

Position description (tasks and responsibilities) for Department Chairs CSU Channel Islands

Department Chairs occupy a critical position and play a critical role in the university's central mission to deliver a high-quality education to our students. Chairs lead program faculty in meeting the needs of students, while supporting faculty in accomplishing that, and coordinating the activities and priorities of the program with those of the broader university. Chairs do so as faculty members, operating as the leader among equals within the department.

The following is a list of tasks and responsibilities expected of the chair. It is neither a description of best practices (which go beyond the basic tasks) nor comprehensive as tasks will inevitably emerge beyond these responsibilities and some discipline-specific issues will arise. Ultimately, the chair is responsible for representing the department, and in providing leadership for all departmental activities. Some tasks enumerated may be completed by faculty other than the chair upon mutual agreement and collective program understandings. However, the chair has the responsibility for ensuring that tasks are completed so as to address the needs of the department and adhere to university guidelines.

While chairs are tasked with leading academic programs, it is important to remember that they are also faculty members who are expected to teach their own classes and maintain their scholarship. That is not only essential to their own professional aspirations, but essential as a model for other faculty. Given the excessive demands which that generates, chairs must prioritize the tasks below, based on the specific needs of their programs.

Tasks are divided into three broad and overlapping areas: Departmental leadership and governance; Student service and success; and Faculty hiring, development, and review.

Departmental Leadership and Governance

The chair's primary responsibilities lie in the areas of departmental governance, strategic leadership, and department management.

1. ***Strategic leadership:*** The chair leads the program in creating and maintaining a vision, setting collective goals, providing intellectual leadership, and leading strategic decision-making to ensure the long-term health and vitality of the department.
 - Lead the development and/or regular review and revision of a mission statement that identifies the priorities and guides the work of the department;
 - Lead discussions focused on a vision for the program, including future growth and strategic initiatives, informed by data and broader developments;
 - Engage in program promotion and advocacy externally to build reputation and resources, which may include advisory boards which chairs are expected to convene and lead;
 - Identify resources and opportunities (intramural and extramural) to enhance and promote the priorities of the department;
 - Lead department in preparation for all aspects and cycles of program review, as well as to satisfy the requirements to achieve and maintain external accreditation for those relevant programs.

2. *Departmental governance:* The chair organizes and ensures effective departmental governance – i.e., governance that maximally engages colleagues to meet necessary departmental tasks and goals, and best serves all department constituents.
 - Organize and lead regular meetings and other processes to ensure that collective decision-making is effective, fair, and transparent;
 - Lead the development and revision of by-laws and all governance documents and structures to ensure that departmental needs are effectively met;
 - Encourage and reinforce collegiality in all decision-making processes;
 - Facilitate effective intra-departmental communication as well as official departmental communication with external parties (administration, other university representatives, community, etc.) to ensure that all are adequately informed;
 - Represent the department in official capacity for external events and meetings (such as meetings of school or university chairs, at commencement, etc.);

3. *Departmental management:* The chair manages the department to ensure that resources are properly allocated, communication is effective, and working relationships are productive.
 - Work with staff and administration to ensure that departmental budgets are allocated properly, and expenditures are held within those budgets;
 - Work with faculty to ensure that all departmental resources – fiscal and otherwise – are allocated fairly and to the best use of the department;
 - Address concerns and complaints from all departmental constituents (faculty and students), work to fairly resolve them (or refer them to appropriate campus units when necessary, such as Student Conduct, Title IX and Inclusion Office, Dean’s Office, etc.);
 - Lead program colleagues in establishing and fostering a welcoming, engaging, and collegial program culture;
 - Build morale among department constituents to create productive dynamics and accountability.

Student Service and Success

The central goal of every academic department is to support and promote student success leading to a high-quality academic education and degree completion.

4. *Design and deliver a high-quality curriculum:* The chair must lead the department in providing students high-quality academic experiences.
 - Develop (review, revise) a well-designed curriculum that serves students by providing a quality education informed by best pedagogical practices and the specifics of campus and system requirements;
 - Lead CSUCI processes for course and curriculum revisions, including working with the Local Curriculum Committee, with the Curriculog system, with the General Education Committee, Academic Policy and Planning Committee, etc.
 - Ensure ongoing assessment of courses and curriculum through the design and implementation of a structured assessment plan.

5. *Course scheduling*: Create course schedules that provide for student needs, address departmental and university goals, and meet the preferences of faculty.
 - Provide students the greatest opportunities to enroll in classes to continue toward graduation in a timely fashion, including allocating sufficient capacity in necessary classes, and accommodating the widest possible range of student schedules;
 - Address the collective needs of the broader university by meeting targets for enrollments (e.g., FTES and SFR);
 - Assign classes to faculty which allow them equitable opportunities (and responsibilities) associated with meeting curricular needs, while meeting all contractual obligations as specified in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (such as order of assignments, entitlements, etc.);
 - Chairs are responsible for ensuring that TT faculty are assigned classes that ensure a full workload (30 WTUs for teaching and service) for each academic year, including tracking and verifying reassigned time, and are also responsible for processing Additional Employment forms for faculty in their department.

6. *Student access to essential services and information*: The chair ensures that students have access to essential services and information necessary to support their success.
 - Organize departmental advising to ensure that students have effective guidance and support to succeed within the major;
 - Organize representation at all university events to introduce students to the major, such as majors fairs and orientations;
 - Handle all student petitions concerning curricular and program needs (course substitutions, grade appeals, dropping, etc.) in a timely manner;
 - Promote student engagement through effective communication with students (regular emails, webpage postings, etc.) and the support of student clubs and events;
 - Identify and promote access to university-wide student services and opportunities beyond the department, including academic support services (e.g., Multi-Literacy Center, tutoring services, embedded peer tutors, learning communities, etc.), special/crisis services (e.g., DASS, CAPS, CARE team; Basic Needs, etc.), and additional opportunities (e.g., Career Development Center; Undergraduate Research, etc.).

Faculty Hiring, Development, and Review

The Chair ensures that all faculty personnel processes – hiring, development, and review – are conducted properly and fairly, with the goal of cultivating engaged and productive colleagues.

7. *Hiring plans and processes*: The chair is responsible for ensuring that all processes for hiring are properly and equitably initiated and engaged so that the department is fully staffed to address its curricular needs.
 - Lead process for developing and maintaining an up-to-date hiring plan for tenure track faculty focused on departmental needs and preferences;

- Ensure that all hiring processes follow all university requirements and guidelines, from the creation of search committees, to appropriate faculty and student participation throughout, and assurance that equity and inclusion are central;
 - Organize the hiring of non-tenure track faculty promptly and fairly to ensure that departmental needs for staffing of classes with appropriate faculty with the relevant expertise is conducted following all essential university guidelines (such as order of assignment and entitlements).
8. *Faculty guidance, support, and development:* The support of faculty (junior and senior, TT and NTT) is critical to an effective academic department, and chairs play a central role in ensuring that.
- Take lead role in welcoming new faculty and orienting them to departmental and university culture, policies and procedures, and opportunities;
 - Mentor and support faculty with routine conversations about navigating meaningful careers, including developing the skills for high quality teaching, meaningful service, and impactful research (as relevant);
 - Assist faculty in identifying and accessing opportunities for intra- and extramural development across all areas of the profession;
 - Advise junior faculty in the compilation of RTP materials.
9. *Faculty review and evaluation:* Chairs must ensure that faculty reviews and evaluations are conducted fairly, thoroughly, and in a timely manner.
- Maintain Program and Personnel Standards (PSPS) that are up to date, that follow all university requirements, and that are regularly reviewed;
 - Facilitate annual elections (as appropriate) for Program and Personnel Committees, and ensure that they have the necessary support to carry out the requisites for RTP review processes;
 - Organize and/or conduct required observations for NTT faculty, and conduct annual evaluations (or periodic, as appropriate).
 - Provide administrative recommendations regarding salary adjustments for NTT faculty.