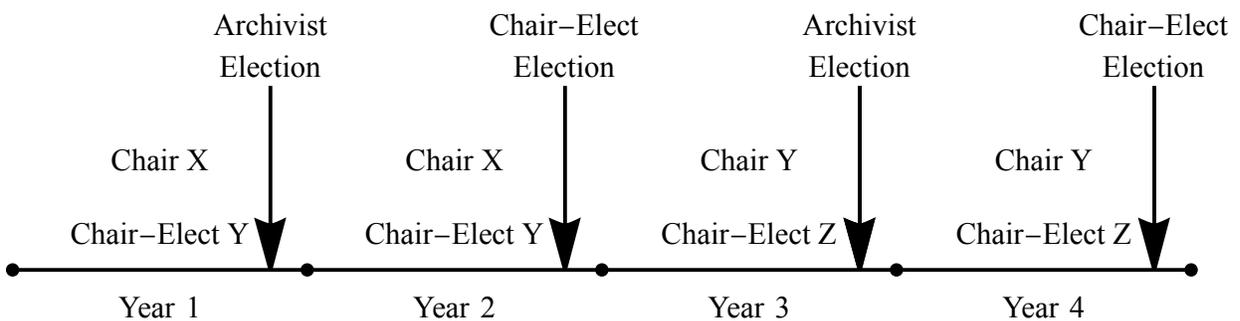


Issues with Chair/Past-Chair Terms When a Chair Steps Down Early

Note: This is a document for discussion only. While there are examples of possible changes to current policy, they are meant as a starting point for discussion and are not couched as formal proposals.

In the normal course of Senate terms, the pattern of Chair and Chair-Elect terms and officer elections looks like this (with years beginning August 1st):



Sometimes a Chair will need to step down early. Historically when this has happened the Chair has had less than a year of service remaining. When an office of Chair is vacated early, Article III Sections C and F of the Senate Constitution describe what happens:

Section C: Should the office of chair be vacated before the two-year term is completed (e.g. because of resignation or retirement), the office of chair will immediately be filled by the chair-elect (who will fulfill the remainder of the two-year term), and a new chair-elect shall be elected from the faculty at large to fill the remainder of the two-year term.

Section F: If the office of chair becomes vacant, the chair-elect shall take the office and the Faculty Senate shall call for the election of a new chair-elect.

As most vacated Chair offices have had a semester or less remaining, Section C has been interpreted as the newly-promoted Chair serves the remainder of their predecessor's term *in addition* to their normally-scheduled term. This results in a Chair (and Chair-Elect) who has served a little over two years.

In the current situation, due to circumstances outside their control the Chair asked the Chair-Elect to begin covering their duties in March of their first year, with the intent to return - however the Chair was unable to return and formally resigned their position in the last week of Year 1. The previous interpretations of Sections C and F would then give a Chair who would effectively serve a term of almost three and a half years - and due to the original uncertainty in the previous Chair's status a Chair-Elect who would serve for just under three years.

Terms that long as a Chair or Chair-Elect are potentially fairly burdensome, especially given the additional time people in these offices will serve as Past Chair. If we want to continue in the “always serve the remainder term and your term” system, it would probably be a good idea to amend the language of Section C to make this clear. If terms of that length seem unpalatable, we could also amend the language in Sections C and or F in different ways to shorten the terms.

One possible way to shorten the terms would be set them based on *when* the Chair vacates their office. For example:

Case 1: The Chair vacates their office with less than a year remaining

- 1) The Chair-Elect fills the remainder of the vacated term in addition to their normally-scheduled term. This results in a term of more than 2 but less than 3 years.
- 2) An Acting Chair-Elect is elected from the Senate to handle the responsibilities of the office (with the exception of eventually becoming Chair) for the remainder of the vacated term. This allows for the election of the next Chair-Elect that spring as normal, for a normal 2 year term.

Case 2: The Chair vacates their office with a year or longer remaining

- 1) The Chair-Elect fills out the remainder of the vacated term, stepping down from the position at its end. The results in a term length of more than 1 but less than 2 years.
- 2) A new election for Chair-Elect is held immediately, with the new Chair-Elect serving out the remainder of the previous Chair-Elect’s term and then becoming Chair. This results in a Chair-Elect term length of more than 1 but less than 2 years.

Another option would be to modify the second case (call it Case 2a):

Case 2a: The Chair vacates their office with a year or longer remaining.

- 1) The Chair-Elect fills out the remainder of the vacated term, one year of their normally scheduled term, and then steps down to become Past Chair. This gives a term length of more than 2 but no more than 3 years.
- 2) An Acting Chair-Elect is elected from the Senate to handle the responsibilities of the office (with the exception of eventually becoming chair) for the remainder of the first year of the vacated term. A new election for Chair-Elect is held at the end of that year, with the new Chair-Elect taking office on August 1 and holding the office for 2 years to match the Chair term.
- 3) This would require shifting the year in which a Chair-Election is held; given the existing election patters this would make the Archivist and Chair-Elections happen at the same time one year, with no election for those positions the following year. This would require additional changes to Article III Section C (which mandates the current pattern of elections).