Appointment of Department Chairs

Department Chairs are appointed by the Dean of the College, through a process of consultation specified in Executive Order 20 [2]. (The title of ?Chair? is synonymous with ?Director? for the purposes of this document.)

Chair Responsibilities

This is an elaboration on UW Presidential Executive Order I [3], which specifies the role and lines of authority for Chairs and Directors.

It is an honor to be appointed as the chair of an academic unit. Chairs play a vital role in the life of the College and the University, connecting the upper administration with the faculty, and vice versa. This is an appointment that provides the incumbent an opportunity to set goals for the next chapter in the department?s history, in collaboration with department members, and to accomplish significant changes in the life of a department. It is important to keep this larger vision in mind as one implements the various specific responsibilities outlined below.

The chair of the department/school serves as its leader and administrative head. The chair sets the tone for the department. The chair does the best s/he can with the resources and people at hand to fulfill the mission of the department/school, college and university. The chair models respect for all students, staff, and faculty, while creating an environment in which they can pursue their chosen fields and professions with rigor, wisdom, and passion. The chair also enables the engagement of the department/school with the broader community on campus and beyond. Chairs will find that fellow chairs are excellent sources of consultation and advice.

The chair is responsible for the essential duties listed below. What follows is an extended list; not all of these tasks will pertain to all academic units. Furthermore, the size of an academic unit will affect how and by whom these tasks are enacted. In small units, the chair may need to do more and delegate less, but the overall scale of the job is smaller. In large departments, the chair may be assisted with these responsibilities by an associate chair or other colleagues, and, when desired, by an executive committee chosen in an appropriate manner. Although operational responsibility may be delegated by the chair to others including departmental administrative staff, ultimate responsibility for these duties remains with the chair. Delegation of responsibilities can also be an effective method of professional development, encouraging others in the department to learn more about departmental and institutional governance.
If the chair or director is going to be away from the campus and inaccessible remotely for more than a week, the divisional dean should be notified and provided contact information for the faculty member responsible for departmental matters during the absence of the chair or director.

- **Personnel matters** [4]
- **Instruction and Academic Administration** [5]
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- **Climate, Diversity and Inclusion** [7]
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**Key Links**

- **College of Arts and Sciences Administrative Gateway** [13]
- **UW Faculty Code** [14]
- **University of Washington Diversity Blueprint** [15]
- **Academic HR** [16]

**Source URL:** https://admin.artsci.washington.edu/department-chairs

**Links:**
[16] https://ap.washington.edu/ahr