



PROV-031 Appointment of University Professors

Effective Date Monday, April 1, 2019

Status Final

Last Revised Monday, October 31, 2022

Policy Type [Executive Vice President & Provost](#)

Contact Office [Executive Vice President and Provost \(Office of the\)](#)

Oversight Executive

Executive Vice President and Provost

Applies To Academic Division.

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Reason for Policy

Explains the eligibility, nomination, election, and review procedure for a faculty member's appointment to a University professorship.

Definition of Terms

[Enabling Language](#)

Description

The terms that establish and define the use of endowment earnings for an endowed professorship, as stated in documentation such as the gift agreement.

[Endowed Professorship](#)

Description

Named professorships funded with the interest earned by invested funds. Minimum funding levels and other details are described in the policy [EXT-009: Establishment of Funds from Gifts](#).

[University Professorship](#)

Description

A distinguished professorship at the University of Virginia established to facilitate cross-university collaboration and recognize excellence in a broad field of study.

Policy Statement

The University has established distinguished University professorships for faculty holding the rank of professor who teach and conduct research that crosses school boundaries. University professors are eminent in their respective disciplines, hold the same or higher qualifications of any faculty holding an endowed professorship, and are held in the highest regard by their national and international academic peers. University professors also hold appointments as professors in department(s) and school(s) and may retain any (other) endowed professorships they may hold in addition to the title of University professor.

University professors report to the president but remain accountable to the dean(s) of their appointed school(s). They are expected to engage in educational and scholarly activities across school boundaries. The base salaries of faculty appointed to University professorships remain the responsibility of their primary academic homes; however, a University professorship may be established or supported by an endowment, with endowment income used to provide some or all of the University professor's salary and/or provide research funds. The University professor appointment is subject to review and contingent on continued superior performance.

Eligibility:

In addition to having achieved national eminence, a nominee must be a full-time faculty member at the University of Virginia and hold the rank of professor, or, in the case of a new hire, be under consideration for a position of similar stature.

An appointment to a University professorship established or supported by an endowment must comply with the enabling language of the professorship, including any additional procedural requirements. University professorships will normally be endowed; faculty may be appointed to an unendowed University professorship, but only in exceptional circumstances.

Procedures

Procedure for Nominating and Electing Faculty to a University Professorship:

1. The dean of a school must consult with the provost before evaluating potential nominees for an appointment to a University professorship. Following an evaluation by the school, the dean of the school will submit a nomination for University professor to the provost.
2. Alternatively, the president or provost may recommend a candidate to a school for consideration, or request that a school conduct a search for a University professor on a specified topic. Following an evaluation by the school, the dean of the school will submit a nomination for University professor to the provost.
3. Nominations include:
 - a. A nomination letter. The letter should evidence the candidate's excellence in a broad field of study as well as describe how this appointment is expected to contribute broadly to the University in scholarship and teaching;
 - b. A curriculum vitae;
 - c. Three to five letters of peer review from distinguished outside scholars. If letters recently solicited for other purposes (such as distinguished professorship in the school, an award, etc.) exist, then the dean may opt to use these in lieu of seeking new letters.
4. A three-person committee selected by the provost, consisting of faculty members with relevant disciplinary expertise, will evaluate nominees and recommend candidates to the president and provost for further consideration.

5. If recommended by the president and provost, formal elections to University Professorships shall be presented to the Board of Visitors for approval.

Review of University Professors:

1. University professors submit their annual performance report to the president, as well as their dean(s).
2. If a University professor's faculty appointment is termed, their University professor appointment runs concurrently and is automatically renewed upon the renewal of the faculty appointment.

Related Information

[PROV-029: Faculty Appointment Types and Titles](#)

[PROV-034: Appointment of Faculty to Endowed Professorships](#)

Major Category [Executive Vice President & Provost Policies](#)

Next Scheduled Review Friday, October 31, 2025

Revision History

Revised 10/31/22.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Provost

Approved Date Friday, March 29, 2019