Duties and Responsibilities of Department Chairs  
(From the Faculty Handbook)

Department chairs are appointed by the vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college. Serving as chair is a crucial form of service to the college. As a matter of fairness, all tenured faculty are expected to share in this responsibility.

The duties and responsibilities of the department chair begin with leadership. This leadership is properly demonstrated in the development and maintenance of the strength and character of the department, of high professional standards and department morale, of clear and equitable procedures for appropriate department participation in department decisions. Department chairs are expected to involve their departmental colleagues in the consideration of departmental matters and in the reaching of departmental decisions and recommendations, but they are not thereby denied the opportunity, or absolved of the responsibility, of expressing their personal judgments and convictions as chairs.

The chair works with the director of academic advising on assigning advisers for majors. The chair is responsible for overseeing the advising of all minors. The chair works with the director of academic advising in placing incoming students in courses at the proper level and in evaluating and interpreting credit from other institutions.

In addition, department chairs' duties include the following: a continuing evaluation of the department's curriculum and its relationship to the overall curriculum of the college; the recommendation to the curriculum committee of the appropriate amount of course credit for the department’s courses; the careful monitoring of the department budget; the care of the department equipment and facilities (where appropriate); the preparation of catalogue material; the initiation of selection procedures and recommendations to the dean and to the president with respect to faculty appointment; the orientation of new faculty into the department and the college; supervision of full-time and part-time faculty, including their submission of reports and grades by the stated dates; the representation of the department on appropriate occasions; the handling of department correspondence; the supervision of student aides; the supervision of library orders and other library business.

Department chairs are thus leaders and administrators of their respective departments, acting in a liaison capacity with the Vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college and the president.

In general, a chair is appointed for a term of three (3) years; the appointment is effective July 1 of the year of appointment. Chairs may be reappointed for a second term but shall not serve more than six (6) years consecutively except in unusual circumstances. Professors and associate professors are preferred candidates for appointment as chairs. When a chair is absent from the college during a year or a portion of a year for sabbatical or other leave, an acting chair is appointed. No person serves as chair of a department in the year immediately preceding retirement.