

Appointment of Faculty to Endowed Professorships

Effective Date Tuesday, February 22, 2022

Status Final

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

This policy establishes the guidelines for the eligibility, nomination, approval, and review of faculty being appointed or reappointed to an endowed professorship (also called a chair or named professorship) or removed from an endowed professorship. This policy also promotes good fiscal stewardship, ensures the fulfillment of donor intent as stated in the enabling language associated with endowments, and advances University goals.

Definition of Terms

Enabling Language

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 Professorships

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](#).

Renewable Term or Untermned Professorships: Professorships intended to be held long-term, to which faculty may be appointed for renewable terms of at least five years (or shorter if necessary due to a faculty member's limited contract term) or without term.

Professorships not intended to be held long-term include:

Non-renewable Professorships: Chairs with terms typically ranging between one to five years, intended to recognize and encourage excellence in an academic area in general, or specifically in research, teaching, practice, or service. These chairs do not carry an expectation of renewal but may occasionally be reassigned to the same faculty member.

Visiting Professorships: Limited term chairs designated for the purpose of attracting and funding faculty visiting from another institution or organization for a short-term period.

Positional Professorships: Termed endowed professorships associated with a specific position, such as a leadership role at the University or a faculty member affiliation with an institute, center, or initiative.

Policy Statement

Endowed professorships are one of the most prestigious honors bestowed by the University of Virginia on a faculty member. Some endowed professorships are awarded following the achievement of extraordinary distinction in their fields. Others are awarded to recognize and encourage excellence in earlier stages of an academic career, or to reward academic general faculty members for their exceptional contributions. In all cases, before an endowed professorship can be awarded to a faculty member, a gift agreement must be executed and the professorship must be established through a Board of Visitors resolution.

Other types of endowments or sources of special funding for faculty should not be referred to as professorships or chairs. Rather, they should use alternate naming conventions such as fellows, scholars, etc., unless otherwise approved by the provost. Non-faculty positions supported by endowments are not governed by this policy.

Each school or academic unit must have a written policy for the nomination and evaluation of faculty members to endowed professorships and publish it online. These policies must be approved by the provost. In this policy, all references to schools/deans are intended to refer also to units/unit heads that nominate faculty for professorships.

A faculty member's appointment to an endowed professorship may be removed at any time at the discretion of the dean after informing the provost, in accordance with the procedures accompanying this policy. Reasons for removal include, but are not limited to, failure to maintain performance expectations and failure to adhere to the intent of the professorship as specified by the school and enabling language.

Eligibility:

All appointments to an endowed chair must comply with the enabling language of the endowed chair, including any eligibility requirements. In addition to the enabling language, appointments to chairs established under the Commonwealth of Virginia's Eminent Scholar program must comply with the eligibility requirements of that program (full-time, associate or full rank, and has achieved national eminence in their discipline as judged by their peers); more details may be found under Related Policies and Information. Chairholders may be current members of the faculty or new recruits to the University. A faculty member with a termed appointment may only hold a termed chair, and no chair appointment term may exceed a faculty member's contract term.

Nominees for endowed professorships should have achieved exemplary accomplishments in their discipline, as determined by an independent assessment of their peers. Accomplishments may include contributions to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, a nominee for a renewable term or untermed professorship must be full-time and hold or be under consideration for the rank of associate or full professor, unless expressly approved by the provost. Non-renewable or visiting professorships may be awarded on the basis of distinguished work or to recognize the potential for excellence in the early stages of a faculty member's career. Positional professorships may be awarded to a faculty member appointed to the associated position or affiliated with a particular entity.

Procedures

Exceptions to the procedures below must be approved by the provost.

For accurate reporting, tracking, compliance, and other purposes, all appointments to endowed chairs must be

documented in an offer letter and entered in the UVA HR Human Resources Management System (HRMS). All new elections to endowed professorships require Board of Visitors approval and are then entered into the HRMS by UVA HR personnel. Renewing or ending terms of faculty holding endowed professorships does not require Board of Visitors approval and these HRMS processes are initiated by personnel in the academic unit to which the endowed professorship belongs.

Procedure for nominating and electing faculty to Renewable Term or Untermid Professorships:

1. An advisory committee of chairholders appointed by the dean of each school will review nominees for endowed professorships and make recommendations to the dean. School policy should provide any additional details on the required makeup of the committee and process for nominations.
2. At a minimum, the review package should include a nomination letter, curriculum vitae, and three letters of peer review from distinguished external scholars.
3. The dean will make a recommendation to the provost, submitted with the report of the chairholder committee, including all supporting documents. The recommendation should include an effective date and specify if the chair is to be held with or without term.
4. The provost will review the recommendation and, if approved, present the nomination to the president for recommendation to the Board of Visitors for final approval.
5. In cases in which a current dean is under consideration for a professorship, a member of the school's endowed chair committee may submit the nomination to the provost. The provost will appoint a committee to review the nominee.

Procedure for appointing faculty to Non-renewable or Visiting Professorships:

1. A faculty committee will review nominees for full-time non-renewable or visiting professorships and make recommendations to the dean.
2. Unless required by the school-level policy, external letters are not required for non-renewable or visiting professorships.
3. Nominations of full-time faculty to non-renewable or visiting professorships must be submitted to the provost and then the Board of Visitors for approval and election of the nominee. Nominations of part-time faculty to a non-renewable or visiting professorship must be submitted to the provost for approval but are not presented to the Board of Visitors. Once approved by the provost, the process to enter endowed professorships for part-time faculty into the HRMS is initiated by academic personnel in the unit to which the endowed professorship belongs.
4. The reassignment of a non-renewable professorship or the extension of a visiting professorship to the same faculty member must be approved by the provost.

Procedure for appointing faculty to Positional Professorships:

1. Some endowed professorships are associated with a specific position, such as a leadership role at the University or a faculty member affiliation with an institute, center, or initiative. These positional professorships convey with the positions for which the candidates are evaluated through a competitive search or by a faculty committee, unless an exception is approved by the provost, and do not require further review and nomination of a chairholder committee. If the candidate does not meet the eligibility requirements (for instance, the director of an institute is not a faculty member), they may not hold the positional professorship.
2. Positional professorships must be termed, subject to review and renewal, and shall be relinquished upon termination of the associated position or affiliation, regardless of reason.
3. If approved, these chair appointments are presented by the provost to the president for recommendation to the Board of Visitors for final approval.
4. When a dean vacates a positional professorship, their nomination to a new chair does not require a full review and must be submitted to the provost by the school's endowed chair committee.

Procedure for appointing faculty to Provostial Professorships:

1. Provostial professorships are chairs assigned to faculty across the university at the discretion of the provost. Examples include the William R. Kenan Professorships and the Commonwealth Professorships.
2. A school must have provost approval before reviewing nominees for a provostial professorship.
3. When a faculty member holding a provostial professorship retires or otherwise vacates the chair, the professorship returns to the provost for reallocation; the professorship does not automatically convey to the same school.
4. If approved, these chair appointments are presented by the provost to the president for recommendation to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

Procedure for appointing faculty to University Professorships:

1. Appointment to a University Professorship requires a special evaluation process in accordance with provost's policy [PROV-031: Appointment of University Professors](#).

Procedure for review and renewal of appointments to endowed professorships:

1. School policies should include procedures for the review of faculty holding an endowed professorship subject to renewal. Faculty holding renewable termed endowed chairs may be non-renewed in accordance with school policy or the terms of the offer letter.
2. While renewals of faculty appointments to endowed professorships do not require provost or Board of Visitors approval, those appointments should be reviewed by the school's chairholder committee in accordance with school policy and approved by the dean, for school-held professorships, or by the provost, for provostial professorships.

Procedure for removal of a faculty member's appointment to an endowed professorship:

1. At any time, the dean may initiate a review of a faculty member holding an untermmed endowed professorship appointment or an appointment during a term.
 - a. The dean will notify the faculty member in writing that they will be reviewed, with a brief summary of the rationale for the review. The dean will then request a committee of chairholders conduct a review to ensure the chairholder under review is maintaining performance expectations and adhering to the intent of the professorship as specified by the school and enabling language.
 - b. The faculty member will have ten (10) working days to submit materials to the committee for consideration. The committee will provide written recommendations to the dean.
 - c. Before removal of an appointment, and after informing the provost, the dean must provide written notice of intent to the chairholder stating the reasons for removal and provide the faculty member with an opportunity to respond in writing within sixty (60) days of receiving the written notice. The dean, in consultation with the committee, shall carefully consider any response provided by the faculty member and inform the faculty member in writing of the dean's decision within ten (10) working days.
 - d. If the faculty member believes that the removal is not appropriate, the faculty member has thirty (30) days after receiving the dean's final decision to appeal to the provost. The provost's decision is final.

Procedure for electing chairholders to different endowed professorships:

1. A faculty member transitioning from one chair to another with an equivalent or lesser review standard does not require a committee review unless called for by school policy or the enabling language. They must meet the eligibility requirements and intent of the new chair. The dean must submit a request for a change of chair to the provost along with a statement providing the rationale for why the change is beneficial to the institution and asserting the faculty member has had satisfactory performance over the last five years. If approved, the provost will present the change of title to the Board of Visitors for final approval.

Related Information

[EXT-009: Establishment of Funds from Gifts](#)

[FIN-015: Endowment and Capital Agreements](#)

[FIN-025: Internal Investment Program for University Units](#)

[FIN-026: Creating and Managing Quasi Endowment Accounts](#)

[PROV-031: Appointment of University Professors](#)

[Standard Gift Agreement](#)

State Council of Higher Education (SCHEV), Policies and Procedures for the Eminent Scholars Program:

[Download Eminent Scholars Policy and Procedures \(PDF\)](#)

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

Next Scheduled Review Monday, February 24, 2025

Applies To Text

Academic Division.

Supercedes Policy Text

[Appointment of Endowed and Eminent Scholars Chairs](#)

Last modified February 13, 2024 - 3:09pm

Approved By Executive Vice President & Provost

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