

**GUIDELINES FOR REAPPOINTMENT OF DEPARTMENT CHAIRS**  
**Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute**

Policy Intent: The following guidelines should be used in the three year review of Department Chairs being considered for reappointment.

Department Chairs should be evaluated on an annual basis during the regular annual performance review. In addition, a formal evaluation process should be conducted approximately six months prior to the end of the three-year appointment if the Dean is contemplating a reappointment of the Chair for another three-year period.

1. Six months prior to the end of the three year term appointment of a Department Chair, the Dean should send a formal notification to the Department Chair that his/her current term as Chair will expire on a specified date and that he/she is eligible for reappointment to a three-year term, if so desired. The letter should state the steps to be taken by the Dean in making a reappointment determination. **(Attachment 1)**

Should the Department Chair not wish to be considered for reappointment for another term, the Dean should notify the Provost and initiate a search for a new Chair.

2. Upon receipt of the signed letter from the Department Chair that he/she wishes to be considered for reappointment, the Dean will notify the faculty and staff in writing, that the Department Chair is eligible for reappointment, and invite them to convey to the Dean, verbally or in writing, their assessment of the performance of the Department Chair, as well as their views concerning a three-year reappointment. The Dean should also inform the faculty and staff that he/she is available for private discussions with them to review the performance of the Department Chair. **(Attachment 2)**
3. If necessary and desired, the Dean may meet with the faculty and staff of the department to solicit further input and/or discussion.
4. The Dean will meet with the Provost to discuss the input received and a proposed course of action regarding the reappointment.
5. The Dean will meet privately with the Department Chair to discuss the input received from the faculty and staff, the Provost, and the Dean's own personal review, and review the objective measures of departmental performance (e.g., quality of graduate students, quality of recent hires, research trends, support of institutional priorities, teaching trends, undergraduate and graduate rankings).
6. Should the decision be to reappoint the Chair, the Dean should formally request approval of the President through the Provost and then notify the Chair approximately three months prior to the end of the term of the reappointment. **(Attachment 3)**
7. The Dean will inform the faculty and staff in the department, in writing, of the ultimate decision and course of action regarding the Department Chair position. **(Attachment 4)**

**Attachment 1**

Dear XXXXX:

Your current term as Chair of the Department of XXXXXXXX will expire on XXXX , however, as indicated in your initial appointment letter, you are eligible for reappointment to an additional three-year term.

Please apprise as to whether you wish to be considered for reappointment by signing the this letter below and returning it to me. If you wish to be considered for reappointment, I will solicit input from the faculty and staff of the department and other appropriate Institute officials to assist me in making the decision regarding reappointment. If you do not wish to be considered for reappointment for another term, I will initiate a search for a new Chair.

I would appreciate receiving your reply no later than XXXXXXXX. If you would like to discuss this issue with me, please let me know and we can set up a time to meet. Regardless of your decision, I want to convey to you my appreciation for all of your efforts over the past XXX years and for the leadership you have provided.

Sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Dean, School of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I wish to be considered for reappointment as department chair.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I do not wish to be considered for reappointment as department chair.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Attachment 2

### MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff of the Department of XXXXXXXXXXXXX

FROM: XXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Dean, School of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

DATE: XXXXXXXXXXXXX

SUBJECT: Chair Reappointment

The current term of your Department Chair, Profesor XXXXXX XXXXXXXX, will expire on XXXXXXXXXXXX. As indicated in the *Handbook for Academic Staff*, Professor XXXXXX is eligible for reappointment to a three-year term as Department Chair.

I invite each of you to write to me conveying your assessment of Proffessor XXXXXXXX's performance as Department Chair and your views concerning reappointment for an additional three-year term beginning XXXXXXXXXXXX. If you will label your envelope "Personal and Confidential", it will be delivered to me unopened. I will keep your communication in the strictest of confidence.

You may also wish to make constructive suggestions about your Chair's management of department affairs. Such suggestions can be helpful to the Chair. I will communicate these suggestions to your Chair in a collective manner, without identifying sources.

If you would like to meet with me for a private discussion about the performance of Professor XXXXXXXXXXXX, I would be happy to meet with you and request that you contact my office to schedule a meeting.

In order for me to make a timely reappointment recommendation, I would be most grateful to receive your response by XXXXXXXXXXXX.

cc: XXXXXXXXXXXX (Department Chair)

**Attachment 3**

Dear XXXXXXXXXXX

Your current term as Chair, Department of XXXXXXXX, expires on XXXXXXXX. You have indicated to me that you wish to be considered for reappointment.

Accordingly, I have consulted with the faculty and staff of the Department and other appropriate Institute officials in order to make a determination about your reappointment. I am pleased to report that the weight of the comments that I have received is in favor of your reappointment. Therefore, I wish to inform you that I am offering you reappointment as Chair of the Department of XXXXXXXX for a three-year term beginning XXXXXXXX through XXXXXXXX. Please be reminded that all administrators in the School of XXXXXXXXXXXX serve at the pleasure of the Dean.

In the near future, I will communicate to you in a constructive manner the collective substance of the comments that I have received about your reappointment. I look forward to working with you during your continuing service as a department chair and participation in the leadership of the School.

Please confirm your acceptance of this reappointment by signing on the line below and returning this letter to me. Once I receive your response, I will initiate the process of requesting approval of your reappointment by the Rensselaer Board of Trustees.

I accept the reappointment described above.

Accepted: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Cc: Provost

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Faculty and Staff of the Department of XXXXXXXXXXXX

FROM: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
Dean, School of XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

DATE: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

SUBJECT: Department Chair Reappointment

I am pleased to inform you that Professor XXXXXXXXXXXX has agreed to a reappointment as Chair, Department of XXXXXXXXXXXX. Professor XXXXXXXX's reappointment will be for a three-year term through XXXXXXXXXXXX.

Professor XXXXXXXX's reappointment as Department Chair follows my review of your comments and input, and discussions with appropriate Institute officials in order to make a determination about the reappointment. The weight of the written comments that I have received was in favor of the reappointment. Thank you for your participation in this process. Please note that I have met with Professor XXXXXXXX and communicated to him/her the comments I received along with my own personal evaluation.

Over the next several months, the School of XXXXXXXXXXXX will be focusing on its Performance Plan that will sharpen our vision and goals, and delineate specific action plans for achieving the higher goals and aspirations defined in the Rensselaer Plan. I look forward to the significant involvement of faculty and staff in this process, and trust that Dr. XXXXXXXXXXXX will receive your support and cooperation as HE/SHE leads your department's participation in this important activity.

cc: Provost