



Policy for 5-Year Review of Faculty with Named/Endowed Chairs and Professorships

Named and endowed chairs and professorships are among the highest honors Michigan State University can award a faculty member. The University's [Endowed, Named Chairs, and Professorships](#) "are faculty members with significant experience and accomplishments in their fields" who "have built a network of collaborators and a robust research portfolio" throughout their careers. The funds provided by private endowments or grants for named chairs are intended as resources "to further their work, publish their findings, travel to conferences, and create opportunities for promising students to gain real-life research experience". The expectations are, therefore, to recruit accomplished individuals who will "help MSU remain a competitive force among other universities and research institutions on a global scale".

In order to ensure careful institutional stewardship of these investments and resources, the College of Natural Science reviews all holders of positions whose funding is renewable¹ for **appointment and funding continuation every five years.**

- This review typically occurs in the spring semester of the fifth year after appointment and at least in every fifth year thereafter.
- The review is conducted by an ad hoc committee of one or more Associate Deans (who will lead the review process), University Distinguished Professors, MSU Foundation Professors, and/or endowed/named professors or chairs. The committee will make a recommendation to the dean of the college.

Review process:

The 5-year review of endowed professors, named chairs and professorships is a multi-step process initiated by the incumbent and their chair/director on the 5th year of appointment, and reviewed by the College's *ad hoc* committee. For most candidates the timeline is as follows:

1) Notification:

The College notifies the incumbent and the relevant department chair(s) or program director(s) about the review (typically by September 1 of the academic year in which the review is to take place).

2) Unit Review:

The incumbent then provides a complete review package (see below) to the department chair(s) or program director(s) in which they hold positions prior to December 1. (Department chairs with endowed professorships or named chair appointments replace this step with a cover letter from a senior colleague at MSU, selected by the chair/director, and approved by the dean².)

¹ MSU Foundation Professorships hold the title for as long as they remain on the faculty of Michigan State University, but the funding for the position does not normally continue beyond 5 years. This policy does not apply to those MSU Foundation Professorships whose funding does not continue beyond 5 years.

² Department chairs or program directors who hold an endowed professorship or named chair submit the review packet directly to the College and include a cover letter from a senior colleague at MSU, selected by the chair/director, and approved by the dean. The review will focus *solely* on their role as a faculty member and endowed professorship/named chair appointment. Administrative review of performance as department chair or program director is a separate process conducted by the Dean.

- 2.1 The department(s) or program(s) undertake a review of the package using its (their) procedures.
- 2.2 The chair/director conducts their own independent review, following the criteria outlined in this policy and the standards used for Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure dossiers at the relevant rank.

3) **College Review:**

The chair(s)/directors(s) then forward the complete dossier to the college with a single cover letter analyzing the incumbent's record and making a recommendation about continuation by February 1. The college will notify the incumbent and chair(s) and director(s) about continuation by April 1.

A complete dossier shall consist of the following:

Assemble a **single PDF** file with the following elements and order:

1. A **cover letter** from the chair(s)/director(s) with their independent evaluation of the incumbent's review package and accomplishments during the reporting period, following the evaluation criteria described above. (In the case of department chairs/program directors with endowed professorships or named chairs, a senior colleague approved by the Dean will provide the cover letter with their independent review.)
2. The incumbent's **updated curriculum vitae**.
3. Each of the **annual reviews** during the reporting period (last 5 years or more, as appropriate).
4. A **reflective essay** (maximum 5 pages) written by the incumbent that describes progress and goals for research, teaching/mentorship, service/leadership, and commitment to MSU's core values (see evaluation criteria below).
5. A **special essay** (1-2 pages) addressing the purpose of the endowment and use of funds, as follows:
 - i. A detailed description of how the position's funds were used and how they supported the intended spirit of the endowment and/or named chair grant.
 - ii. A description of what the incumbent accomplished during the review period that could not have accomplished without the funding, highlighting the impact of the funds.
 - iii. Evidence of impact on students and trainees.
 - iv. A justification of why funds, if any, remained unspent and specific plans for their use.
 - v. A description of plans for use of additional funding from the position for the next five years.

Evaluation criteria³:

1. Continuing **outstanding performance** in all key areas of the appointment (typically research, teaching/mentoring, and service/leadership) according to rank.
 - Research: Research excellence (sustainable funding, publications, invited seminars, etc.) and plans for future research commensurate with the University's and College's standards for rank and title.
 - Teaching: Demonstrated effectiveness at successfully engaging (under)graduate students through individual research supervision, in the classroom, and in less formal

³ For Named and Endowed Chairs and Professorships that do not involve research, alternate criteria (as outlined in the endowment) will be applied.

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- Service: Effective support of the internal academic functions of the university and demonstrated disciplinary leadership and broad/global impact.
 - Leadership: Positive and effective leadership within MSU and in the relevant external scientific/scholarly communities.
2. Effective use and **management of the position's funds**:
 - Successful use of funds to obtain substantial additional external research funding and grow scholarship and impact within and beyond MSU. (The normal expectation is that there will be little carryover of funding from the position from year to year.)
 - Evidence that the funds have been impactful – directly or indirectly– towards research experiences for students and/or other trainees.
 3. Commitment to **upholding MSU's core values** of integrity, access, opportunity and excellence across the mission:
 - Sustained record of upholding the highest standards of conduct and professional integrity
 - Encourages behaviors that foster an equitable, safe and respectful workplace
 - Upholds personal and institutional accountability
 - Contributes to a healthy, safe, and welcoming culture and climate for all, in and outside of MSU
 4. Meeting the specific **expectations/purpose** of the private endowment and/or grant (for named chairs).

Committee's recommendation to the Dean:

1. Continue appointment and funding for a period of 1 to 5 years.
2. Continue appointment for a period of 1 to 5 years without or at a reduced level of funding.
3. Discontinue appointment and funding at the end of the term or beginning July 1 for spring reviews.

Approved by NatSci Faculty Advisory Council 12/8/16. Revisions approved by NatSci Faculty Advisory Council 10/3/2020. Updated by the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Development Gemma Reguera on 09/08/2025 for compliance with University's standards and procedures.