

Department Chair Taskforce

April 26th, 2023

In attendance: Amy Obegi, Ruth Fuller, Erin Farmer, Lauren Taylor-Hill, Sandy Lamba, LaNae Jaimez

Rationale/benefit to college of department chairs:

- Schools can feel like mega-departments which doesn't give individual disciplines the chance to get individual attention
- Might work better than coordinators
- Dept chair can be discipline specific expert that can help dean work with faculty in support of college
- There is an imbalance in size of schools—math/science and liberal arts. Chairs could make this more equitable
- Some departments (e.g. library) didn't have coordinators or deans
- Someone is already doing much of the chair job, but this isn't transparent or compensated
- Need for structure to ensure consistency, institutional consistency, institutional knowledge, etc.
- Depending on volunteers problematic and personality driven
- Volunteers burn out
- Program review/assessment don't have authority to enforce activities needed for accreditation
- Department chair provides essential point person that anyone can contact (in community or on campus)
- Proof of concept: vast majority of schools have chairs
- School coordinators wonderful, but the tasks are primarily departmental so we need this more granular support and leadership
- In certain departments, a small number of faculty need to evaluate a large number of colleagues—overwhelming workload that slows down process
- Lots of curriculum/common course # coming down the pipe
- Lack of bandwidth for departments and administrators to follow integrated planning process
- Opportunity for faculty to learn and transition to administrative

Tasks/Responsibilities of department chairs (to lead, delegate, or complete):

- Assessment, accreditation, and program review point person
- Hiring
- Mentoring of new faculty
- Draft of Schedule to be approved by deans
- Student grievance/ ombudsmen for student complaints
- Curriculum review
- Public point of contact
- Communicate with students/community, outreach
- Space to help grow departments

- Focus on team building, community support
- Plan events for faculty and students, graduations, etc.
- Expert on equivalency, other technical questions
- Identify faculty for committees (Senate connection)
- Work to support review, planning, budgeting (integrated planning) process
- Coordinate/facilitate/delegate:
 - Presentations / work for hiring prioritization
 - Perkins, etc reports

Questions for further research or additional feedback:

- Compensation for chairs based on size of department? FTE?
 - We want to ensure people have the bandwidth
 - Release time helps ensure chair has bandwidth to actually do the work.
 - Important chairs also have opportunity to teach in the classes
- Consider needs of all departments, regardless of structure
- Chairs identified by election?
- Possible to grieve chairs?
- Evaluations. Chair can evaluate some faculty to take load off of dean?—Ruth, Amy, Erin
- Can chair position be split?
- Contact Los Rios—Lauren
- Contact DVC--Josh