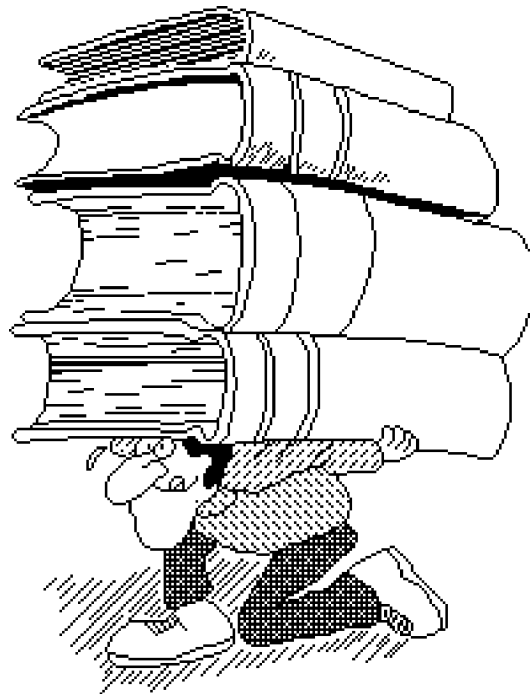


**Handbook for Department Chairs  
In Arts and Sciences  
At Pittsburg State University**

**2003-2004**

**Compiled by Dr. Elwyn H. Davis  
Mathematics Chair 1989-2003  
For, and under the direction of  
Lynette J. Olson, Ph.D.  
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences**



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## **Introduction**

This is intended to be a resource for department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences at Pittsburg State University. It contains some details concerning how things are done at Pittsburg State, and several general, or philosophical, discussions about administration in general and chairing a department in particular. The author hopes that the reader will find words of wisdom in these general discussions, which have grown out of his 14 years of experience chairing a department of mathematics, and the Dean's experience of 10 yrs .

Do not be frightened by the picture on the front of this handbook, as there are many ways the burden on a department chair can be shared at Pittsburg State University. Some of those helps are discussed in this handbook. Not the least of the helps is the great group of department chairs in the College of Arts and Sciences. This is a very collegial group, whose members have always been willing to share ideas and help mentor new chairs. Also, do not overlook the resource of the Dean of the College. The Dean succeeds as departments succeed, so she is very interested in helping department chairs succeed in their work.

To put things in a nutshell, there are four people, or groups of people a department chair needs to be concerned with. One is tempted to say that these are people, or groups, you "Need to keep happy", but when it comes to administering an academic department happiness of others can be overrated. Rather, it is sufficient to recognize that these four people, or groups of people, have a direct bearing on the chair's happiness. These groups are: (1) the Dean, at whose pleasure a department chair serves; (2) the departmental faculty; (3) the students; and (4) the public, which varies from department to department.

There is a strong tradition of shared governance at Pittsburg State University. This tradition exists at all levels, entire university, college, and department. It is important to keep this in mind when reading this handbook since we often refer to something as being the "chair's responsibility". When a given task or practice is a collective responsibility in your department, the reference to the chair's responsibility refers to an expectation that the chair will see that the department's policies and procedures are followed in a timely and appropriate manner. Saying, for example, that the chair is responsible for "a clear, consistent, well-articulated system for evaluation of faculty..." does not mean that the dept. chair will do this alone or that the chair is to make up a process for faculty evaluation. It simply means that he or she must address these matters and it is assumed that the chair will see that existing, approved procedures and policies are followed.

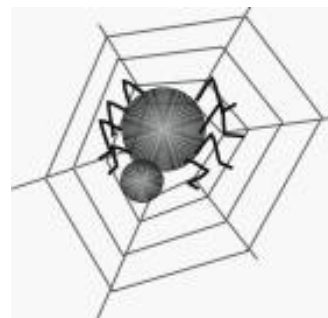
So, read and enjoy. We hope that you even find some wisdom and direction in what follows.

## Chapter 1 – Tasks Outside of the Department

As an academic department chair, a significant portion of your responsibilities lie outside of your department. These responsibilities often involve working with others from across the university, but just as often involve working with colleague chairs from the College of Arts and Sciences. This chapter contains some information about responsibilities outside of your own department.

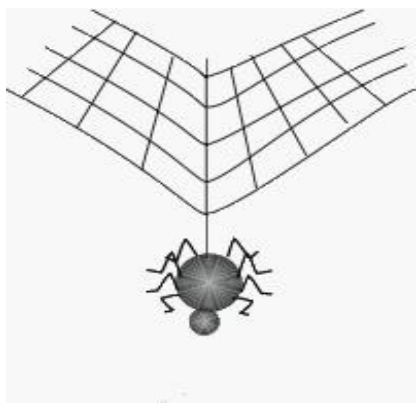
### Section 1.1 The University is Like a Giant Cobweb

Pittsburg State University, like any institution of higher education is somewhat like a giant cobweb. Just as a motion anywhere in a cobweb can be felt at any point in the cobweb, changes made in one area have an effect on the rest of the institution. It is important to keep this in mind when a department is considering changing procedures or curriculum.



Here is an example of the cobweb nature of the university which I encountered in my work as a chair. Several years ago the Dept. of Mathematics decided that it would be

good to institute a system of Basic Skills Exams in College Algebra and Calculus I. These exams were to be, as the name implies, exams over very basic skills, that is, skills that we believed anyone who earned credit in the course should be able to do with a high level of accuracy.



We set the policy that a student must pass the Basic Skills test to receive credit in the course. The policy also required that if a student had not passed the Basic Skills test by the last day to drop classes then the student would be dropped from the course. Luckily, I, and other members of the department, were believers in the cobweb nature of the university, so representatives of our department contacted people from throughout the

institution. We found that this policy was going to introduce two problems we had not anticipated. Both problems were related to students who were barely taking enough hours to be classified as full-time students. One problem was that if students were dropped from the mathematics course then they might no longer be considered full time students. This caused difficulties for two types of students – (1) those with student loans which required full-time enrollment, and (2) student athletes, who had to be enrolled full-time to be eligible to compete. No one in our department would likely have thought of this problem had we not contacted many other people in the university. Seeking, valuing, and using input or perspective from others almost always results in better planning and decision making.

### **Section 1.2 Tasks Within the College of Arts and Sciences**

One of the most obvious extra-departmental jobs of the department chair is to attend meetings called by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. These meetings are usually informative, provide direction from central administration, and are often called to provide feedback, or information, to the central administration from departments. You should not only attend these meetings, but go prepared to make a contribution should the opportunity arise. It is primarily through such meetings that you will get information to share with your department. Such information can be important in making plans for the future.

It is not unheard of for the information from meetings with the Dean to be contrary to desires or directions of the department. One of the more difficult tasks of the department chair is to fairly represent such information to the department, and where it is possible, to lead in implementing it at the departmental level.

Should the rare occasion arise in which such implementation is impossible, or highly undesirable, it is the job of the dept. chair to fairly represent the department's interest to the Dean. For some time it has been the culture at Pittsburg State that disagreements between the department and the College or University have been fairly handled, usually to the benefit of all concerned.

In addition to these regularly scheduled meetings with the Dean of the College special tasks often arise, and committees are established or assignments delegated. Some of these tasks from the recent past include: a committee to plan for an instructional technology fee, centennial celebration committee (note – after 2003 this committee is not apt to meet again during our lifetimes), and planning to host alumni during a football game.

When you, as the department chair, cannot attend a meeting of Arts and Sciences chairs you should check with the dean to see if it would be appropriate to send a substitute. Whenever a substitute is permissible it is good to send one, as oftentimes announcements are made of which the department should be made aware.

### **Section 1.3 Tasks Involving the Central Administration**

At Pittsburg State University there is a tradition of regular meetings of Deans and Department Chairs with the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Typically these meetings take place monthly. Just as with the College of Arts and Sciences chairs meetings, it is good to attend these meetings with the V.P. as important information is often disseminated. On occasion it is permissible for a department chair to send a representative, but this should be cleared in advance with the Dean of the College and the V.P.

In addition to these meetings called by the Academic Vice President departmental chairs are often asked to serve on university-wide committees appointed by the V.P. or the President.

## **Chapter 2 Departmental Organizational Tasks**

The initial responsibility of the department chair is to ensure that all academic policies and procedures of the department are consistent with the policies of the College of Arts and Sciences and the University, that all curricular obligations of the department are met, and that a dynamic, current, and stimulating curricular environment is sustained.

While a departmental chair may, and often should, delegate some departmental jobs, the final responsibility for successful completion of all departmental tasks rests with the chair. Among these tasks are: making class schedules, leading faculty recruitment, mentoring new faculty, managing departmental funds, overseeing successful teaching/learning, managing scholarships, managing the graduate program, (if there is one), managing departmental physical resources such as computers and teaching aids. It is anticipated that these tasks will be completed in an effective and timely manner.

### **Section 2.1 Making class schedules**

This can be routine, or a chair can make it quite a chore. Even though making class schedules can be routine, the job should NOT be turned over to the departmental secretary, (known on this campus as administrative specialist), as this is primarily an academic responsibility, and is not at heart clerical in nature. However, there is a locally designed program which is used to enter the course schedule into the university computer system. It is appropriate to turn over the computer entry part of the course scheduling job to a secretary, once the chair has made up the schedule. This program can be accessed through what is known as the "Deans' Screen". If you are unable to locate it you should contact the Office of Information Systems.

Among things to consider in making out the schedule are:

- (i) The number of majors who need certain upper division/graduate courses.
- (ii) The teaching load a faculty member can be expected to teach is outlined in the Agreement between PSU/KNEA and the Board of Regents. The following comes from page 44 of the 2003-2004 agreement.

“ Operational procedures for assigning individual instructional workloads are as follows:

- a. The departmental faculty and Chairperson will collectively determine, with the approval of the Dean, the extent to which credit hour guidelines, contact hour guidelines, or some mixture of both will be applied to the course offerings of the department.
- b. Assignment of instructional workload responsibilities involving exclusively undergraduate courses or less than six (6) credit (or nine [9] contact hours) of graduate teaching (courses numbered 800 or above) per academic year shall be as follows:

- i. for those faculty teaching exclusively credit hour courses, the instructional workload shall not exceed twenty-four (24) credit hours per academic year;
  - ii. for those faculty teaching exclusively contact hour courses, the instructional workload shall not exceed forty (40) contact hours per academic year; and
  - iii. for those faculty teaching a mixture of credit and contact hour courses, the instructional workload shall not exceed thirty-six (36) converted hours per academic year.”<sup>1</sup>
- c. Assignments of instructional workload responsibilities involving at least six (6) credit hours (or nine (9) contact hours) of graduate teaching (numbered 800 or above) during an academic year will result in a downward adjustment of the maximum instructional workload as follows:”

There are several statements which follow this indicating how workload should be reduced. In addition, the Agreement provides for no more than six preparations per academic year in the ordinary case.

- (iii) The needs of the university for service courses offered by your department. While there are some departments in which service courses appear to be the predominant responsibility, it is important to keep in mind that the strength of a department lies in the strength of its major, and adequate faculty resources must be reserved for a strong major program of study.
- (iv) Desires and competencies of the departmental faculty. It is good to accommodate the desires of faculty whenever possible, however this should not drive the departmental offerings, nor the curriculum, which should be firmly grounded in best practices of the profession. To “accommodate the desires of faculty”, you might make allowances for the fact that faculty may belong to community organizations which meet at certain times during the day; you might want to assign upper division/graduate courses to all levels of faculty competent to teach the courses, and not just to senior members, or not just to the newest hires. You can make allowances for the

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<sup>1</sup> Converted hours equals contact hours taught plus 1.5 times the number of credit hours taught. For example, if a faculty member taught two three-credit hour courses and two five-contact hour courses his/her converted hours would be nineteen ( $[1.5 (2 \times 3) + (2 \times 5) = 19]$ ).

desires of faculty to teach certain special courses through the use of Topics or Seminar courses, and you don't have to institute major curricular changes to make such accommodations.

- (v) Number and size of rooms available. This might seem utterly simple and routine, but it has been a regular source of headaches when trying to balance the level of courses taught at certain times with student needs, and faculty desires. For instance, student needs might include their reluctance, or near refusal, to take courses at certain times like late afternoon, or early in the morning. It might also include the possibility of conflicts with courses in related departments.

Here is an example of a conflict from my experience chairing a department. In an attempt to schedule a Calculus II course so that the instructor could attend a civic club I inadvertently scheduled it the only hour that a Physics lecture course was scheduled. It turns out that there were several students in the Physics course who also needed the Calculus II course. Since that time I have been more sensitive to when other courses were offered by those departments whose majors take a significant amount of mathematics. Come to think of it, this is also an illustration of the cobweb nature of the institution.

- (vi) Student credit hour production. While this concern shouldn't drive the curriculum, it is a fact of life that student credit hour production is important. (In fact, for small departments it is vital to continued viability.) Therefore, course offerings should be planned to allow for adequate student credit hour production. (What is adequate is usually defined by the Dean.) Sometimes this runs counter to the wishes of faculty to teach certain courses, but your primary responsibility as department chair in this area is to meet student needs, whether the students are your majors or not.

## **Section 2.2 Transfer credits into the university**

One of the more mundane, yet important tasks performed by a department chair at PSU is the evaluation of courses students wish to transfer into the university. The registrar's office will send the chair information about the proposed transfer course, usually a catalog description, and occasionally a syllabus. Often the proposed number of credit hours will be decided by the Registrar's office. It is up to the department chair to consider the course content and make one of the following recommendations:

- (i) This course is equivalent to a PSU course – give the course number and name.
- (ii) This course is not equivalent to a PSU course, but can be used as a departmental elective.
- (iii) This course is not equivalent to a PSU course, but can be used as a general elective.
- (iv) No transfer credit.

On some occasions you may not feel qualified to make a judgement about course equivalency. This most often happens in the case of specialized courses at the upper division level. Usually faculty members who have expertise in the area in question are willing to make the judgement about transfer credit. A wise department chair makes use of faculty in this manner.

### **Section 2.3 – Monetary Resources**

At Pittsburg State University the monetary resources available to a department chair are of several types, depending upon the department. There are state funds, privately generated funds, and grant moneys. We will address each of these types of funds.

#### d. State funds, aka OOE<sup>2</sup>

This is your operating fund, from which expenses to operate your office and department come. In addition to on campus expenses, in-state travel expenses can be taken from OOE. Two examples of in-state travel are: expenses incurred when faculty attend a state-wide meeting, and expenses incurred when a faculty member visits a school to evaluate student teachers.

There are restrictions on what can be done with the money from this fund, but to include those restrictions would run the risk of dating this document. The best thing to do, before making an expenditure from this fund, is to check with the Dean's office to see if it is appropriate.

#### e. Alumni Funds

These funds are donations from alumni and friends of the institution. At Pittsburg State University, many of these funds are generated by faculty members who participate in the annual Phonathon, which is usually held in February. There are very few restrictions on the uses of alumni money, so it is important for the department chair, and faculty to cooperate with this fund raising effort. Some departments generate enough money from alumni and friend donations to cover a few scholarships. Some departments have used these funds

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<sup>2</sup> It is not clear that anyone is still alive who remembers when OOE became the moniker for office operating expenses.

to purchase much needed equipment and other instructional and travel support.

f. Out of State Travel Funds

Each academic year there is a pre-determined amount of money guaranteed to each tenured, or tenure track faculty member to help support out of state travel. These funds are guaranteed to each faculty member, but can be shared, or transferred to other faculty with permission. For instance, if professor A decides he isn't going to attend an out of state professional meeting in a given year, he may decide to allow professor B to use his money.

One peculiarity of out of state travel funds is that they can't always support trips which you might consider out of state. For instance, even though Pittsburg State University is located in Kansas, Kansas City Missouri is not considered out of state, nor is Tulsa, Oklahoma. (Go figure.) You should check before each trip to be supported by out of state travel to make certain that it is truly considered out of state.

It is a good idea to have a "pre-travel" form which faculty fill out before taking a trip. This enables the departmental administrative specialist to catch errors before they occur and facilitates his or her work in filling out forms to provide reimbursement for the faculty making claims on out of state travel.

In addition to Out of State Travel money being set aside for faculty members, there are also funds for chairs to use to support their own out of state academic travel. These funds are controlled by the dean.

There is not a generally accessible fund to support out of state travel for full-time temporary faculty, although some departments have made privately donated funds available for this purpose.

g. Professional Development Fund

This is a fund which is used to supplement academic travel for faculty. A faculty member must make application for money from this fund, and the money is usually provided to those who are making presentations at professional meetings, though there are some other categories of grants from this fund. You should encourage your faculty to make applications to this fund, as the experience has been that almost all faculty who give presentations at professional meetings are granted travel expenses from it.

There is also a Professional Development Fund to help support department chairs who are making presentations at professional meetings.

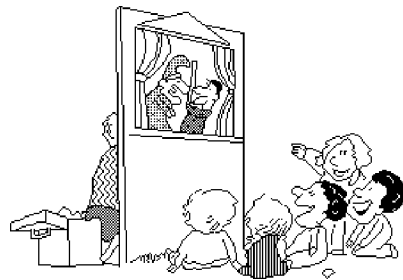
h. Other Funds

There are other funds available to some departments. In particular, some departments have been very active in obtaining grants, which often generate moneys over which a department has some discretion.

There is the Pittsburg State University Foundation, which generates significant donations from alumni, business, industry, and other university supporters. These donations can be, and often are, designated for the use of a particular department. Probably the most important type of Foundation money for most departments is scholarship money. Several departments have significant scholarship money they distribute each year which comes from donations governed by the Foundation. The Foundation, and Development Office, located in the Alumni Center, and Russ Hall, has employees who will work with departments in seeking specially donated funds for departmental use.

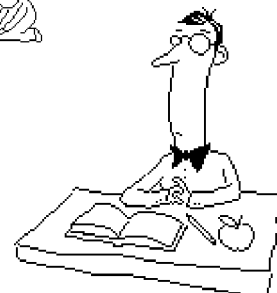
There is also an important fund for the purchase or maintenance of instructional equipment which is generated from student fees. The guidelines for obtaining resources from this fund are available from the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Each department receives a designated annual amount. In addition there is usually an amount for which departments can apply.

## Section 2.4 –Personnel Tasks



### A. Mentoring of new faculty

One of the most rewarding, though difficult tasks of the department chair is development of a strong faculty. While this starts with hiring good faculty members, the responsibility for developing the strength of a faculty continues with mentoring of new hires, and encouraging and supporting senior faculty.



You should keep in mind that mentoring is difficult at best, but made more difficult when evaluation of faculty is in the mix. A new faculty member might be reluctant to be completely honest with a chair about weaknesses or problems if the faculty member is concerned about these showing up in annual performance appraisals or tenure/promotion decisions. Unfortunately, the system in place at Pittsburg State Univ., as at many institutions, which involves annual performance review of faculty does not easily allow for separation of mentoring and evaluation. However, that difficulty does not relieve the chair of the responsibility for making provision for mentoring.

One possible solution is to use other willing, and capable, faculty as mentors. This solves the problem of mixing annual performance appraisals with mentoring, but does not solve the problem of the mentor possibly serving on a tenure or promotion committee, which may involve the mentor sitting in judgment of the one being mentored. However, experienced faculty are a rich resource which should be tapped in development of new faculty.

#### B. Support and Direction of Experienced Faculty

Experienced, or senior, faculty also need and deserve the attention of a department chair. Sometimes they need direction to improve since they might have been doing the same things long enough to have worn a rut. Sometimes they just need a pat on the back from a chair. If your

department has a colloquium series<sup>3</sup> a friendly invitation to experienced faculty to make a presentation can help keep them alive as scholars. Experienced faculty are an important part of any academic department and their contributions need to be nurtured, but, though senior faculty are an important resource, a department chair should make certain not to overburden them with responsibilities.

#### C. Assignment of Departmental Responsibilities

The final responsibility for assigning faculty to department tasks and courses rests with the dept. chair. There may be some departmental tasks which are elective in nature, such as representatives to various university committees, but for which, in many cases, the dept. chair makes assignments.

This may be the only time that some chairs have any power over their tenured full-professor colleagues, and assignments can be used both as a carrot and a stick. The following example might be instructive in this regard.

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<sup>3</sup> It is the author's opinion that you should have one

Soon after I had become a department chair, a very senior faculty member dearly wanted to teach an important course for our majors. This course was to be a bridge between our lower level courses and the higher level, more abstract courses, taken by our majors. It soon became clear to me that he was using this course as a hobby horse for his interest in technology. Instead of making the course a bridge to abstract thinking, he was using it to teach low level technological skills, and thought that he was doing a great job.

I tried to counsel him about this problem, but he dismissed my counsel as “Ludite”, and became even more determined to “do his thing” in the course. What to do? After giving him one more semester’s chance to correct his actions I no longer assigned the course to him. Now, I could have left it at this punishment, and had a very disgruntled senior faculty member, and lost a life-long friend. However, I knew that he dearly loved Elementary Statistics, so I assigned him more sections of that course, which made him happy.

I wish that this example had shown that the senior faculty member’s behavior changed after my “expert” counseling, but alas, such an eventuality is rare in academia. The department chair has to be ready to do what is necessary to protect the quality of instruction/learning.

#### C. Recruitment of new faculty

This is vital to improving a department in its ability to make needed updates in curriculum and to strengthen the scholarship activities of the faculty. There are several aspects of recruitment which merit our attention here.

- (i) Salary. At Pittsburg State University salaries have recently been competitive with similar institutions in the Midwest, but not with institutions in the east or west of the United States. Salaries of new hires are typically negotiated between the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Department Chair before a position is advertised. After, or during the interview process, salaries can occasionally be negotiated between the dean and chair, but the department chair should refrain from making a promise of a higher salary than is advertised. Generally, a good point to make with a faculty recruit, (and this has the advantage of actually being true), is that the cost of living in or near Pittsburg is lower than in a city, or in localities near one of the coasts. For one thing, housing costs are typically lower here than many other locations with universities.
- (ii) Organized Faculty. It is important to make it clear when recruiting faculty for a tenure earning position that Pittsburg State University’s faculty has a

formally organized, and legally recognized collective bargaining unit. Pittsburg State University Kansas National Education Association, (PSU/KNEA). Regardless of the chair's feelings or beliefs about the appropriateness of collective bargaining at PSU, or in higher education in general, it is a fact of life at this institution, and it is important to discuss this in a neutral manner, because to express an opinion on collective bargaining, either pro or con, might jeopardize a good hire.

- (iii) Pittsburg State University is an Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action Employer, and as such has an Equal Employment officer, (EEO), who has a hand in all recruitment efforts. It is important to involve the EEO officer at the very beginning of a faculty search to make certain that the publicity for the open position and the conduct of the search meet all legal requirements. The EEO officer has a formal schedule of steps to be followed in a faculty search. It is a mistake to treat the office of EEO as an obstacle to be avoided, because this person has considerable experience and knowledge of the law and can protect the department and university from legal action should something go awry in the search.

Here is an example of how cooperation with EEO helped the Mathematics Department in years past. We were involved in a search for a new faculty member to teach statistics. We had a phrase in the advertisement which went something like this, "... must have experience with using technology in teaching statistics ...". An applicant with years and years of experience, who will be named Bill for purposes of this writing, had a lot of experience, and turned in a somewhat impressive resume, but there was just something about his application which made us uneasy. He did not provide evidence of experience with using technology in teaching statistics. Consequently, we did not pursue Bill as a possible new faculty member.

About 6 months after the search was completed the university was contacted by Bill's lawyer about possible age discrimination. Fortunately, we had followed all of the steps in our search prescribed by

the EEO officer, and had all of the information necessary to show that we did not engage in age discrimination. One of the requirements of EEO was that we provide a list of all applicants, together with reasons we did not pursue the unsuccessful ones. During the search we had noted on this list that Bill did not show experience with using technology in teaching statistics. The fact that we had provided this list as part of the search convinced the legal authorities in the state that Bill's age did not enter into the decision not to pursue him. Case dismissed. The story doesn't end there. A few months later we became aware that Bill was making a habit of broadcast applying for any mathematics/statistics position and then filing age discrimination complaints. A sister state institution became ensnared in his scheming, and hadn't been so scrupulous in following equal opportunity guidelines. They had a much tougher time with the lawyers..

Moral of the story. Follow the EEO officers hiring guidelines. They will help you, and you might even like them.

- (iv) Faculty opinion is very important. Woe to the department chair who decides to ignore faculty opinion, and go it alone in making a hire. The existing faculty will be intimately involved in tenure and promotion decisions for all tenure track hires, so it is important that their ideas be taken into account in hiring. Try to put yourself in the shoes of a new faculty recruit who the faculty did not want to hire. You probably wouldn't have a very successful time with your new colleagues.
- (v) The Dean of Arts and Sciences has been involved in many faculty searches and not only wants to be involved in departmental hiring but needs to be involved. This involvement is important, not least, because the Dean has an important part in tenure and promotion decisions. This is in harmony with the belief of the current Vice President for Academic Affairs that the interview is the first step in the tenure process.
- (vi) Itinerary for the visit of a prospective faculty member. For interviews which require a flight or lengthy drive it is not unusual for a candidate to spend a night in Pittsburg with the interview process

taking place during parts of two days. When setting up an itinerary for a recruitment interview it is usual, and advisable, to include interviews with the departmental faculty, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. International faculty should also meet with the Equal Employment officer because that person has knowledge of immigration and permanent residence issues. Whether or not to include interviews with students is a matter which varies from department to department, depending upon the position and the culture of the department. It is good to include conduct of a class or a lecture at the student level. If a department has a strong research program, then a research level talk might be appropriate, however, it should be made clear to all recruits that PSU is primarily a teaching institution which has scholarship expectations of its faculty. It is not good to hire faculty under false pretenses, or with false expectations on either side.

- E. Protocols for Part Time Faculty and Summer Employment
  - i. Student Employment
    - (i) Graduate Students
    - (ii) Student Hourly Employees

### **Section 2.5. Tenure/promotion decisions**

Each academic department has statements of what is required for promotion and for tenure which have been approved by the departmental faculty and the dean and academic vice president. Copies of these statements are to be provided to new tenure track faculty members when they arrive on campus. It is a good practice to remind faculty, who do not yet have tenure or who have not been promoted to Professor, of these statements from time to time.

The Department Chair is only one voice in tenure and promotion decisions, but this is a very important voice, equal with that of the departmental faculty. At PSU tenure decisions are made utilizing deliberation by the departmental tenure committee, the Department Chair, the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Promotion decisions also involve College and University Promotion Committees. Each spring or summer the Office for Academic Affairs sends out a list of which faculty are eligible for tenure/promotion to each department, including a time-line for the application and review process. For more details concerning promotion

and tenure you should refer to the current Agreement between PSU/KNEA and PSU/BOR, often called the Agreement or the Contract.

### **Section 2.6 Annual Performance Appraisal of Faculty**

One of the major responsibilities of the Department Chair is the annual evaluation of faculty. Currently, at PSU this process involves an annual report of accomplishments from the faculty to the chair. The chair then makes a recommendation of a rating to the Dean who reviews all ratings and meets with chairs to reconcile differences. This meeting is very important for several reasons, beyond reconciling differences in faculty ratings between dean and chair. This meeting provides a good opportunity for the dean to get to know the strengths, weaknesses, and needs of a department more intimately. It provides a good opportunity for the chair to learn more about how the dean operates, and learn more about the dean's expectations of faculty. The framework for the annual performance appraisal of faculty is negotiated and included in the current Agreement.

Currently tenure track faculty are evaluated in the areas of Teaching, Scholarship/Creative Endeavor, and Service, for which they are given adjectival ratings and an overall rating. The faculty members will prepare reports detailing their successes and activities in each of these areas. Teaching is perhaps the most controversial of the three areas, and currently, in the College of Arts and Sciences, the evaluation in the area of teaching is organized into the following areas:

- (a) Work load
- (b) Advisement/Recruiting Activities
- (c) Student evaluation of teaching
- (d) Student Involvement and Success
- (e) Course revisions, curriculum development, course content, grants that focus on curriculum or that provide opportunities for student learning.
- (f) Professional development activities, presentations having impact on pedagogy, teaching or content beyond the boundaries of P.S.U.
- (g) Other – any other evidence of teaching effectiveness that does not fit in any of the above six categories.

The adjectival ratings given in each area are: Unsatisfactory, Less than Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Above Satisfactory, and Highly Satisfactory, with this listing obviously being from worst to best. The Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences will discuss how she is inclined, in general, to assign a rating to Teaching. This is usually based upon the number of areas (a) – (g) above in which the faculty member reports notable activities.

It is important for a new department chair to realize that traditionally faculty at PSU do not view a Satisfactory rating as meaning what the word means to the general public. Faculty have attached grades to these ratings

with Satisfactory being a C, Above Satisfactory being a B, and Highly Satisfactory being an A.

Since most Ph.D. holding faculty have been excellent students, they view a C as failure. Woe be to the department chair who misunderstands this and believes that Satisfactory is not a bad rating. In fact, an amusing incident happened in this regards with a new department chair. This person believed that Satisfactory meant “satisfactory”, and that if a faculty member was a contributing member of a department, doing a good job, but not outstanding in any way, that person deserved a Satisfactory rating. The new chair gave Satisfactory ratings to the majority of the department’s faculty. An uproar ensued, which the then dean had to spend time and energy quelling – it is not a good idea, in general, for a department chair to needlessly cause his or her dean to spend time and energy quelling uproars.

The area of student evaluation of teaching is somewhat controversial, and deserves some comment. At PSU, almost all faculty use the SPTE, produced by Wichita State University, to obtain information on how students perceive teaching effectiveness. Non-tenured faculty must turn in summaries of the results on the SPTE, and the formal results themselves. Tenured faculty are expected to do this. However, in general the only evidence of student perception of teaching effectiveness which is accepted is the SPTE. Evaluations made up by faculty themselves are not acceptable evidence in this segment of the evaluation.

(continue index from here)

### **Section 2.7 Faculty Grievances**

If a faculty member believes that he or she has been wrongly evaluated during the annual performance appraisal process or that he or she has been wrongly denied tenure or promotion he or she may grieve the decision. There is a formal grievance procedure delineated in the current Agreement between PSU and PSU/KNEA.

Typically the grievance procedure includes deadlines for submission of the grievance and responses by the academic officers, as well as guidelines for the formation of a hearing committee, which will review the facts relevant to the grievance.

### **Section 2.8 Academic Advisement**

An important part of the job for many faculty is academic advisement of students. This task is viewed as so important by the central administration of PSU, as well as the Kansas Board of Regents, that departments are expected to make evaluations of how well faculty advise students.

Not all faculty are disposed to do a good job of advising. In the rare case of a faculty member who just is not atuned to this task it is better not to assign that faculty advisees. This might seem to be an act that favors some faculty, but in my experience the faculty who do have advisees see the task as important and want students to be well served. They do not usually appreciate faculty who they know do a poor job as

advisor. As long as the faculty with no assigned advisees is contributing to the department in other ways the seeming favoritism should not become a problem.

It is important for faculty to realize that their job is one of academic advisement, not personal advisement. The distinction is that academic advisement involves course scheduling, planning for future semesters, and career advice. Personal advisement involves problems with girl/boy friends, and other personal problems. Faculty should realize they are not usually trained to be personal advisers, and if they want to help with such problems, they should limit their help to referrals to competent professionals.

### **Section 2.9 Promotion/tenure**

The first responsibility of the department chair concerning promotion/tenure is to make certain that all faculty have a copy of the department's tenure/promotion guidelines or expectations. It is good to hand a copy of this document to new hires when they first report for duty.

It is the department chair's responsibility to oversee the mechanics of the promotion/tenure process within the department. This includes the task of choosing promotion/tenure committees. It is not unusual for all tenured faculty within a department to form a tenure committee, but a proper subset of the tenured faculty can be elected or selected to form the committee. Similarly, it is not unusual for all tenured faculty who outrank a candidate for promotion to serve as the promotion committee, but they also can be elected or selected.

The department chair's responsibility is to see that a candidate for promotion/tenure realizes that he or she is eligible and the chair should make certain that the candidate knows how to get sample dossier's and instructions for application. It is the candidate's responsibility to produce the dossier; this is NOT a responsibility of the dept. chair.

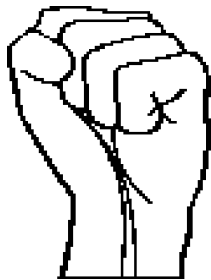
Currently, there is a nomination form for tenure, which serves as the cover sheet for the candidate's dossier. The department chair's first task is to make certain that a faculty member really does meet the time in service and terminal degree requirements to advance to candidacy for tenure. There is a similar form for promotion. Filling out that form and giving the dossier to the tenure/promotion committee starts the formal process of tenure/promotion review. After the departmental committee has made a recommendation for or against tenure/promotion, the dossier is returned to the dept. chair who then makes a recommendation for or against, and then passes the dossier on to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. The chair has no more responsibility in this process unless a candidate grieves an unfavorable decision, in which case it is imperative that the steps for grievance spelled out in the PSU/KNEA Agreement be followed.

### **Section 2.10 Course content**

Following is a quote from the College of William and Mary A&S Chair's/Director's Manual, 2001 Edition, page 3 which is appropriate for the College of Arts and Sciences at PSU.

“The issue of who is responsible for course content is an interesting and often contentious one. Embedded in this discussion are First Amendment rights and academic freedom issues. However, chairs and directors must never ignore the fact that the curriculum is an intentionally designed program of instruction that is created and maintained for the good of our students. Faculty do not have license to teach whatever they wish in courses that meet either general education or concentration requirements. Faculty are obliged to fulfill the reasonable expectations of students and colleagues in teaching the content described in the catalog and in course syllabi. Chairs and directors should exercise some caution in interfering with a faculty member's freedom to teach as he or she deems appropriate, but that caution does not limit your responsibility to see that faculty meet their classes, provide appropriate feedback to students, and fulfill the curricular expectations of the students and of the faculty.

### **Section 2.11 Handling Complaints About Faculty**



This is a very sensitive part of the job of department chair. There are competing interests when students complain to the chair about a faculty member. On the one hand, the department chair has the responsibility to see that students are well served in the classroom, but on the other hand, a chair also has the responsibility to support the departmental faculty if possible.

The following procedure has worked well for the author. First hear the student complaint, and take notes. It is often informative to ask questions of the student. One question which I have found to be useful, and it often disarms a particularly upset student, is to ask, “Of course, I will discuss your complaint with professor X, and protect your identity. What would you like for me to do about this, other than discussing it with professor X?” Before the student left I always made it a point to schedule a follow-up visit with the student. This has a couple of advantages: (1) A second visit can bring closure to the complaint. (2) It helps the student believe that the chair is taking their complaint seriously. I then discuss the complaint with the complained about faculty member, in private. I have always made it clear to the faculty

member that this discussion is a fact finding discussion. I never totally believe students, for experience has taught me that student perception can be very inaccurate. However, I have also found that, faulty though the student's perception of a possible slight by the teacher might be, it is usually grounded in something real which occurred. It is important to protect the identity of the student so that there can be no question of a faculty member "taking it out" on the student. Protecting the student's identity can be difficult in your visit with a faculty member because the nature of the complaint is often a giant clue as to the student's identity. Also, it is not unusual for a student to go first to a teacher with a complaint, then to the department chair, this also makes protecting the identity of the student difficult. After attempting to discover the facts in the case, I met with the offended student again, if the student kept the appointment. I would discuss the faculty member's perception of the difficulty, and then we would try to reach some sort of accommodation, hopefully to the benefit of the student and the class, while protecting the professional stature of the faculty member.

## **Section 2.12 Public Relations Tasks**

### **A. Alumni**

It is absolutely vital to the continued health of a department to keep good relations with alumni. Not only can such relationships with former students be rewarding, but they can also be a good source of future students and monetary contributions.

One way to keep in touch with alumni is through the use of a departmental newsletter. Several of the departments in Arts and Sciences have departmental newsletters and the chairs of those departments will be willing to share their experiences with you if you are thinking of this means of communication with alumni.

Another good means of keeping contact with alumni is to invite them to give colloquium talks. Such talks are often well received by students, as the students seem to easily identify with graduates of PSU, particularly recent graduates who have made significant accomplishments.

The PSU Alumni Association also has two recognition programs in which departments are invited to nominate alumns for awards. These programs are Outstanding Alumni and Meritorious Achievement Award.

The Outstanding Alumni Award grew from an earlier program called the Outstanding Young Alumni Award. It is usually given to



graduates from the last 10-15 years who have made significant contributions. The awardees are recognized at a home football game, and it is the responsibility of the department to host an award winner for the weekend by providing time for the awardee to talk to students and perhaps planning a reception.

The Meritorious Achievement Award is the highest award PSU offers to its graduates and is usually given to graduates of more than 20 years ago who have made very substantial contributions to their disciplines, businesses, industries, or professions. The awardees are recognized at graduation ceremonies.

One of your more pleasant tasks as department chair is to take advantage of the opportunity to nominate worthy graduates of your program for these awards. Faculty members can also nominate, and should be encouraged to do so.

#### B. Related businesses and industries

Many departments in Arts and Sciences have natural constituencies in business and industry. For instance, Communication has a natural constituency in local radio and TV stations. Mathematics has a natural constituency in insurance companies who hire their actuary graduates. It is wise for such departments to cultivate contacts with these businesses and industries for they are a good source of many opportunities, among which are:

- (i) Consulting opportunities for faculty
- (ii) Fund raising opportunities
- (iii) Placement of graduates
- (iv) Curricular advice by serving on a departmental advisory board or council.

#### C. Rest of the university/college

It is important for a department to be well regarded in the rest of the university for a number of reasons: budget, recommendation of courses, consultations with advisees in other departments, accreditations. For this reason you should take advantage of opportunities to serve on committees and task forces which involve people from around the campus. It is also good for you to urge departmental faculty members to be involved with activities beyond the department. Indeed, the function of encouraging activity around campus is part of your mentoring duty.

#### D. Professional organizations

If a department has faculty members who serve in various capacities in professional organizations this can pay dividends to the department in several ways:

- (i) Keeping up-to-date with the profession.

- (ii) Services can be rendered to the department by professional organizations
- (iii) Personal contacts can lead to new students and job placement for graduates
- (iv) Accreditations  
Many departments have found that accreditations go more smoothly if they have faculty members involved with professional organizations which lead accreditation efforts. This advantage goes beyond the obvious political advantage, in that faculty who are active in accreditation agencies have up-to-date knowledge concerning what the agency is looking for and changes in the process from the previous accreditation.

E. Fund raising

The dept. chair is ordinarily the chief fund raiser for the department. At the very least, the dept. chair sets the tone for faculty involvement in fund raising.

**Section 2.13 Personal professional growth**

Many people who are departmental chairs will not be chairs the rest of their careers. Typically, they will go back to full-time teaching, or will move to other administrative positions. For these reasons, it is essential that a department chair continue to grow in his or her discipline.

- B. Scholarship – It can be very difficult to continue scholarship in many fields due to demands on time and energy. However, it is possible, and desirable to keep up with major developments in a scholarly field. At the very least time must be made for reading of journals. A chair can prepare departmental colloquim talks to keep in touch with his or her discipline.
- C. Teaching – The dept. chair is often looked to as a model professor by younger faculty, and should lead the way in striving to do a good job in the classroom.

D. Service – There is little need for a chair to worry about this, as there are ample service opportunities on campus. However, it is good to become involved in service with professional organizations, or to continue such involvement, else your service efforts can be solely on campus, which do not go very far in professional growth.

## **Chapter 4. Deadlines and Specific Tasks in the College of Arts and Sciences at PSU and Whole University**

### **A. College of Arts and Sciences**

There are a few regularly, or routine tasks which devolve upon a department chair due to the fact that academic departments are located within colleges.

#### **(i) Department Chairs meetings**

For several years it has been the policy of the Dean of Arts and Sciences to schedule weekly meetings of the department chairs within the college. It is important for a chair to make every effort to arrange his or her schedule to take advantage of these meetings, because, while they are often routine, they are essential to the smooth running of the college and departments.

Some of the items typically discussed at these meetings include: (a) How the Dean approaches faculty evaluation, (b) Guidelines for making up summer assignments and schedules, (c) Announcements which need to be shared with the department, (d) New initiatives such as the technology money proposal.

A chair who misses a meeting has likely missed something that is important to his or her department. It is sometimes permissible for a chair to send a faculty member to a chair meeting as a substitute, but this practice should be seldom used. In any event, if you think you must miss a Department Chairs' meeting you should so notify the Dean's office before hand and inquire if a substitute is appropriate.

#### **(ii) Course schedules to the Dean's Office**

Upon completion of the course schedule within the department a copy is to be sent to the Dean of the College.

#### **(iii) Various Requests – list some successes, such as the technology money**

#### **(iv) Special Events – such as hosting alumni at FB games**

### **B. University – I need help with dates and timeline.**

#### **(i) Events**

**(a) Apple Day**

**(b) Homecoming**

**(c) Family Day**

- (ii) Promotion/Tenure
- (iii) Sabbatical leave requests – sometime in October
- (iv) Dec. 1 – non-renewal of first year faculty
- (v) Performance Appraisal – January
- (vi) Goals and Objectives from faculty – early in second semester
- (vii) Part-time requests - spring
- (viii) Second year letter – before spring term ends
- (ix) Class schedules – Early Sept for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester, Early Jan. for 1<sup>st</sup> semester, Early Jan. for summer
- (x) Report of your accomplishments for the year
- (xi) Strategic/Long Range Planning
- (xii) Catalogs are revised every three years, and a schedule of when copy is due will be mailed to each department in plenty of time for due deliberations. However, it is wise for a department to continually consider academic requirements, so that important decisions can be made with appropriate deliberation and not just to meet a catalog copy deadline.
- (xiii) Requests for teaching equipment money

## **Appendix I**

The following was written by Dr. James Gilbert, who was the Vice President for Academic Affairs in the 1980's at Pittsburg State University. It is his general discussion of the function of a department chair. This item concludes with an extensive discussion of the search process for a department chair.

**Date:** August 13, 1984 Number 84-

12

### THE DEPARTMENT CHAIR: DEFINITION, FUNCTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND SELECTION

The role of the Department Chair in a comprehensive university is multifaceted. Not only are chairpersons expected to be academic administrators and to provide academic leadership but also they are to be fund raisers, those who engage in scholarly activity, faculty advocates, administrative spokespersons, teachers, public servants, developers of intellectual and creative talent, and fiscal managers.

A definition of the Department Chairperson position should set forth the major functions of the position as well as organizational relationships to be established. It is also important to outline the procedures for the selection and appraisal of Department Chairpersons.

Office of Academic Affairs Memorandum 84-12 will deal with chairperson position descriptions and a chairperson selection process. A subsequent OAA Memorandum will specify appraisal guidelines and procedures.

#### Definition

The Department Chair is the chief academic administrator of the Department and is appointed by the President of the University with the advice of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the School or College. The Department Chair serves at the discretion of the President of the University on an annual basis. The Chair is the personnel administrator, fiscal officer, and academic supervisor of all courses, curricula, programs, and degrees sponsored and administered by the Department. The Chair interprets institutional policies to the faculty, implements them in the Department and interprets departmental objectives, needs and programs to the academic administration. Department Chairpersons are responsible and accountable for the efficient management of departmental affairs, activities related to the goals of the Department, the maintenance of quality teaching, scholarly activity and creative endeavor, coordination and cooperation with other departments, fiscal control, professional development and service, and the integration of the Department into the University community. The Department Chair assists and cooperates with the University Affirmative Action and Educational Equity program.

### Major Functions

The functions of the Department Chairperson fall into eight categories: department governance, instruction, faculty affairs, student affairs, external communication budget and resources, office management, and professional development. Following is a representative list of the major functions that make up each of these categories.

**Departmental Governance.** With the cooperation and participation of the departmental faculty, the Department Chair conducts Department meetings on a regularly scheduled basis; establishes and effectively uses Department committees; develops and implements both short and long range programs, plans, and goals; determines what services to provide the University, community, and state; prepares program review reports for evaluation and accreditation; serves as the departmental advocate; and monitors library acquisitions.

**Instruction.** Working with Department faculty and independently, the Chair schedules classes; evaluates instruction offered by the Department; supervises academic off-campus programs; teaches courses in areas of expertise; reviews and updates Department curricula; develops, administers, and evaluates departmental examinations; and monitors programs of graduate students; grants exceptions to departmental academic program requirements; controls course enrollments; and cooperates with the Graduate Dean in admitting graduate students.

**Faculty Affairs.** Maintaining adequate communication with faculty, the Department Chairperson will be responsible for administering any contract or agreement negotiated with a faculty bargaining group; recruiting and selecting faculty members; assigning faculty responsibilities, such as teaching and committee work; monitoring faculty service contributions; evaluating faculty performance; making promotion and tenure recommendations; participating in grievance hearings; making merit salary recommendations; attempting to resolve unsatisfactory faculty and staff performance in a timely manner; keeping faculty members informed of department, college, and institutional plans, activities, and expectations; maintaining good morale; providing the required resources to facilitate faculty accomplishment of goals; and encouraging faculty participation in academic and departmental governance.

**Student Affairs.** The Chairperson will be responsible for establishing, monitoring, and evaluating departmental activities and services relating to students such as: recruiting and selecting students, advising and counseling students, handling student complaints and grievances, and facilitating the development of student participation in departmental, school or college, and University activities, organizations, and student governance opportunities.

**External Communication.** Utilizing faculty participation where appropriate, the Department Chair will communicate Department needs to the Dean and interact with upper-level administrators; improve and maintain the Department's image and reputation; coordinate activities with

outside groups; process Department correspondence and requests for information; complete forms and surveys; and initiate and maintain liaison with external agencies and institutions.

**Budget and Resources.** The Chair has available data and information concerning the budgetary and resource needs of the Department. Based upon those needs, the Chair encourages faculty members to submit proposals for contracts and grants to government agencies and private foundations; prepares and proposes Department budgets; sets priorities for use in various funds (travel, equipment, instructional media, etc.); prepares annual reports and program reviews; justifies expenditures correlating such with departmental achievements.

**Office Management.** The Chair will manage Department facilities and equipment, including maintenance and control of inventory; monitor building security and maintenance (where appropriate); supervise and evaluate the clerical and technical staff in the Department; maintain essential Department files, including student and faculty records relating to academic programs and professional responsibilities.

**Professional Development.** The Chairperson is expected to be knowledgeable of the discipline with which he/she is affiliated. Such knowledge should be used to foster the development of each faculty member's special talents and interests; foster good teaching in the Department; stimulate faculty scholarly activity and public service; promote affirmative action; encourage faculty members to participate in regional and national professional meetings, represent the department at meetings of learned and professional societies; and counsel faculty on their progress toward promotion and tenure.

#### Organizational Relationships

Department Chairs are responsible to the chief administrative officer of their academic unit. Department Chairpersons coordinate programs, curricula, and course matters with relevant elements of the Office of Student Affairs, other departments, and when required, elements of the Office of Business and Fiscal Affairs. The Chairperson advises and assists the Office of Academic Affairs through his/her academic unit in such areas as space needs, academic concerns, fiscal matters, and manpower requirements. Fiscal matters, purchasing, physical plant maintenance, and furniture needs are cooperatively administered by the Department Chair and the School or College Dean. Faculty relationships with the Offices of Development and Public Relations, and Office of Graduate Studies and Research are monitored by Department Chairpersons.

#### Department Chairperson Selection Procedures

The following procedures apply to the recruitment, screening, selection, nomination, and recommendation of academic Department Chairpersons. When the decision has been made to seek a Department Chairperson, such authorization will be communicated in writing to the Dean of the School or College by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The authorization shall include the focus of the Chairperson search (internal or external), the terms of appointment, and a proposed timeline. (If deemed appropriate, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean, or the faculty may propose an interim or acting chair.)

1. Upon authorization for the search, the Dean will request the faculty of the Department to recommend, by whatever means they deem appropriate, a Chairperson Selection Advisory Committee which will elect its own Chairperson. (The School or College Dean and the Department faculty collectively determine the proper number of faculty and students to serve on the Chairperson Selection Advisory Committee. The University Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action will sit ex-officio on each CSAC.)
2. Using Office of Academic Memorandum 84-12, the Committee and the Dean, working in cooperation, will develop a job description, recruitment items (flyer and advertisement), a recruitment plan and a time frame for the search and screening process. The University Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action will advise concerning the pertinent Equal Opportunity guidelines.
3. The Dean will review with the Vice President for Academic Affairs the job description, recruitment items, recruitment plan and time frame for the search and screening process.
4. The Office of the Dean or the Department Chairperson coordinates and provides clerical and fiscal support for the search which entails placing advertisements, responding to inquiries, answering correspondence, collecting and disseminating credentials, scheduling meetings, etc.

(Candidate credentials may consist of at least the following documents: curriculum vita, undergraduate and/or graduate transcripts, three letters of reference, and names of three individuals familiar with the candidate's professional competence that may be contacted by telephone.)

5. Following the closing date of the search and in consultation with the University Director of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, the Chairperson Selection Advisory Committee identifies as soon as possible those candidates NOT considered qualified for the position and notifies them immediately of that decision.
6. The Committee then identifies three to five acceptable candidates and forwards their credentials to the School or College Dean. The Dean, after consultation with the Vice President for Academic Affairs authorizes a candidate or candidates to be invited to the campus for more extensive interview.

7. The Committee then acts as host to the candidate(s) and schedules interviews with appropriate individuals including the departmental faculty, Dean, Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the President of the University.
8. Following the visit to the campus, the departmental faculty submit to the School or College Dean their evaluations of the candidate(s) and the Coommittee submits its recommendation. After reviewing the evaluations and the recommendation, the Dean will submit a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
9. If the Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with the recommendation of the Dean, such recommendation will be presented to the President for approval.
10. If the Vice President for Academic Affairs does nto concur with the recommendation, or if the President does not approve, reasons are specified substantiating that decision and discussed with the Dean and the Coommittee. A decision is reached by the Vice President for Academic Affairs as to the next step to be taken: offer the position to one of the remaining candidates, invite to campus the semi-finalists, identify from the existing pool likely candidates, close the search and begin anew.

James E. Gilbert  
Vice President for  
Academic Affairs