

CLA Guidelines for Endowed Chairs, Professorships, and Fellowships

Overview

These guidelines apply to all Endowed Chairs, Professorships, and Fellowships in the College of Liberal Arts and its academic departments, schools, centers, and institutes. All Endowed Chairs, Professorships, and Faculty Fellowships are awarded in accordance with Auburn University's [Guidelines for the Appointment of Endowed Chairs and Professorships](#). In cases where an Endowed Chair, Professorship, or Fellowship has been donated for a particular purpose, the College will adhere to the donor's intentions as stated in the gift agreement. In addition, the College of Liberal Arts will apply the criteria specified in this document.

Endowed Chairs, Professorships, and Fellowships are honorary appointments acknowledging the distinguished scholarship, teaching, and/or service of faculty and directors (e.g., of centers, institutes). Endowed positions in the College of Liberal Arts are awarded to recruit, retain, and reward faculty members who possess an exemplary and ongoing record of outstanding performance in research and creative inquiry/activity, teaching, student impact, or service at a level commensurate with the highest national and international standards. As a guiding principle, the College strives to support as many exceptional faculty as possible over time, which means generally limiting the number of terms a faculty member may hold an endowed title.

Types of Endowed Support

There are four categories of endowed positions in the College of Liberal Arts

- Eminent Scholar Chair
- Endowed Chair
- Endowed Professorships and Distinguished Professorships
- Fellowships

Qualifications

- A. Regardless of specific type, all endowed positions are designed to support exceptional faculty in the College of Liberal Arts. Unless specified differently in the endowment agreement, the holder of an endowed title will typically have achieved the academic rank of full-time tenured associate or full professor.
- B. Appointees to endowed positions must have a record of distinguished academic or professional work in an appropriate field. Such distinction will be judged in national terms, as compared with colleagues at the same rank at peer institutions.
- C. Any faculty member currently holding another endowed title from within the College of Liberal Arts must agree to relinquish that currently held title if chosen to receive the different title they are applying for under these terms. Any relinquished title will be subject to the terms outlined herein.
- D. Any faculty member who holds an endowed title from a source outside of the college (i.e., Alumni Professor) is eligible to apply for a CLA endowed title under these terms and, if approved for the CLA title, will be entitled to retain both titles for the term for which they are respectively granted. **Note:** That a nominee already holds an external endowed title may be a consideration in the selection process.

II. Role of the Endowed Title Holder

The holder of an endowed Chair, Professorship, or Fellowship will strengthen and enhance the department or program represented through this award, and through the quality of the holder's work will serve as a positive role model for colleagues and students.

III. Application and Selection Process

The nominee will compile and submit to the Dean's office a file of evaluating materials that will typically include the following:

- Nomination letter that details the nominees' achievements and qualifications. Self-nominations are allowed and would eliminate the requirement for a separate nomination letter. For endowed titles associated with a given department, the department chair or head should not submit nominations on behalf of their faculty. For endowed titles at the college level, a department chair or head may nominate faculty.
- Cover Letter documenting the nature of nominee's distinguished work. In the case of self-nomination, the nomination and cover letter may essentially be combined.
- A complete and up-to-date CV.
- Statement of anticipated activities if appointed.
- Letters of Support - A minimum of 1 and maximum of 3 letters with at least 1 letter being from someone external to the department. The letters should be received and appended to the application before it is reviewed by the review committee. For endowed titles associated with a given department, the department chair or head should not submit letters of support on behalf of their faculty. For endowed titles at the college level, a department chair or head may support the nomination(s).
- If a nominee is already a holder of an endowed title and seeking renewal by application, excerpts from previous annual reviews (e.g., FAR) pertinent to performance related to the endowed title should be included.

Consistent with university guidelines, the Dean will establish a review committee including, if possible, endowed position holders, to review the nominations. The review committee will be composed of faculty with representation from multiple disciplinary areas in the college.

After reference letters are received, the review committee will review supporting evidence and recommend the strongest two or three nominees for the Dean's consideration, although the Dean is not limited to the recommended nominees. When a position is related to a specific area of study, or discipline, or department, a department head or chair will be asked by the dean for advisory input prior to a final recommendation. The applicant's department head or chair is not a voting member of the committee.

After initial recommendation of an endowed title holder by the Dean, nominations requiring Provost or President approval will be submitted to the Provost or the President for consideration.

The titled designee will receive a letter of initial appointment from the Dean specifying the duration of and expectations for the endowed position, including performance criteria and performance review procedures. This letter will require the appointee to sign indicating agreement to the terms. The signed letter will be included in the faculty member's personnel file in the Office of the Dean.

IV. Appointment Term and Benefits of the Endowed Position

- A. Conditions and Terms as outlined in the existing agreements of all titled professorships in the College of Liberal Arts will be guided by the conditions and terms of the College of Liberal Arts Endowed Professorship Naming Guidelines and the University Guidelines for the Appointment of Endowed Chairs and Professorships.
- B. Titled professorships will be held for the time specified in the professorship agreement for which the candidate is making application. No titled professorship under these terms will extend beyond the period specified in the agreement. Professorships without a specified term in the agreement will be set by the Dean (with Provost's approval) and most typically 3 years per term and no longer than 5 years in duration for a term. If renewal is allowed by the endowment agreement, candidates are eligible to apply for the same titled professorship in the future but will generally be limited to two consecutive terms. For holders of Endowed Chairs or Eminent Scholar Chairs that were recruited to Auburn University as part of a competitive job search, the College will typically request approval from the Provost's Office to renew their titles beyond two terms, although this is not a guarantee of renewal.
- C. The amount of the titled professorship award will be limited to the amount in the endowment spendable earnings account on an annual basis for the term of the professorship. Other stipend and spending limitations may apply as directed by the College or the University. When additional spendable funds from the endowment are available, additional funds can be designated to support travel and the designee's scholarly program with dean approval.
- D. Other forms of direct or indirect compensation, such as course releases or other forms of leave, are not inherently associated with the endowed title designation.

V. Reporting

Consistent with practices of good stewardship, the dean will annually send to the donor or the donor's representative a brief report, written by the endowed title holder, that summarizes major activities and accomplishments in the previous year. Consistent with the line of reporting, the Dean will provide a copy of the report to the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Each titled faculty member is required to prepare an annual report regarding the use of funds. The impact report will be submitted to the Department chair or head by February 1 to align with the timing of traditional faculty annual reporting and review. The brief report will be based on activities during the previous calendar year and include the following:

- A. Research and Creative Highlights
- B. Professional Accomplishments
- C. Instructional Highlights
- D. Service and public engagement activities
- E. Other information you would like to share with the donor

Holders of endowed and named chairs are expected to maintain levels of productivity that are characterized as excellent in order to retain the title and privileges. If the holder of an endowed or named chair is not performing as expected, a recommendation to revoke continuation of the title and its privileges may be forwarded by the Dean to the Provost.

VI. Timeline

- Call for Nominations by the Dean – Typically by March 1
- Nomination packets due in early April
- Titled designee will be announced – Generally not later than August 1 of that same year

VII. Policy Exceptions

Any exception to the stipulated guidelines requires the prior approval of the Dean. Exceptions to the stipulated appointment terms and conditions may also require approval of the Provost.

VIII. Modifications of Policy and Procedures

These guidelines and associated College of Liberal Arts procedures will be reviewed on a periodic basis and modified as deemed necessary by the Dean, after consulting with relevant stakeholders. Additional institutional approval will be secured as needed. The Dean's Office will communicate changes to the units.

History of document updates

Created March 2, 2026