

## SCHOOL OF DATA SCIENCE ENDOWED CHAIRS POLICY

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### **Reason for Policy:**

This policy provides requirements and procedures related to the appointment, review, and, if appropriate, renewal of endowed professorships in the School of Data Science (SDS). These provisions will promote equity and excellence in appointments, encourage good fiscal stewardship, and ensure that the intention of donors, as stated in the enabling language, is honored. This school-specific policy conforms to and supplements the University of Virginia [policy](#) governing endowed professorships.

### **Definition of Terms:**

*Endowed Chair:* A named professorship established for scholars who are usually full or associate professors at the University of Virginia (or, in the case of a new hire, under consideration for a position of similar stature), provided to recognize excellence in a school or field of study.

### **Policy Statement:**

Endowed professorships are critical to the school's ability to attract and retain teachers and scholars of extraordinary value who embody the values and vision of SDS. The holder of an endowed chair is receiving one of the most prestigious honors that can be bestowed on a University of Virginia faculty member. SDS values a variety of perspectives and will work to ensure diversity in all its forms in the appointment and renewal of endowed chairs within the school.

### **I. Qualifications:**

The University of Virginia's [policy](#) governing endowed professorships provides that holders of such professorships exhibit the "highest levels of performance, and national and international recognition of that performance." This means that the individual will exhibit exemplary accomplishment in a discipline or area of research as judged by an independent assessment of their peers. In certain instances, accomplishment may be judged on the basis of distinguished work for which there is peer consensus of superior achievement whether in teaching, service or in accomplishments which lie beyond strictly academic endeavors. The appointment to an endowed chair may recognize a current member of the faculty or it may be associated with the recruitment of a new faculty member; but, in all appointments, excellence should be evidenced by several years of outstanding performance based on national and international standards.

In the School of Data Science candidates for an endowed professorship must demonstrate:

- Sustained excellence in scholarship and/or teaching and/or service
- Sustained integrity in all aspects of scholarship
- Proven interdisciplinary activity
- Proven collegiality and collaboration with faculty and non-faculty
- A commitment to open knowledge through the [FAIR \(Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable\) Data Principles](#) and other evidence
- Evidence that the candidate's accomplishments have substantively increased the base of knowledge in their field and impacted product, policies, or services for societal benefit
- Proven ability to positively impact the university and surrounding communities

There may be additional, specific criteria depending on the stipulations associated with a particular chair. Candidates for chairs oriented toward emerging and mid-career faculty still must demonstrate high levels of performance and recognition, as appropriate for their career level, with high potential for further achievement and growth. The Endowed Professorship Appointment and Review Committee (described below) is responsible, in consultation with the dean, for ensuring that the nominee fits the substantive criteria as specified in the endowed professorship agreement or otherwise specified by the school.

## **II. Types of Professorships:**

Endowed professorships in SDS include the following types. SDS reserves the right to establish other categories of endowed professorships, consistent with University policy and future endowments.

### **Distinguished Professorships**

Faculty appointed to a distinguished professorship in Data Science will have demonstrated internationally recognized achievement in the foundational aspects of data science applied across disciplines. They will provide leadership in the establishment of new research centers and initiatives to guide the school in the dynamic field of data science. They will demonstrate flexibility and collaboration by partnering with multiple schools, departments, and units to address research questions that cannot be addressed in one discipline alone. They will show an enthusiasm for the development and education of a new generation of data scientists at a variety of levels with applicability to all fields. SDS will seek to appoint professors who can develop new methods and breakthrough in a variety of fields using data science methods and techniques and help establish the University as a world leader in data science.

### **Mid-Career Professorships**

Faculty appointed to a mid-career professorship in Data Science will have demonstrated recognized achievement in the foundational aspects of data science applied across disciplines. They will provide thought leadership in the field and contribute to areas of strategic importance and initiatives to guide the school in the dynamic field of data science. They will demonstrate flexibility and collaboration by partnering with multiple schools, departments, and units to address research questions that cannot be addressed in one discipline alone. They will show an enthusiasm for the development and education of a new generation of data scientists at a variety of levels with applicability to all fields. SDS will seek to appoint professors who are agile and flexible enough to meet the dynamic nature of the field using data science methods and techniques and help establish the University as a world leader in data science.

### **Professorships Associated with a Position**

SDS maintains professorships that are associated with a specific position (e.g., dean or associate dean). Faculty members appointed to these professorships shall relinquish the professorship upon leaving the position.

### **Visiting Professorships**

Limited term chairs designated for the purpose of attracting and funding faculty visiting from another institution or organization for a short-term period.

## **III. Terms**

Endowed professorships in SDS typically will be awarded for terms of no more than 5 years. Terms associated with the endowed professorship will be communicated via the offer letter (for new hires) or the chair appointment letter (for those already on the faculty).

In special circumstances, offers of an endowed professorship without term may be extended in order to recruit or retain faculty who have extraordinary standing in the national and international data science community and who would significantly advance the long-term goals of SDS.

#### **IV. Endowed Professorship Appointment and Review Committee (EPARC)**

At the beginning of each academic year, the dean will appoint faculty as necessary to the standing Endowed Professorship Appointment and Review Committee (EPARC), for a term of up to five years. The EPARC will consist of no fewer than three faculty members who hold endowed professorships at the University of Virginia. If there are not three active holders of endowed professorships on the SDS faculty who are willing and able to serve, committee members will be recruited from endowed professors in disciplines or substantive fields related to the endowed professorship candidate's scholarship. At least one member of the committee must hold a joint appointment of at least 50% in another school. The dean also may appoint external endowed professors to the EPARC on an ad hoc basis for consideration of endowed professorships related to a joint appointment or other interdisciplinary position.

#### **V. Procedures**

The following procedures should be followed when appointing a faculty member to an endowed chair. Exceptions to these procedures may be authorized by the dean and provost.

##### **A. Nominations, Evaluation, and Selection:**

The dean will evaluate the status of unfilled endowed professorships annually and determine whether to offer a call for nominations. Nominations for prospective chair holders may originate with either the SDS dean or a committee of the school's endowed chair holders, or may be coupled with an external search. Any SDS team member may suggest potential candidates for nomination by submitting a letter recommending such nomination to the dean.

Upon nomination, the dean asks the candidate to provide supporting materials including:

- a) Curriculum vitae,
- b) Personal statement, highlighting how the candidate and their scholarly work align with the principles of the school. The statement should describe the impact of past work and map out future goals, and
- c) A list of five potential external reviewers who are distinguished in the field. The list should include name, title, employer name, phone number, and email address. The dean will initiate the request to the external reviewers.

The nominee's dossier will be reviewed and evaluated by the EPARC. The nominee's dossier includes the documents submitted by the nominee, the nomination letter, and at least three letters from external distinguished reviewers. The committee conducts its review and evaluates the nominee in light of the overall goal of the specific chair and the eligibility qualifications provided above. The committee will place a particular emphasis on the nominee's scholarship and contributions to the field, unless the terms for the chair are oriented to teaching, service, or engagement.

The committee sends a written report to the dean outlining the qualifications of the nominee(s) along with its recommendations. Based on these recommendations, the dean makes the final school decision and submits the nomination, along with the original report of the committee and all supporting documents, to the provost for approval and recommendation to the Board of Visitors.

##### **B. Review and/or Renewal of Chaired Professorships:**

All faculty in the school are reviewed annually, including those holding endowed chairs. In addition, prior to the end of the appointment period (for fixed-term chairs) chair holders will receive notification of chair review from the dean, if renewal of the chair is under consideration. For five-year appointments this review will usually occur in the fourth year, with the deadline set so that the renewal application can include the fourth year annual report and evaluation. In the event of a non-termed chair appointment, the chair holder must also be reviewed every five years following the process below.

The chair holder will submit a dossier that includes:

- a) Letter from chair holder summarizing progress to date (including an outline of scholarly work produced, contributions to the field, and impact during the review period) and alignment with the purpose of the chair,
- b) When appropriate, documentation of teaching, engagement, and service to the school and university,
- c) Curriculum vitae, and
- d) Annual reports for the period under review.

The Endowed Professor Appointment and Review Committee conducts its review and evaluates the chair holder in light of the overall goals of the specific chair. In order to be renewed the chairholder must, at a minimum, meet the same qualifications as original appointment.

The committee sends a written report to the dean outlining the chair holder's accomplishments during the appointment period and standing within their field along with their recommendations.

The result of every review will be a specific recommendation. Such recommendations will specify:

- Those faculty with termed professorships who have maintained the standards of the chair and SDS for confirmation of endowed chair reappointments for another term.
- Those faculty who have not met the standard for excellence or may be struggling, as evidenced by their review packages and independent assessment by the committee. The committee will provide written recommendations to the dean, noting extenuating circumstances which may have contributed to reduced scholarly productivity over the review period, and/or factors which may indicate that the faculty member holding an endowed professorship should relinquish his or her chair.

Based on this recommendation, and any additional information the dean deems important, the dean makes the final decision regarding the renewal of the chairholder and will notify the provost as appropriate. Decisions regarding the nonrenewal or removal of an endowed chair are at the discretion of the dean.

When a person on the committee is under review, the candidate is recused from the committee as it relates to their own review. The dean will appoint a temporary replacement to the committee if the recusal causes the committee membership to fall below the minimum of three members.

### **C. Non-renewal or Removal of an Endowed Professorship**

Faculty will be required to relinquish an appointment to an endowed professorship if the holder fails to adhere to the intent for which the professorship was established or violates policies of the University or the School of Data Science. Faculty with either termed or non-termed endowed professorships who have not met the standard for excellence as evidenced by their review packages and independent assessment by EPARC will be referred to the dean for further consideration. The committee will provide written recommendations to the dean, specifically noting factors which may have contributed to reduced productivity over the previous 5 years, and/or any factors which may be of concern.

**Related Information:**

**[UVA Financial Reporting and Operations, Procedures and Guidelines](#)**

**[EXT-009: Establishment of Funds from Gifts](#)**

**[PROV-006, Extending Offers of Employment to Faculty in Academic Areas](#)**

**[MOU template for Joint Appointments](#)**

**[PROV-017, Promotion and Tenure](#)**

**[PROV-004, Employment of Academic General Faculty Members \(Tenure-Ineligible\)](#)**