

Appointment of Academic Administrators Policy (AAA Policy)

- **Related Documents:** [Appointment of Academic Administrators Procedures \(AAA Procedures\)](#); [Rights and Obligations of Ryerson University Search Committee Members](#)
- **Owner:** Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs
- **Approver:** Board of Governors
- **Approval Dates:** 1994, 1999, 2017

I. Purpose

The Appointment of Academic Administrators Policy (AAA Policy), which rests on the bedrock of collegial governance, is intended to provide for the Appointment of Academic Administrators in a manner that is transparent and accountable.

The Appointment of Academic Administrators Policy (AAA Policy) establishes the guidelines for the formation and functioning of committees related to the appointment of the academic administrative leadership of Ryerson University (the “University”). The AAA Policy also establishes the guidelines for the term of appointment and intra-term assessment of academic administrative leaders. The application of the policy is articulated in the Appointment of Academic Administrators Procedures (AAA Procedures).

The policy is made in accordance with the Ryerson University Act. The Board of Governors delegates its authority, and the grant of its authority for further delegation as is necessary, to the President and Vice-Chancellor.

It replaces the *Policy and Procedures Relating to Search Committees and Appointments in the Academic Administration, and to the Development and Evaluation of the Performance of Academic Administrators*.

II. Scope and Application

The policy and related procedures addresses a range of policy dimensions related to the appointment of academic administrators including: committee composition; the processes by which committee members are elected or appointed; guidelines related to conflict of interest and confidentiality; establishment of a review committee and the review of an incumbent; initiation of a search committee; guidelines related to disbanding a review or search committee; the general rules regarding internal and external advertising; and engaging a search firm.

- This policy applies to the following positions:
 - Provost and Vice-President Academic;
 - Vice-President Research and Innovation;
 - Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs;

- Vice-Provost, Academic;
 - Vice-Provost and Dean of the Yeates School of Graduate Studies;
 - Associate Vice-President, Research;
 - Deans of Faculties;
 - Dean of The Chang School of Continuing Education;
 - Associate Deans of Faculties;
 - Associate Deans of Yeates School of Graduate Studies;
 - Chief Librarian; and
 - Associate Chief Librarian.
- As the academic structure of the University changes in the future and new types of academic administrative leadership positions are created, the President, in consultation with the Provost and Vice-President, Academic, and the Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs (VPFA), may alter the scope of this policy.
 - The sections of this policy related to review and search do not apply in the case of interim appointments for a position. Such interim appointments are made on the recommendation of the appropriate senior administrator, after consultation with the appropriate constituency, for a period that will normally not exceed one year.

III. Definitions

- **“Chair”**: Refers to the Chair of a review or search committee; the senior administrator to whom the position reports is typically the Chair
- **“Committee member”**: Refers to the employee or student who is either elected or appointed to a review or search committee; eligibility is determined in part by the position that is being filled
- **“Failed search”**: A failed search arises in situations where either a committee is unable to recommend a candidate, or the committee’s recommendation for a candidate is not accepted by the Chair, and the committee finds no other candidate to recommend to the Chair
- **“Incumbent”**: The holder of an academic administrative leadership position at the time. An interim is not considered an incumbent.
- **"Review committee"**: Name of the committee when it is reviewing the current incumbent with respect to recommendation regarding re-appointment for a second term
- **“RFA”**: Ryerson Faculty Association.
- **"Search committee"**: Name of the committee when it is actively recruiting a new candidate for an academic leadership position

- **“Voters”**: Individuals who are eligible to vote for the nominated members of a review/search committee; eligibility is determined in part by the position that is being filled
- **“VPFA”**: Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs; the senior administrator responsible for the interpretation and application of the AAA policy and procedures

IV. Policy

1. Principles

- As provided in the *Ryerson University Act*, and in the University’s general by-laws, with the exception of the appointment of the Provost and Vice-President Academic, the Board of Governors has delegated its authority to the President with respect to the appointment of academic administrators referred to in this policy.
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:
The University is committed to promoting equity, diversity and inclusion within its community; and to providing equal opportunity in employment for people from historically under-represented and marginalized groups. Equity, diversity and inclusion, along with access to education and employment, and respect for Aboriginal perspectives, are values at the core of the University’s overall mandate as a citizenship builder and institution of higher learning. Committees shall, in all their deliberations, consider issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.
- All recommendations for appointment to an academic administrative position identified in this policy must be made by a duly constituted review or search committee, and must be approved by the President or designate prior to an offer of appointment being extended to the selected candidate. The Provost and Vice-President Academic’s appointment or re-appointment must be approved by the Board of Governors.
- As per Schedule One of the procedures, all committees shall be constituted as laid out in this policy in accordance with generally accepted principles of collegial governance. Each committee shall have a majority of elected members, and shall normally include at least one student representative whose program of studies falls within the responsibilities of the position in question.
- In reaching recommendations, committees will seek to identify and appoint individuals to perform critical academic administrative leadership roles. Such recommendations shall be based on evidence of demonstrated abilities and excellent performance of duties, taking into account the need to also evaluate a candidate’s potential with regard to the position the candidate is seeking.
- All committee members and Chairs will act in accordance with University policies including, but not limited to policies on Employment Equity,

Workplace Civility and Respect, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention, Conflict of Interest, and Accommodation for Persons with Disabilities.

- g. The search process should reflect best practices in recruitment and reflect the university's commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, and access to education and employment as articulated in paragraph 1(b) above.
- h. All committee members and Chairs have a duty and obligation to act in the best interests of the University, including complying with the principles and processes articulated in this policy and acting in a fair, equitable, objective, professional, respectful, civil, non-discriminatory, non-harassing, and confidential manner.

i. Conflict of interest:

A conflict of interest occurs when personal interests interfere with the independent judgment required by the member in order to perform their duties and responsibilities in the interest of the University. Beyond the obvious personal or financial conflicts, examples may include situations where the member has acted as an academic supervisor of the applicant or where the member has collaborated with the applicant on a research project or business venture; however, these supervisory and collaborative relationships do not automatically constitute a conflict of interest. Members of a review or search committee are bound by the Rights and Obligations of Ryerson University Search Committee Members document, and as such must disclose if they have, or believe they may have, a conflict of interest with respect to any candidate being considered by the committee.

j. Confidentiality:

Members of a review or search committee will have access to confidential material, and must therefore be bound by the requirements of confidentiality necessary for the proper functioning of such a committee and the protection of the interests of the candidates. In particular:

- i) In the course of committee work, members may become aware of plans, opinions and employment experiences provided in confidence by individual candidates. Confidential reference comments about candidates will also be received. This information should only be shared or discussed with other committee members.
- ii) The committee process should respect the confidence of the candidates and the identity of candidates should not be disclosed save as necessary for the decision making process.
- iii) In the course of committee deliberations and discussions, members will become aware of the perceptions, assessments and views of the other members concerning candidates being assessed. These exchanges for the purpose of assessment are provided in confidence and should only be shared or discussed with other members; all members have an obligation to make every effort to respect the dignity and integrity of their colleagues

and to sustain a climate in which colleagues are able to function as responsible members of the academic community.

k. Consultation:

Members of review or search committees may, in accordance with the Rights and Obligations document, consult with the university administration, their union/association or the Human Resources Consultant supporting the school/department/faculty for advice on issues such as processes related to their committee, collective agreement interpretation or policy interpretation.

Those being consulted are also bound by the confidentiality provisions of this Policy. Therefore seeking their advice should be done in a confidential manner and does not itself constitute a breach of confidentiality.

If a committee member observes inappropriate behaviour or activity that contravenes a collective agreement or policy relevant to the committee's mandate, this member should avail him/herself of the consultation process described in the paragraph above.

2. Term of Appointment

The term of appointment for all positions covered by this policy shall not be more than five years and may be renewed for a second term based on the recommendation of a review committee and its Chair, and the approval of the President. Incumbents are restricted to two consecutive terms. A second consecutive term includes two, five-year terms interrupted by a leave or an interim appointment.

In special circumstances, on the recommendation of the appropriate senior administrator, the length of appointment (either the first or second term) of an incumbent may be extended for one additional year.

3. Intra-Term Assessment

The primary purpose of performance evaluation is to maintain and increase the effectiveness of academic administration through feedback on administrative performance and, where appropriate, recommendations for improvement. An annual performance assessment will be conducted by the academic administrator's supervisor. In the second or, more usually, the third year of the five-year term, there will be a full and detailed intra-term assessment of each position covered by this policy.

The person being reviewed has the right to obtain a copy and respond in writing to the confidential annual performance assessments, intra-term assessment or any other assessments.

An annual performance assessment will be conducted by the academic administrator's supervisor.

The annual performance assessment is a confidential document. It is to be completed by May 31 of each year.

The intra-term assessment in either the second or third year of the five-year term will be informed by confidential input from appropriate and knowledgeable people in the University community as determined by the academic administrator's supervisor. In the case of the assessment of Deans and Associate Deans of faculties, this will include at minimum the canvassing of the tenured faculty members in that Dean or Associate Dean's faculty. In the case of the Chief Librarian and Associate Chief Librarian, this will include at minimum the canvassing of the career-status librarians.

The supervisor may seek similar broad input to assist in the assessment at any time in the five-year term.

The academic administrator will be provided with a summary of views provided but under no circumstances will the names of those whom provided feedback be identified.

V. General Roles and Responsibilities

President

- Final decision-making on all recommendations for appointment to an academic administrative leadership position except for the Provost and Vice-President Academic
- Recommendation to the Board of Governors of appointment of Provost and Vice-President Academic

Vice-Provost, Faculty Affairs (VPFA)

- Interpretation and application of the AAA policy and procedures
- Consultation with Chairs and committee members on issues related to the process of review and search committees, except in the review/search for the VPFA

Chair

- Oversight for committee development and formation, including elections and appointments of committee members

- Responsible for principles and processes outlined in the AAA Procedures including creation and maintenance of a committee environment that is collegial, respectful and accessible, and where all committee members comply with University policies
- Considerations of institutional values in particular equity, diversity and inclusion as described in the academic plan, during committee formation and committee administration
- Participation in committee discussions on an equal basis as a non-voting member

Members

- Compliance with the principles, rules and procedures of the policy
- Reading, signing and abiding by the Rights and Obligations of Ryerson University Search Committee Members document
- Reading documents put before the committee, listening with an open mind to the arguments offered for various positions, as well as for and against particular candidates, and respectfully participating in committee interviews, committee discussions and decision-making
- Protection of the rights of committee members to have different opinions and make different judgments, and to raise difficult questions in a respectful manner and in an atmosphere of collegiality and mutual respect, without fear of reprisal

VI. Policy Review

As a Board of Governors policy, the AAA Policy and Procedures will be reviewed on a regular basis, normally every five years or sooner at the discretion of the Board. The review will involve formal consultations with the Ryerson community, including, but not limited to, the RFA and its members, regarding ways in which the current policy may be improved. These consultations allow the community to provide feedback and input into the review process. Changes to this policy and procedures shall not be made prior to such a review; with the exception of changes in scope should new types of academic administrative positions be created.