



*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*  
*Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Deans, Associate Deans, Chairs, and Directors – Norman Campus

FROM: André-Denis G. Wright  
Senior Vice President and Provost, Norman Campus

DATE: May 21, 2026

SUBJECT: Norman Academic Unit Chairs and Directors Step-Up and Step-Down Process

Please see the attached revised guidelines for the appointment of Norman Academic Unit Chairs and Directors.

For all appointments the terms must be set forth in an appointment letter signed by the Dean and the person to be appointed. At a minimum, the letter must set forth the following:

- a. 9/12 conversion and administrative stipend information
- b. Step down information
- c. Course release information

The following language is also required:

- d. *"Your appointment is effective [insert dates] (and the associated biweekly pay periods) contingent on performance and University discretion."*
- e. *"Administrative positions such as this are appointed and may be rescinded by the dean at any time. Should you no longer serve in the administrative role(s) for the University of Oklahoma for any reason, the administrative supplement associated with the duties/role(s) will end."*
- f. *"Upon step-down, you will be expected to perform the duties of a regular member of the faculty."*
- g. *"Note that upon step-down to a 9-month faculty position, any accrued leave will be transferred to your extended sick leave account."*

All Chair and Director appointments are contingent upon approval of the Provost. All appointments over the Regents' \$150,000 threshold and/or include changes to an endowed title are contingent upon the approval of the OU Board of Regents.

As a reminder, per the [memo from March 12, 2024](#), starting with the 2024-2025 academic year contract cycle any change to a nine-month faculty member's appointment will be limited to the following dates:

- August 16, at the beginning of the academic year contract,\* or
- January 1, mid-year with the beginning of the second semester.

\* Please note this date may not align with the university's biweekly payroll action/cycle dates. Consult with your unit's payroll administrator for more details if needed.

Step-ups or step-downs should follow the dates stated above or align with the fiscal year (for 12-month appointments, July 1/June 30).

attachment

cc: Sarah Ellis, Vice Provost for Faculty  
Grey Allman, Associate Provost for Policy and Administration  
Lizi Young, Director of Academic Personnel Records, Office of the Provost

**OU NORMAN ACADEMIC UNIT CHAIRS AND DIRECTORS  
STEP-UP AND STEP-DOWN PROCESS**

Final Approved May 20, 2019  
Revised April 2025, April 2026

	Q&A	OU Norman Colleges
Step-up	Do all chairs/directors serve on a 12-month schedule?	Yes
	How is the 12-month salary calculated?	12/9th conversion of base
	Is there an administrative <u>stipend</u> given to chairs/directors in addition to the summer pay benefit?	<p>Yes. The administrative <u>stipend</u> is a range of \$10,000 - \$20,000 and can be provided based on the individual's current COMPA level, rank, role (chair or director) and size/complexity of the department, division, or program.</p> <p>Care should be taken to avoid compression or inversion for existing leadership.</p> <p>An individual's COMPA percentage may be reviewed prior to moving into the chair or director role.</p> <p>The Office of the Senior Vice President and Provost, and, if applicable, the University Board of Regents must approve the administrative salary for unit chairs and directors.</p>
	What, if any, is the reduction in course load?	A 2-course load reduction while serving is generally provided.
	If any salary increase, such as merit or COL, are earned while they are serving as chair/director, does the increase apply to their full admin salary or just their base faculty salary?	<p>Increases are calculated using the full admin salary amount.</p> <p>Increases while serving as chair or director will be proportionally allocated to the salary components; i.e. 9-month base, 12/9th conversion, and admin stipend. (See next question.)</p>

	Q&A	OU Norman Colleges																												
Step-down	Are the individuals returned to their old faculty base or is a new faculty base calculated?	<p>Administrative stipend removed, if applicable, and then new annualized salary rate for nine months will be calculated based on a 9/12 conversion at the time of step-down.</p> <p><b>Examples:</b></p> <p>Chair/Director step-up salary: (from 9 to 12 month)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Base Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$100,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer (3/9)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$33,333.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Admin Stipend</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$10,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$143,333.33</b></td> </tr> </table> <p>Chair/Director step-down salary: (from 12 to 9 month)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>12 MTH Base Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$143,333.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(minus) Admin Stipend</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$10,000.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(minus) Summer (9/12ths conversion)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$33,333.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>9 MTH Base Salary</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$100,000.00</b></td> </tr> </table> <p><b><u>Chair/Director Salary Increase: (2.5%)</u></b></p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>12 MTH Admin Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$143,333.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.5% increase</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$3,583.33</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>New 12 MTH Admin Salary</b></td> <td style="text-align: right;"><b>\$146,916.33</b></td> </tr> </table> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>9 MTH Base Salary</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$102,500.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Admin Stipend</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$10,250.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer (9/12ths conversion)</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$34,166.33</td> </tr> </table>	Base Salary	\$100,000.00	Summer (3/9)	\$33,333.33	Admin Stipend	\$10,000.00	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$143,333.33</b>	12 MTH Base Salary	\$143,333.33	(minus) Admin Stipend	\$10,000.00	(minus) Summer (9/12ths conversion)	\$33,333.33	<b>9 MTH Base Salary</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>	12 MTH Admin Salary	\$143,333.33	2.5% increase	\$3,583.33	<b>New 12 MTH Admin Salary</b>	<b>\$146,916.33</b>	9 MTH Base Salary	\$102,500.00	Admin Stipend	\$10,250.00	Summer (9/12ths conversion)	\$34,166.33
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	Are step-up/step-down practices college wide or department specific?	Norman Campus-wide																												
	What will happen to existing chair and director step-up/step-down arrangements?	<p>This new procedure does not supersede pre-existing written agreements in place with chairs and directors.</p> <p>Hence, if an individual has a current offer letter/employment contract in place for the Chair or Director role that defines their step-up and/or step-down pay, they will be grandfathered in that commitment.</p> <p>If the offer letter does not have step-down provisions, the University will follow the above process.</p>																												

	Q&A	OU Norman Colleges
Step-down (cont'd)	What happens to those chairs and directors that are below the new step-up amounts?	The Provost and Dean will review on a case-by-case basis to make a determination.
	What happens for chair and director term renewals?	<p>The Provost and Dean will review each renewal to make a determination for the next term.</p> <p>In those cases where the Term I stipend is lower than the range, or inconsistent with the College, an adjustment can be made for the next term.</p>
	Is there required language for appointment letters?	<p>All administrative appointment letters must contain the following language:</p> <p><i>Your appointment is effective [insert dates] (and the associated biweekly pay periods) contingent on performance and University discretion.</i></p> <p><i>Administrative positions such as this are appointed and may be rescinded by the dean at any time. Should you no longer serve in the administrative role(s) for the University of Oklahoma for any reason, the administrative supplement associated with the duties/role(s) will end.</i></p> <p>If the required language is missing on any of your current appointment letters or memos, you may, but are not required to, update. However, if you modify the faculty appointment or administrative role in the future, the letter or memo must be updated with this language.</p>