additional term appointments, and promotion and tenure

within the department. The chair will meet, at a minimum, annually with each faculty member to provide evaluation, guidance and mentoring for the faculty member. The chair is responsible for ensuring that professional commitments of faculty members which are external to the university do not impinge on, or conflict with, their academic responsibilities, and for ensuring to the best of his or her ability that faculty disclose consulting agreements and potential conflicts of interest so that these can be evaluated and managed appropriately. The chair is responsible for annual reporting to the Dean of his/her own days away from the University.

The chair will oversee all faculty activities and manage all academic initiatives. The chair will provide strategic program recommendations on future directions for the faculty complement to the Dean. The chair has the authority to assign administrative, teaching, and research roles to the faculty of the department. The chair is responsible and accountable for the academic performance and productivity of the faculty.

The chair is responsible for the management of faculty teaching loads within his or her department and for ensuring that teaching assignments are consistent with the SEAS Workload Management Policy for Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty.

3. **Staff** The chair is responsible for recruitment, management, compensation and retention of departmental staff in consideration of the University of Virginia and the School of Engineering and Applied Science strategic plans and of the balancing of the multiple missions of the University. Initial approval by the Dean is required prior to the initiation of any search process for new staff. The chair will meet with or, in cases where the staff member reports to another person in his or her department, ensures that the staff member's immediate supervisor will meet with, at a minimum, each staff member annually to provide evaluation, guidance and mentoring for the staff member.
4. **Promotion of teamwork.** An important responsibility of the department chair is to promote teamwork and to model cooperation both within a department and between/among other departments in all aspects of academic functions.
5. **Educational and training programs.** The chair is responsible, together with his/her faculty, for the development of the engineering undergraduate and graduate student programs of the department. The chair's responsibility includes appropriate evaluation of programs, including accreditation where appropriate, and the general administration and management of the education programs. The chair is responsible for maintaining liaison with

other departments to foster an integrated teaching program for the School of Engineering and Applied Science and to work with the Senior Associate Dean. The chair will work collaboratively with the appropriate associate dean in the implementation of these programs to assure the execution of the overall institutional goals.

6. **Research programs.** The department chair has the responsibility to encourage and support research creativity and productivity. The goals of departmental research must be integrated with those of the School of Engineering and Applied Science as a whole. The chair will provide input on research strengths and recommendations on strategic research program directions for the Dean, as well as the Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Programs. The chair is responsible for fostering interdepartmental collaboration and integration of basic and applied research.
7. **Facilities.** The department chair is responsible for the planning and development of departmental space and for ensuring that all space is used efficiently and productively. All space belongs to SEAS and is made available to departments through the Office of the Dean. Therefore, the chair should direct all requests for new academic (research, faculty office, and teaching) space or changes in space utilization to the Senior Associate Dean.
8. **Finances and budget.** The department chair is responsible for the financial affairs and long-term fiscal stability of the department including budget preparation and reporting. Expenditures from an approved fiscal year budget are authorized only by the chair with the approval of the Dean. The chair is responsible for and authorizes expenditures from departmental funds, consistent with all institutional guidelines and practices.

The chair will work with the Dean and the UVa Engineering Foundation to identify prospects and to develop proposals to fund departmental initiatives.

9. **Remuneration of departmental personnel.** Chairs are responsible for making recommendations to the Dean for faculty and staff compensation (base salary and incentive) in compliance with the established University of Virginia and School of Engineering and Applied Science guidelines. These recommendations must reflect the overall contributions of individuals to the academic activities of the University of Virginia, and must be supportable by an articulated department remuneration policy based to a great extent on measured performance. The institution is responsible for establishing policies and guidelines for the remuneration of all faculty and non-faculty personnel.

10. **Core values of the University and SEAS.** The department chair serves as a role model and advocate for the core values of the University of Virginia and SEAS, including: (1) the value placed on students in a thriving research environment, (2) development of its faculty and staff, (3) mutual respect for all members of SEAS, (4) appreciation of diversity in all its aspects, (5) leadership for the public good, (6) honor and ethics, and (7) innovation and collaboration in the pursuit, creation, and dissemination of knowledge. The chair is an officer of the institution who acts collaboratively and makes decisions based on sound ethics in order to optimize the educational success of students and the professional growth of University employees in advancing the mission of the department, the school, and the University.

Background

This revised policy was voted upon and approved unanimously with two abstentions (Cahen and Guilford) by the SEAS Leadership Council on November 30, 2015. The revised policy is effective as of January 1, 2016.