

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION	ACAF Academic Affairs
POLICY NUMBER	ACAF 1.02
POLICY TITLE	Comprehensive Performance Review of Academic Deans
SCOPE OF POLICY	USC Columbia & Palmetto College
DATE OF REVISION	February 3, 2025
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE	Office of the Provost

PURPOSE

This policy establishes a systematic process for comprehensive evaluation of academic deans. The evaluation aims to assess their performance and effectiveness, gather feedback from faculty, staff, and other stakeholders, provide constructive feedback to enhance their leadership, and ensure accountability for their contributions to the university's overall success.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Academic Dean: The chief academic administrator of an academic college/school or the University Library, who bears responsibility for an academic unit containing faculty members and/or reports to the provost. The Palmetto College deans are also evaluated in accordance with this policy.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (provost) will conduct regular reviews of academic deans at the Columbia Campus, and the Chancellor will conduct regular reviews of academic deans at Palmetto College. These reviews will include annual assessments and comprehensive reviews typically occurring in the beginning of the fifth year of their appointment. Such reviews may be initiated at any time, particularly during periods of organizational change or when deemed necessary by the provost, unless the dean explicitly declines consideration for another term.

As at-will employees, they may be reviewed at any point during the academic year, with reviews ideally concluding before the year's end. The provost may waive or delay reviews for valid reasons received in writing, such as planned retirement, resignation, or a return to a faculty position within a year of the scheduled review.

PROCEDURES

A. Review Process

1. The respective academic officer for each campus or designee shall notify the academic dean of the pending performance review, which will typically begin at the start of an academic semester and typically conclude prior to the end of the academic year.

2. The academic dean is informed of the timeline and requested to provide specific information: a statement of five pages or less that describes the highlights of his or her tenure as dean and one to two pages that describes his or her leadership role as dean. In addition, the dean may provide or suggest other data that he or she believes would be valuable for the committee to review.
3. The respective academic officer for each campus will appoint a committee of faculty and/or staff from the representative academic unit or other academic units to conduct the review, as deemed appropriate. The chair of the committee is normally an academic dean who is not being reviewed concurrently. Review of an academic dean is a confidential process, and the committee is expected to maintain confidentiality in all aspects of its work.
4. The respective academic officer for each campus or designee convenes the committee for the initial meeting to present the committee with its charge, discusses the review process and expected timeline, provides information regarding materials, responds to questions from the committee and informs the committee of relevant university policies.
5. Membership of the committee and committee meeting dates will be publicly posted and available on the Office of the Provost and Palmetto College websites. These meetings are subject to the provisions of the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act per policy [UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy](#).
6. The Office of the Provost and Palmetto College will assist their respective committee(s) by supplying data as requested, preparing survey questionnaires, administering and collecting survey results and compiling final materials to be submitted to the provost, president, and respective dean.
7. The committee is responsible for determining the methods of gathering additional information during the review process which may include, but is not limited to, electronic surveys, interviews, written comments and letters, with particular emphasis on gathering input from the faculty and staff of the unit. Other constituencies may be considered as determined by the committee and approved by the provost. Committee members are excluded from participating in electronic surveys.
8. The committee is responsible for preparing a report on the performance of the dean based on the materials provided.
9. The respective academic officer(s) will meet with the full committee at the end of the review process and before the report is finalized.
10. The committee is responsible for submitting a summary report to the provost with supporting materials.

11. The Office of the Provost and Palmetto College will compile the final report and all materials to be reviewed by the president, provost and respective dean.
12. The respective academic officer will communicate the results of the committee’s review and recommendations orally and in writing with the dean.
13. The dean will provide a written response to the report.
14. The provost/chancellor will inform the review committee and the respective faculty and staff of the reappointment decision.

B. Final Report

The final report and materials from the review will be given in their entirety to the dean and are subject to requests under the Freedom of Information Act. See policy [UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy](#).

C. Reappointment of Academic Dean

The dean who has undergone review will be notified of the status of his/her appointment status following the review by the provost. The appointments that can be made are (a) continuing appointment without a specified period of appointment with or without performance requirements; (b) term appointment with a specified time period with or without performance requirements; and (c) no reappointment.

Academic deans who are not reappointed and are tenured may return to the faculty or to another appointment as specified by the provost. Deans who are not tenured and not reappointed will be given a minimum appointment of one academic year as a non-tenure-track faculty member.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[Office of the Provost Dean Review Schedule](#)

[USC Columbia Faculty Manual](#)

[Palmetto College Campuses Faculty Manual](#)

[UNIV 2.00 Freedom of Information Policy](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
February 1, 1995	New policy approval
November 19, 2015	Policy updated to reflect changes in position titles, process, and practice.
February 3, 2025	Policy updated to standard template and revised to reflect current practices.