

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CHAIR ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, & AUTHORITIES

I. Introduction

The Department Chair¹ is the Department's² chief academic officer. In that capacity, the Chair holds the authority over and responsibility for the following key areas, summarized here and elaborated later in the document:

- **Leadership, strategic planning, and governance.** The Chair is authorized and expected to provide leadership toward the achievement of excellence in the teaching, research, and service activities of the Department. The Chair articulates a vision and direction; leads strategic planning efforts for which he or she engages faculty, staff, students, and other constituents; and ensures that Department governance occurs in accordance with Department, College, and University policies and procedures.
- **Department climate and culture.** The Chair is the Department's steward, and in that role is authorized and expected, by example and through leadership, to set the tone in building, exemplifying, modeling, and ensuring an inclusive, collegial, and professional environment for faculty, staff, and students.
- **Communication.** The Chair is authorized and expected to develop, create, and maintain effective communication networks within and beyond the Department to inform internal and external constituents about departmental matters. The Chair represents the Department at academic leadership events, where he or she advocates for and on behalf of the Department.
- **Instruction and Program Development and Management.** The Chair is authorized and expected to direct and oversee the Department's academic programs, including instructional workload assignments, course instruction assignments, course scheduling, and curriculum.
- **Recruitment, Development, and Recognition.** The Chair is authorized and expected to serve as the Department's hiring authority, and is responsible for the recruitment and selection of a diverse faculty and staff. The Chair also establishes effective mentoring strategies for faculty and staff, and actively nominates faculty and staff members for awards as appropriate. A commitment to excellence and the principles of diversity, inclusion, and equity guide recruitment, development, and recognition efforts.

¹ For the purposes of this document, a Director of a School within a College is equivalent to a Department Chair.

² For the purposes of this document, Department refers to an academic unit.

Supervision and Management. The Chair is authorized and expected to supervise and manage the Department's faculty and staff. Through effective personnel and fiscal management strategies, attention to the work environment, and adherence to appropriate Department, College, and University procedures and policies, the Chair seeks to optimize the success of the Department and its human resources.

- **Administration.** The Chair is authorized and expected to engage in and complete routine administrative activities that ensure the effective operation the Department, such as approving faculty and staff leave, assigning and/or re-allocating space as appropriate, and signing off on grant proposals.
- **Compliance.** The Chair is authorized and expected to ensure that the Department and its faculty and staff are in compliance with Department, College, University, University System of Maryland (System), state, and federal policies, procedures, guidelines, and expectations such as lab safety protocols, completing timesheets, human subjects, sexual misconduct, occupational safety, and other reporting requirements.

II. Elaboration

Below are expanded authorities and expectations for Chairs for the above articulated responsibility areas.

In this leadership role, the Chair is expected to seek the input of the faculty, conduct departmental affairs in an orderly manner through regular Department meetings, appoint appropriate deputies and committees, and keep Department members informed in a timely fashion. The Chair is also expected to seek student feedback on climate, curriculum, and other matters related to the student educational experience. It is the Chair, however, who has the responsibility and authority regarding decisions and actions necessary to achieve outcomes of the roles articulated in this document.

The Chair may elect to delegate some of the responsibilities below to others within the Department, but the Chair remains accountable for the execution and attainment of these roles, responsibilities, and authorities. Colleges may elect to augment the roles articulated below to reflect specific expectations and authorities of Chairs within their Colleges.

Leadership, Strategic Planning, and Governance

- The Chair provides leadership for departmental and individual excellence in teaching, research and service.
- The Chair supports the strategic goals of the College/School and University through the Department's programming decisions.
- The Chair articulates the vision and goals of the Department to internal and external constituencies, and makes requests on behalf of the Department in pursuit of the Department's vision and goals.
- The Chair guides the Department's strategic planning process.

- The Chair adheres to and models the principles of academic shared governance within the Department (e.g. policies and procedures regarding promotion and tenure; policies and procedures for merit evaluations; long-range planning, curriculum development; and program review).
- The Chair leads the Department's development strategy, working with the Dean and College/University development staff to establish a plan for engaging with external constituencies.
- The Chair encourages and recommends Department members for service on College and University committees and the University Senate.

Department Climate and Culture

- The Chair maintains a climate that is welcoming, inclusive, hospitable, civil, professional, and transparent.
- The Chair establishes and models faculty and staff behavioral norms and expectations.
- The Chair works to maintain morale and reduce conflict within the Department.
- The Chair encourages faculty and staff engagement, participation, collegiality, and innovation.

Communication

- The Chair informs the Department of the perspectives and actions of the Dean, Provost, President, and other relevant administrators in general and that might impact the Department in particular.
- The Chair communicates with other academic leaders and administrators as appropriate regarding matters relevant to the Department, such as the impact of policies, procedures, and regulations; use of facilities; etc.
- The Chair communicates with current undergraduate and graduate students in Department programs about curriculum, climate, and other issues related to the student experience.
- The Chair communicates with external constituencies (e.g., alumni, potential donors) regarding the Department's activities, and is responsible for fundraising/development efforts.
- The Chair is receptive to questions, concerns, complaints, grievances, and suggestions from Department faculty, staff, and students. The Chair takes appropriate actions as required and in accordance with the policies and expectations of the Department, College/School, University, and University System of Maryland.

Instruction and Program Development and Management

- The Chair oversees the development of the Department's academic programs to support the mission of the College/School and within established University and University System guidelines.
- The Chair oversees curriculum development and ensures that the curricula support College/School, program, and departmental learning goals.

- The Chair provides information about faculty instructional expectations, consistent with University practices and state accountability reporting requirements.
- The Chair assigns teaching and other duties within the Department. Chairs should consider Department instructional needs, FTE levels, and other factors (e.g., the appropriate mix of teaching, scholarship, and service may differ from person to person, and at different points in the career of an individual and following post-tenure review).
- The Chair oversees the preparation of course schedules.
- The Chair is responsible for ensuring coordination, communication, and curriculum planning with partner academic units to ensure a program's operation for interdisciplinary or co-owned curriculum and/or programs.

Recruitment, Development, and Recognition

- The Chair assists with the active recruitment of students and, in doing so, establishes and maintains a productive partnership with the Admissions Offices.
- The Chair recruits, selects, promotes, and retains an outstanding and diverse faculty, staff, and administrative team.
- The Chair oversees the development of individual faculty members and is responsible for creating the conditions for their success. This includes the development and implementation of mentoring strategies and plans, and assigning mentors. The Chair should meet individually with all assistant professors at least annually, and encourage all faculty members to participate in professional development opportunities on campus and through professional societies, etc.
- The Chair oversees the annual review process of staff and ensures the creation and implementation of their professional development plans.
- The Chair continues to develop as a scholar in his/her discipline through an active research program and also seeks opportunities to develop as a leader and an administrator. The Chair promotes the Department nationally and internationally at professional meetings and engages in College, University, or other service as appropriate.
- The Chair recognizes the accomplishments of faculty and staff, and nominates qualified faculty and staff members for awards from the Department, College, and University, as well as for national and international external awards.

Supervision and Management

- The Chair sets workload and performance expectations for the faculty, consistent with Department, College/School, University, and University System of Maryland guidelines, requirements, and expectations.
- The Chair independently evaluates and oversees the periodic departmental reviews and preparation of dossiers for all faculty members being considered for promotion, tenure, and post-tenure reviews.
- The Chair is responsible for recommending merit, equity, and retention raises to the Dean consistent with Department, College, and University policies and procedures.
- The Chair addresses personnel matters that may arise in the Department and recommends appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. As appropriate and necessary, the Chair may bring personnel matters to the attention of the Dean or higher-level administrators.

- The Chair evaluates the job performance of faculty and staff members, and makes recommendations for all Department employees as required by appropriate policies.
- The Chair oversees and implements the Department's plan of organization and all other governing documents (e.g., APT, AEP, merit).
- The Chair is responsible for accurate, fair, and equitable administration of the Departmental budget, including preparation of budget requests, establishing priorities, and ensuring against malfeasance or over-spending.

Administration

- The Chair recommends the purchase of equipment and supplies, projects space and equipment needs for the Department, and exercises general responsibility for departmental facilities and equipment in accordance with appropriate policies, rules, and regulations.
- The Chair ensures the attendance, time commitments, and work assignments of Department faculty and staff.
- The Chair approves all faculty leaves (e.g., sabbatical, LWOP, FMLA, PPL); the Chair ensures that the scheduling of such a leave is consistent with Departmental needs and that the requests comply with University policies (i.e., conflict of interest/commitment) before submitting the recommendation to the Dean.
- The Chair approves grant submissions. The Chair ensures financial compliance with applicable regulations for sponsored projects within Department and maintains local oversight for the permissibility and reasonableness of project expenditures.
- The Chair appoints departmental officers, ad hoc committees, and standing committees in accordance with the Department plan of organization. The Chair charges them as appropriate and as required by the Department plan of organization as well as College/School, Campus, and System policies.
- The Chair assigns and oversees departmental space consistent with Department and College/School policies and needs.

Compliance

- The Chair ensures departmental compliance with College, Campus, System, state, and federal policies, procedures, guidelines, and expectations (e.g., lab safety protocols, completing timesheets, human subjects, sexual misconduct, occupational and health safety). In doing so, the Chair works as appropriate with University compliance offices such as the Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct and the Division of Research.
- The Chair approves outside professional activities (OPA) reports of applicable departmental faculty and staff. The Chair ensures that each person reports his/her outside professional activities on annual OPA reports, and reviews those activities for compliance with University policy on conflicts of interest and/or commitment.
- The Chair ensures and enforces the conduct of all faculty reviews (e.g., annual reviews, third year reviews, and post-tenure reviews) as required in University and System policies.

- The Chair oversees the preparation and submission of accurate data, reports, or materials for all Department, College, University, or other publications and communications, as appropriate or required by Department, College, University, and System policies.
- The Chair oversees the management and maintenance of all departmental records. The Chair is required to relinquish access to confidential personnel records granted in his/her role as Chair upon vacating the Chair position.