MEMORANDUM

TO: Keith Ogawa, Academic Senate Chair
FROM: Beth Dobkin, Provost
DATE: January 21, 2014
RE: Faculty Handbook Language re: Department Chairs/Program Directors

Section 1.4.2.4 currently includes ample qualifying language (e.g., “normally,” “may be”) as well as listing specific duties that vary among departments and programs as well as across the College. The language below is suggested as a replacement to the existing Faculty Handbook entry, and was drafted following Dean’s Council discussions of July 25, August 8, and August 21 2013. It should allow opportunities for individual program variation while identifying the characteristics of program directors and department chairs that unify the positions across the College. Finally, we have also proposed an additional employment category, “Program Manager,” that affords the opportunity to rely on staff or adjunct faculty support for some administrative duties previously assigned to ranked faculty chairs and program directors.

Beth Dobkin
Provost
January 21, 2014

Faculty Handbook 2013-14
1.4.2.4 Chairpersons of Undergraduate Departments

The chairpersons of departments that are composed of undergraduate faculty are appointed by the Dean of the School for a three-year term, normally after consultation with at least the senior members (i.e., full professors and tenured members) of the department and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Academics. Department chairpersons may be reappointed by the Dean after confidential evaluations have been solicited from all members of the department and consultation has taken place with all senior department members and others whose opinions the Dean deems may be helpful. The terms of the department chairpersons should be staggered so that approximately one-third are considered for reappointment each year.

Duties of a Department Chairperson, Undergraduate Department

1. Departmental Organization
   a. Organize instruction (course assignment, course scheduling) and develop instruction (new courses, teaching effectiveness) within the department for the academic year;
   b. Ensure that the College’s policy on final examination scheduling is followed by faculty;


c. Hold regular monthly departmental/program meetings, the minutes of which are sent to the Dean;
d. Discuss with candidates the criteria for tenure and promotion; under teaching effectiveness include the candidate’s policies and standards on grading, homework, and examination/papers;
e. Prepare description and evaluation of departmental/program curricula for the Program Review Committee or appropriate School committee;
f. Consult in a spirit of cooperation with departmental/program members on matters of their own practice and of general departmental interest. (For the chairperson’s procedure when a department member is being reviewed by the Rank and Tenure Committee, see Rank and Tenure Procedures, section 2.6.2.2);
g. Submit department/program budget proposals and exercise control over expenditures in the approved budget;
h. Recruit new faculty members, maintain records and complete such reports on applicants as are required by the Human Resources office;
i. Review the performance of adjunct and visiting faculty and lecturers, based on criteria to be established by the Dean of the School, which may include classroom visitations and the general student questionnaire.

2. Rank and Tenure Review

It is the responsibility of the chairperson to:

a. Familiarize himself/herself with and follow the procedures of the Rank and Tenure Committee as these pertain to the chairperson;
b. Maintain a current file for each member of the department with relevant material of candidates for rank and tenure review; keep informed on candidates subject to interim review, those eligible for tenure, and those eligible for promotion; collect appropriate materials to be presented to ranked members of the department to assist them in their evaluation of the candidates;
c. Be responsible for the timely placement of the departmental forms in the candidate’s rank and tenure file and of the formal letter from the chairperson for candidates subject to interim review, and of any appropriate letters of recommendations on candidates (see Rank and Tenure Procedures, section 2.6.2.2);
d. Review student evaluations of the candidates, especially the opinions of departmental majors;
e. Make written departmental rank and tenure recommendations on candidates, in consultation with ranked members; report objectively any recommendations of ranked members which are different from those of the chairperson, submitting those directly to the Rank and Tenure Committee; share and discuss these written recommendations with the candidate prior to submitting them to the Rank and Tenure Committee;
f. Submit appropriate written class visitation evaluations from the candidate’s departmental file to the candidate’s rank and tenure file.

3. Teaching Effectiveness

a. Class visitation of departmental members:
i. For faculty moving toward tenure, a minimum of two classroom visits per term, at least one by the department/program chairperson, is expected.

ii. Faculty being considered for promotion must be visited by the chairperson.

b. Written evaluation of class visitation: The visitor is required to submit a written evaluation of the visit to the faculty member and then to consult about the evaluation with him/her. A copy of the evaluation is to be placed in the departmental file. The Chairperson will attach these written evaluations of the visits to Form B as an integral part of Form B in the case of a promotion or tenure review. Similarly, in the case of an interim review, the written evaluations of class visitations will be attached to the written review of the candidate’s performance submitted by the department chairperson (FH 2.6.2.2.1.2) as an integral part of that written review.

c. Student evaluation questionnaire: Discuss with and make recommendations to departmental faculty concerning student evaluation questionnaires that provide a perspective of teaching effectiveness which complements peer evaluation.

d. Hear and ascertain the validity of complaints that may be received from members of the department or from students who are taking courses in the department/program.

4. Authority

a. To recommend to the Dean, as appropriate, the reappointment or non-appointment of departmental/program faculty;

b. To call departmental/program meetings and to establish departmental/program committees;

c. To assign courses and schedule courses of instructors in the spirit of cooperation with them;

d. To initiate procedures deemed necessary for the good of the department/program (e.g., for the dismissal of an instructor);

e. To visit classes and to delegate tenured members of the department/program to do so; class visitations (day and time) are with the instructor’s permission;

f. To exercise the power of veto over departmental/program decisions;

g. Limitations on the chairperson’s authority: major changes (e.g., personnel policies, major requirements, composition of the major, interdisciplinary requirements) may be undertaken only with the approval of the Dean and others if necessary.
Proposed language to replace Section 1.4.2.4

1.4.2.4 Department Chairs and Program Directors

A Department Chair or Program Director (hereafter “Chair”) is a ranked faculty member, typically with tenure, chosen to provide leadership to academic departments and programs in collaboration with department/program faculty and in consultation with the Dean of the School, who oversees all Chairs in the School. Chair responsibilities include developing and sustaining the academic identity of the department/program as informed by faculty deliberation, the relevant academic field or fields, and the needs and direction of the School and College. Chairs help effect the integration of their unit across the College, take responsibility to ensure the integrity and quality of the SMC educational experience, and promote productive and professional working relationships. Chairing a department or program can be a substantial leadership opportunity that extends beyond an initial three-year term. The duties listed below reflect general areas shared by all department chairs and program directors.

Duties of Chairs:

1. Lead strategic planning, program development and review, and assessment consistent with disciplinary norms and expectations and aimed at student success;

2. Recruit, mentor and supervise all faculty in the department/program, including evaluation and support of the Rank & Tenure process as appropriate;

3. Work collaboratively to address department/program and faculty needs with Deans and other administrators while also communicating School and College priorities to faculty;

4. Collaborate with other academic leaders on behalf of a shared vision of the College as a whole;

5. Serve as a first point of response for and ensure compliance with applicable College, state and federal guidelines, and promote practices consistent with the building of inclusive community;

6. Schedule classes, articulate equitable expectations of service for faculty, and supervise relevant staff; and

7. Carry out specific duties and expectations appropriate to the department/program in consultation with the Dean.
Note: the employment category below is currently in use at the graduate/professional program level. The Senate may wish to consider inclusion in the Faculty Handbook.

Academic Program Manager
Under appropriate supervision as established by the Dean, the Program Manager oversees the operations of a program or department that is large and/or complex enough to require substantial administrative support. Typical duties include student outreach and recruiting, course scheduling and class assignments that cross program/department boundaries, part-time faculty training and orientation, new student orientation, coordination of student assessment activities, field placement and internships, community outreach, supervision of staff, and collaboration with campus administrative units such as Admissions, Financial Aid, and Human Resources. Program Managers may hold adjunct faculty or staff status.