

PALO ALTO COLLEGE COLLEGE PROCEDURES

Procedure Number: I 20.0
Procedure Title: Department Chairperson Position
Relevant Board Policies: [D.2.3 Qualifications](#)
[D.2.5 Hiring Authority, Status, Assignments and Duties](#)
Relevant Board Procedures: [D.2.5.1 Hiring Authority, Status, Assignments & Duties](#)
[D.2.3.2 Faculty and Department Chair Positions](#)
Originating Unit: Dean of Arts & Sciences
Maintenance Unit: Vice President of Academic Affairs

I. Purpose: This procedure, closely aligned with Alamo Colleges [Procedure D.2.3.2](#), outlines the selection process and term of office for department chairpersons.

II. Procedures Statement:

- A. Qualifications: Department chairpersons are tenured or tenure-track faculty members who demonstrate the ability and willingness to serve in a leadership capacity. Their primary responsibility is to ensure the attainment of educational and student support goals as these pertain to their specific department. They are responsible to a dean and, as faculty advocates, serve as an essential link between faculty and administration.
- B. Term of Office:
1. As per [Board Policy D.2.5 Hiring Authority, Status, Assignments and Duties](#) and [Procedure D.2.5.1](#), Department Chairpersons will generally be issued ten and one-half month contracts, provided approval is granted by the College President.
 2. Commencing with the initial contract of a department chair, at a minimum of every three years, the chairperson of the department Promotion Committee (*), in a formal meeting of the tenured/tenure-track faculty members of the department, shall supervise a secret ballot election to determine by majority vote whether a chairperson shall continue to serve (assuming chairperson's willingness to serve) or if the selection process for a new chairperson shall begin.
 3. The departmental tenured/tenure-track faculty may by majority vote petition the Dean at any time to begin the selection process for department chairperson.
 4. The Dean may recommend to the Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) reassignment of the chairperson to full-time faculty teaching duties for reasons such as gross neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, or repeated unsatisfactory annual performance evaluations.

5. A chairperson may not be reassigned to full-time faculty teaching duties as a result of a dispute involving academic standards or academic freedom (see [Board Policy D.3.5: Academic Freedom and Responsibilities](#)) within the department.

C. Selection Process:

1. Nominees are submitted who meet these criteria: (1) tenured or tenure-track faculty member, (2) ability and willingness to serve. The administration may introduce external candidates to the pool.
2. The tenured and tenure-track departmental faculty members select by secret ballot and majority vote their nominee for department chairperson. The voting process is supervised by the standing Promotion Committee (*) chair.
3. The nominee is forwarded to the Dean, who responds with approval or disapproval within three working days.
4. If the nomination is not approved, the process is repeated and another nominee is forwarded to the Dean.
5. If the Department and the Dean do not reach an agreement within 45 calendar days of the initiation of the selection process, the Dean, in consultation with the VPAA and with the approval of the College President, may appoint a chairperson from the original or any subsequent pool of candidates formed during that 45 day period.

(*) In the absence of a Promotion Committee, the departmental tenured/tenure-track faculty shall nominate a faculty member to supervise the secret ballot.

Issued: December 9, 2010

Approved: Ana M. Guzman
President