

**Procedures for the Election of the
Chairperson of the Physics Department**

(adopted by secret ballot, 13 May 1985)

(where changes have been made, original in [brackets])

1. **Eligibility.** All tenured and tenure-track faculty members of the Physics Department, and those part-time faculty members of the department who were appointed to that position before January 1, 1984, are eligible to vote for the department chair. Only full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve in that position.

2. **Nominations.** Mid-fall semester [At the beginning of the spring semester] of the year in which his or her term of appointment expires, the departmental chair shall send to each eligible voter the link to a secure web site [a nominating ballot] containing the names of all faculty members eligible to serve as chairperson. Nominating ballots are cast via a secure web site [by the double-envelope method, with the nominator's name and signature on the outer envelope], and contain at most two votes for different eligible faculty members. Ballots are counted and the results made available to the faculty two weeks after being sent out by the department.

The persons with the three highest numbers of nominating votes shall be asked by the chair if they are, in principle, willing and able to serve if conditions of the appointment are satisfactory. If necessary, the person or persons with the next largest number of votes shall also be contacted.

3. **Election.** The names of the willing and able persons with the three largest numbers of nominating votes shall be posted on a secure web site with the link sent [as a ballot] to all members of the physics faculty eligible to vote. Voting is via the secure web site [by the double-envelope method, with a voter's name and signature on the outer envelope and the ballot sealed in the inner]. A valid ballot must contain at most one vote for one person. Write-in votes are permitted. Ballots are counted two [three] weeks after being sent out by the department. The winner is the person who receives the majority of votes cast. The results are announced to the faculty.

If no one received a majority of the votes cast there shall be a run-off election (in which write-in votes are not permitted) for the persons with the two largest numbers of votes. The results are announced to the faculty. This procedure is repeated, if necessary, until a majority is achieved, provided that any such election has a smaller number of candidates than the previous one.

If at any stage no reduction of the number of candidates is possible, but no candidate has a majority of the votes cast, the decision will be made either by a committee consisting of the chairperson of the department (unless he or she is among the remaining candidates) and the executive committee or by a method devised by it. If any of the remaining candidates are members of the executive committee they will, for this purpose, be replaced by the available person who served as a representative of

the same group most recently. The results are communicated to the Dean of the College, as well as to the faculty.

If the winner of the election either cannot or will not serve as chairperson, there shall be a new nomination and a new election.

Changes to Policy - From Executive Committee Minutes, 10 January 1997:

The practice of campaigning, in all its various forms, is not expressly forbidden in the existing procedures. Thus, those who wish to campaign may do so, although others may choose to refrain.

Once the "willing and able persons with the three largest numbers of nominating votes" have been identified, however, it is important that the faculty have the opportunity to learn about their views on various topics of concern. The EC felt the most appropriate method would be one adopted by many of the larger physics organizations: that each candidate be asked to submit a 2-3 paragraph summary of their goals and positions on what they consider to be the most important issues facing the department. These statements would be distributed to the entire faculty.

On the specific suggestion that the Dean of the College be given only the name of the person receiving the highest number of votes (rather than the present practice of providing the number received by all three candidates), the EC believes the present practice should be continued.

Change to Policy - From Executive Committee Minutes, 17 April 2000:

The EC agreed that the time period for each round of voting in future Departmental elections will be one week for EC elections and two weeks for Chair elections.

Change to Policy – COAS Directive, Fall 2009:

Prior to the deadline requested for receipt of recommendations, a faculty meeting should be held for the express purpose of discussing a department's goals, achievement and directions in the context of thinking about the issue of leadership.