12.99.99.M5 - Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Deans

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Revised by the Personal & Welfare Committee October 23, 2002
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1. GENERAL

The selection and evaluation of deans should involve the widest possible faculty participation and the fullest exchange of ideas between faculty and administrators consistent with the requirements for sound management flexibility, and the maintenance of proper standards in the operation of the college. The ultimate authority to select deans is vested in the higher administration of the University, but under limitations of this Rule. These provisions are designed to ensure broad faculty participation in the process.

The administrative officers responsible for dean appointments shall determine faculty sentiment concerning incumbent and prospective deans and seriously take such sentiment into account. An appointment or reappointment decision contrary to the expressed wishes of a majority of the faculty who choose to participate in the review process requires a compelling reason.

This Rule does not apply to deans who also hold the title of Vice Chancellor. Appointment and evaluation of these deans is under the purview of the Chancellor of the Texas A&M System. However it is strongly recommended that the University and System administration adhere to the spirit of faculty participation in this rule, and employ its processes to the maximum extent possible in the appointment and evaluation of Vice Chancellor/Deans.

In a system where the ultimate authority to select deans is vested in the higher administration, specific methods of including broad faculty participation in the process will enhance the institution's reputation, aid in recruiting the best faculty, promote a positive relationship between the faculty and the university administration, and ensure that all levels of the university function effectively.

For the purposes of this document, "faculty" shall mean those persons eligible to vote for members of the Faculty Senate.

2. SELECTION

2.1 When a vacancy occurs or is imminent, a search committee shall be appointed by the Provost according to the provisions of this Rule, and the search for a new permanent dean shall begin promptly. If necessary, the Provost and President may recommend that the Chancellor appoint an interim dean for a period not to exceed one year. The appointment may be renewed for an additional year.

2.2 The size and precise makeup of the search committee will vary according to circumstances, but a majority of the members shall be faculty members of the college who currently do not hold administrative positions of Department Head or above. The committee should represent as many different departments and other units as feasible. Other constituencies which might be represented include (but are not limited to) administrators and faculty from other colleges, technical staff, students, and representatives of relevant agencies and various University programs. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the Faculty Senate Caucus of the college and, if appropriate, the elected Faculty Advisory Council of the college shall assist the Provost in the identification of faculty members to serve on the selection committee.
2.3 During the search for suitable candidates:

2.3.1 The search committee shall take into account the rights of the individual candidates and the laws of Texas concerning open records. Curricula vitae and all other non-confidential material shall be made available for examination by the faculty.

2.3.2 Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, the college caucus and, if appropriate, the elected members of the Faculty Advisory Council of the college shall have an opportunity to meet with the candidates who are interviewed and give an evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate to the search committee.

2.4 The search committee shall give all college faculty an opportunity to evaluate the leading candidates, through a process involving the procedural safeguards of a formal vote. Each faculty member shall be asked to:

2.4.1 rank the candidates, and

2.4.2 indicate any candidates who are for each candidate whether he/she is (1) acceptable, (2) unacceptable, or (3) no opinion/unable to observe.

2.4.3 Faculty shall be given at least one week to vote. Voting will be by secret ballot. The ballots shall be collected by a person chosen by the search committee. Ballots will be kept in a secure place, and measures will be taken to ensure that each eligible faculty member votes at most once.

2.4.4 At a minimum, the chair of the search committee and the Dean of Faculties shall be present while the votes are counted.

2.4.5 The results of the acceptability vote described in section 2.4.2 shall be reported to the faculty within one week of the end of the balloting period. The Dean of Faculties, and the Provost shall also be informed of the results.

2.4.6 The ballots shall be kept in the Dean of Faculties’ office for three years.

2.4.7 Each faculty member shall also be encouraged to provide a brief rationale for his or her ranking and provide a brief explanation for citing some candidates as unacceptable. If only one candidate is under consideration, the evaluation should be conducted in a spirit similar to that of the review of an incumbent dean.

2.5 After all the steps in sections 2.3 and 2.4 are completed, the committee shall deliver a report to the Provost (orally or in writing, as appropriate) providing descriptions of each leading and acceptable candidate's strengths and weaknesses, and a committee recommendation. At the committee's discretion, the recommendation may include a ranking.

2.5.1 All deliberations and decisions of the search committee are privileged and confidential. No member is allowed to divulge any information discussed in its meetings, other than the results of the faculty acceptability poll described in section 2.4.2.

2.6 The Provost, in consultation with others in the administration, shall recommend to the President for recommendation to the Chancellor, the appointment of a new dean from the list of leading candidates to the President, who shall recommend this candidate to the Chancellor.

2.7 The Provost shall provide the committee with an explanation of the action taken on its report. If no acceptable appointment can be made from the list of leading and acceptable candidates, the
search process and above procedures shall be repeated. Under no circumstances shall an
appointment of a permanent dean be made before the person has been recommended by a search
committee, as defined in sections 2.1, 2.2 or before fulfillment of the procedural requirements of
sections 2.3 and 2.4 of this Rule.

3. EVALUATION AND RETENTION

3.1 The normal appointment of a dean shall be for a four year renewable term.

3.1.2 Although there is no strict upper limit on the length of service, a strong case must be
made to continue in office beyond eight years.

3.1.3 A definite term of appointment may be negotiated with a particular candidate, so
long as any guarantee is consistent with this Rule.

3.2 The dean serves with the approval of the Provost and President. With prior approval of the
Chancellor, the dean may be removed from office for either unsatisfactory performance of duties,
or unacceptability to the faculty of the college as determined by the review process provided in
this Rule.

3.3 The faculty members of each college shall periodically have an opportunity to evaluate their dean
and to convey their opinions and related facts to the Provost (including, but not limited to, their
opinions as to whether the dean should continue in office).

3.4 Preliminary Review

3.4.1 In addition to more formal reviews (see section 3.5), the Provost shall initiate a
preliminary review of new deans within the first 24 to 27 months of service. The results of
this review shall be reported to the faculty within 4 months of the initiation of the review
process.

3.4.2 The format of this preliminary evaluation may vary, but shall, at a minimum, include an
opportunity for faculty representatives to present their views, and the reasons for them, to
the Provost or to a committee designated by the Provost for this purpose. Provost
consultation shall include, but is not limited to, members of the Faculty Senate Caucus,
elected members of the College Faculty Advisory Council, and college department heads.

3.4.3 The Provost, in consultation with the President, shall consider the results of the
preliminary review and determine what actions appear warranted. For example, follow-up
actions may include the following:

3.4.3.1 constructive consultation with the dean under review, or

3.4.3.2 initiation of the formal review process.

3.5 Formal Reviews

3.5.1 As in the case of the preliminary review, the exact timing of the formal reviews may
vary according to circumstances. Formal reviews should normally occur every fourth
year of the dean's term in office, and shall be conducted in a timely manner.

3.5.2 The exact format of the formal reviews may vary, but should include the following:

3.5.2.1 a questionnaire for faculty members of the college to present their views, and
the reasons for them, to the Provost or to a committee which will report to the
Provost,
3.5.2.2. an opportunity for each member of the college faculty to indicate to the Provost, or designated committee, whether the dean should continue in office.

3.5.3. One aim of a review is to help a dean improve the performance of the college. Moreover, a legitimate concern in evaluating a dean is his or her effectiveness in selecting and supervising associate and assistant deans. Therefore, the review of a dean will include an opportunity for each faculty member to provide an appraisal of the performance of associate and assistant deans. In implementing this appraisal, a job description for each associate or assistant dean will be provided with the evaluation materials, and, at a minimum, faculty will be able to provide to the dean open-ended responses in their evaluation of the associate and assistant deans. After discussing the results with the associate or assistant dean(s), the dean will present a summary of the results to the faculty and will discuss the results with the members of the college Faculty Advisory Committee and Faculty Senate Caucus. This does not constitute a formal review of these positions by the Provost, but rather a means of gauging the effectiveness of the dean and the dean's staff in implementing college and University policies.

3.5.4. The Provost, in consultation with the President, shall consider the results of the review and determine whether administrative action is needed. In judging the significance of faculty opinion, the size of the majority and the proportion of those eligible to respond, who actually indicate a preference regarding continuance, should be taken into account. The result of the faculty poll will be the best single indicator of faculty sentiment. Other factors affecting the reappointment decision include the dean's length of service and the information gained from other aspects of the review.

3.5.5. The results of the review and any decisions made shall be shared with the faculty within 4 months of the college's initiation of the review process.

4. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS

4.1. Individual expressions of opinion regarding selection (section 2) and continuance in office (section 3) shall be made in confidence, subject to the limitations of the Public Information Act. For evaluative purposes, such expressions shall be restricted to and include all faculty in the college unless there is a reasoned decision to include additional individuals. A questionnaire providing a minimum of two weeks for a response shall be distributed to eligible individuals.

4.2. The review described in section 3 is not intended to replace the periodic review of a college by a panel of outside experts. At the discretion of the Provost such an outside review may be combined, or conducted simultaneously, with the internal review of the dean.

4.3. Prior to undertaking any review of the incumbent dean or seeking to appoint a new dean, the Provost, other administrators, and the faculty of the college concerned shall review the role, responsibilities, and special competencies expected of the dean.

4.4. Violations of the principles or the spirit of these procedures and any other improprieties in the selection, evaluation, and retention of deans shall be reported to the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate.

Office of Responsibility:
Dean of Faculties