I.G.3. Appointment of Department Chairs
(Source: Offices of the President and Provost, Almanac, October 18, 1977; revised, 1983)

All department chairs are appointed by the President upon recommendation of the Provost and the Dean and with the advice of faculty both inside and often outside the department. Responsibility for initiating the appointment of a new department chair and the charge to any nominating/search/selection body, including criteria and number of persons to be recommended, rests with the Dean. The Dean should state from the outset whether there is available a position in the Standing Faculty to allow consideration of external candidates. The means by which nominations are secured and reviewed will vary from school to school, but should be regularized and clearly stated for each school.

In all cases, the Dean should play an active role, either as a participant in the departmental review, or by requiring two or three names from which to choose. A change in department chairs should normally be preceded by a review of the direction, quality, and plans of the department. Such a review may be initiated by the Dean, Provost, President, or members of the department and should be planned cooperatively by all parties. Reviews with external evaluators should take place as a matter of course in departments at regular intervals, but preferably at such times as to be helpful to new departmental leadership.

A recommendation for appointment as a department chair takes the form of a letter from the Dean to the Provost, accompanied by a current curriculum vitae of the nominee and other information about the selection process, including names of others considered. The letter should set forth the proposed period of appointment (most often five years, renewable, but may be less and occasionally more according to prevailing school practice). The letter is sent to the Provost, who will transmit it to the President for final approval and preparation of the appointment letter.