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Community College

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DEPARTMENT CHAIR HANDBOOK

Department Chair Handbook

Department Chairs

Department Chairs are the primary educational faculty leaders responsible for assisting and advising in the coordination of the disciplines and/or programs within institutionally determined departments. Chairs are the primary spokespersons for their department faculty. Effective chairs are essential for maintaining the strengths and building the reputation of the department, and the college. Chairs assist the respective supervising administrator in achieving institutional goals, plans, and strategies that fulfill the college mission. Chairs are expected to provide leadership toward achievement of the highest possible level of excellence in teaching, advising, scholarship & research, and service activities of the departments.

Role of Department Chairs

The list of “primary” obligations can be organized into the following categories:

Governance

- Lead and facilitate regular department meetings
- Serve as a member of the institution’s Student Learning Committee and one additional committee (See policy manual for list of committees)
- Assist in making recommendations to the supervising administrator for committee assignments

Instructional Support and Staffing

- Advise and assist in coordinating:
 - The schedule of classes for their particular department
 - The master final exam schedule for their particular department
 - Changes to the catalog
- Identify and recommend staffing assignments for their department
- Assist in recruiting new faculty members
- Mentor new faculty members
- Maintain and organize essential department records/data (Meeting agendas, minutes, grant information etc.)
- Assist in the coordination of professional development appropriate for their department

Budget, Equipment and Facilities

- Facilitate discussion, prepare, and present department requests for equipment, student support, professional development, and supplies to the supervising administrator
- Advise and provide input to supervising administrator for facilities planning, including facility alterations, design, organization, and remodeling, within the department

Assessment

- Facilitate the completion of all appropriate assessment activities for their corresponding departments and members
- Collect, interpret, and present department data relevant to discussions about curriculum and program effectiveness
- Conduct annual full-time faculty and adjunct faculty observations
- Review all full-time and adjunct faculty course syllabi

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- Assist in the coordination and representation of the department in preparation for accreditation
- Coordinate the implementation of strategies and efforts within the department to promote student success and academic achievement

Compensation of Department Chairs

For the regular academic year, the chairs shall be compensated at the rate of a 3-credit course per semester. If needed for summer duties, the chair shall be compensated an additional summer contract, up to 15 hours and equal to a one-credit course.

Election Process

No later than April 1, the supervising administrator will send an email to all full-time regular faculty members soliciting nominations or self-nominations. All full-time regular faculty members who teach the majority of their load in the department, and are in good standing, are eligible to nominate or self-nominate. Procedures for determining the names to be submitted to the supervising administrator will be established by the faculty in a department meeting. All full-time regular department faculty shall be notified of this meeting.

Names of the nominated or self-nominated faculty will be forwarded to the department's supervising administrator no later than April 7th via email. The supervising administrator will concur with the nominations. If no nominations or self-nominations are submitted, the supervising administrator will select two faculty names for each vacant position. The names will be placed into an online voting application and faculty within each respective department will have five (5) days to vote online. The supervising administrator will forward the results of this ballot, including a record of the number that voted, to department faculty.

The elected Department Chair of the department will be appointed by the end of the current contract year by the President upon recommendation of the faculty. At that time, Department Chairs will assume their appointment. Department Chairs will serve a three-year term.

If an elected Chair resigns from his/her assignment or permanently leaves the institution, an election will be held to select a permanent replacement who will serve out the remainder of the three-year term. If needed, the position may be filled temporarily with a faculty member appointed by the department faculty in consultation with the supervising administrator.