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Department Chair Handbook 2025-2026

We recognize that being a Department Chair requires working productively with a broad range of constituencies, as well as managing a wide variety of tasks. With that in mind, and with your feedback, we developed this Department Chairs Handbook. We welcome your suggestions and plan to continuously update the content.

In addition to this handbook, the office of Dean of Faculty offers periodic meetings of university-wide department chairs and an annual department chairs' retreat. We also support chair networking and support groups. Please contact us for more information.

*The UMass Boston Department Chairs' Handbook was adapted with permission from Cornell University's adaptation of the Knox College's Guide for Department Chairs (Galesburg, Illinois: Knox College, 2006), which was a Mellon-funded Faculty Career Enhancement (FaCE) Project of the Associated Colleges of the Midwest. We are grateful for the help of many people at UMass Boston who helped us transform this guide to fit the context and policies at UMass Boston. Our heartfelt thanks to the Deans, the Provost, and Department Chairs who vetted drafts.

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Strategic Leader of the Department

The department chairperson is elected/ recommended by the department faculty and appointed by the college Dean, in consultation with the Provost. That your departmental colleagues have elected/ recommended that you be their chair is evidence of the respect with which they view you. They trust you to help them to envision the department's future, facilitate their individual professional aspirations, and cultivate and sustain a vibrant and supportive environment for students, faculty, and staff. The Dean and Provost share their confidence in you.

There is a lot to balance as chair: the variety of day-to-day and recurring tasks with the large vision, and also the various and numerous tasks of being chair with your continuing development as teacher and scholar. In addition to managing faculty relationships, you also have supervisory responsibilities over departmental staff, and you are responsible for departmental facilities including labs or art studios and ensuring that the facilities are in smooth operating conditions.

UMass Boston Resources for Department Chairs

- Your college Dean should be the first person you contact for advice if there is a particularly problematic situation in your department that you are not able to resolve yourself.
- UMass Boston's Office for Faculty Development (OFD) organizes an annual department chair retreat, typically at the beginning of the Fall semester, on what it means to be a departmental leader within the UMass Boston community. At this retreat, you may seek the advice of other chairs in the university about challenges you have encountered or expect to encounter. The retreat is also your opportunity to establish small support groups of chairs with similar departmental profiles and to agree to meet on a regular basis throughout the academic year.
- As needed, OFD also holds workshops that focus on specific aspects of the chair's responsibilities—the budget or faculty mentoring, for example.

Additional Resources

- *Academic Leadership: A Practical Guide to Chairing the Department* (Jossey-Bass) Deryl R. Learning (Anker Publishing Company, Inc.; 2nd edition (November 1, 2006).
- *The Academic Chair's Handbook*, Daniel W. Wheeler, Alan T. Seagren, Linda Wysong Becker, Edward R. Kinley, Dara D. Mlinek, Kenneth J. Robson (Jossey-Bass, 2008).
- Jochum, C. J. (2021). The department chair: A practical guide to effective leadership. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Consult your discipline's national and/or accreditation organizations as they might have materials regarding leadership, faculty roles, or higher education. Big Picture Responsibilities of a Chair

Big Picture Responsibilities of a Chair

Ensure open communication

Crucial to strategic leadership is the chair's ability to ensure open communication – between you and faculty members, between you and the Dean, and, through the Dean, between you and the Provost. You are closest to the pulse of the department! An effective chair is able to explain and persuade faculty members, the Dean, and other administrators of what is best for both the department and the institution.

One thing that is difficult about being chair is that your relationship with colleagues may change when you move from being a departmental colleague into the chair's position. Being aware that this change may happen can help ease the discomfort. It might help to preface remarks to your department with what "hat" you are wearing: colleague, chair, or senior faculty member. You cannot be perceived to have favorites. Though you may be close friends with some of the faculty in your department, as a chair that friendship should not affect the decisions you make with regard to teaching and service assignments or matters of personnel review. Each member of the department should have full trust in your fairness.

These practices help to make a good department chair:

- Be fair and unbiased,
- Be a good listener, and
- Don't take things personally.

Evoke a Shared Vision

Read both UMass Boston's strategic plan (For the Times: A New Strategic Plan for UMass Boston) and your college's strategic plan (usually found on your college's website), and use these documents to generate a three- or five-year strategic plan for your department. A departmental vision for the near and long term will be most effective if you keep in mind the following suggestions:

- Your plan should emerge from discussions among all departmental faculty;
- Your plan should assess your department's position relative to peer universities as well as aspirational peers, and should address:
  1. What the department's special niche is among the competitors;
  2. How it can be improved to rise to the next level of excellence;
  3. What strategic choices will move it towards that goal; and
  4. What benchmarks should be established to gauge progress?
- Use your dean as a source of advice and a partner in planning;
- Serve as both the academic and research leader of the department;
- Remember that strategic plans are not static documents—you should update your plan annually, noting the progress in achieving the benchmarks the department has set.

Mentor Faculty at all Stages of their Career and Generate Departmental Collegiality

Each college and department have their own approach to mentoring faculty, but department chairs serve as a key resource for ensuring that mentoring is, in fact, taking place. Within this general area of care and concern of departmental faculty members, as yet untenured faculty members have a special place; it is crucial that the department chair provide support and resources to new and pre-tenured faculty.

Tenured faculty members need your attention too, perhaps not in the same or as concentrated a way as pre-tenured faculty, but they will also benefit from encouragement, support, and attentive listening. The vitality of a department and the college and university depends on the continued energy, productivity, and intellectual edge of all faculty.

Please refer to "Supporting New Tenure Faculty," "Mentoring New Tenure Faculty," "Protecting and Integrating Tenure Track Faculty," "Mentoring Mid-Career Faculty," and "Relationship with and Role of NTT Faculty" sections of this handbook for detailed suggestions on how you can mentor pre-tenured and mid-career faculty.

Act as a Liaison Between the Department and the Dean

- Your college Dean will consult with you on any issues facing your department, and, in turn, the Dean's office should be kept informed of problems emanating within the department, real or potential.
- You are the primary representative of the department, a spokesperson, and an advocate for the department. You are also the person who relates back to the department the perspective and concerns of the Dean.
- If there is a conflict between what the department collectively agrees are its needs and what is presented by the Dean as the college's needs, the chair serves as the intermediary, conveying the department's perspective to the Dean, and the Dean's perspective to the department. If an issue is particularly contentious, the Dean may meet with the whole department. Associate deans are also available to meet with chairs.
- Tell the Dean's Office about departmental accomplishments, including those of students and faculty. Departmental accomplishments are an important factor in budget allocations and approval of faculty lines and departmental prestige (both within the university and nationally in the field). Construct an annual end-of-year report of departmental accomplishments for the Dean that you should share with your department.

Examples of some of the issues that routinely call for the chair to consult with the Dean (for more details, see sections on these issues):definition of positions in the department (when change is being considered)

- definition of positions in the department (when change is being considered)
- searches (various aspects, from approval of the search to candidate choice)
- significant curriculum change or proposed new initiatives
- faculty workload issues
- faculty development

- course scheduling
- some course logistics (e.g., over- or under-enrollment)
- departmental contribution to interdisciplinary programs
- departmental advising systems
- student learning outcomes
- program assessment
- faculty evaluation and review
- personnel issues and conflicts
- space needs

Serve as the Face of the Department

- A Chair must be accessible - to students, faculty, and staff, both in person and on email. This means that chairs will need to be in the office, with the door open. Certain times of the term are especially important (e.g., at the start of each semester, during the add-drop period, advising and registration weeks each semester, during course withdrawal deadlines, and during the weeks following the last day of classes until grades are due). (*Note*: The period before grades are due is when faculty members may seek your counsel or intervention around instances of plagiarism and ask for advice on the process.)
- Plagiarism is an academic matter, and therefore it involves the faculty member, the department chair, the college dean, and the director of undergraduate studies, or, in the case of graduate students, the graduate program director. For a detailed explanation about the sequence of steps in reporting and responding to a case of plagiarism, consult the procedures. Student Affairs holds the permanent record on both misconduct and plagiarism.
- The Division of Student Affairs is an important resource in guiding faculty members to respond to questions of non-academic student misconduct, including disruptive behavior in the classroom. The Associate Dean of Students is available for consultation.
- It is important that a knowledgeable representative from the department be present on significant recruitment days, such as the Open House in October and Welcome Day in April. Make sure that your department is visible, and relevant literature about your department is attractively displayed on the tables provided. You might consider having a group of faculty members staff the tables in manageable shifts.
- Timely answering of email will be appreciated by all the people turning to you with questions. Much of this communication stems from the chair's role as point person for communication to and from the Registrar's Office, other departments, and the Office of the Provost.
- The department chair’s responsibilities extend into the summer and winter sessions. You should consult the Red Book, Article III (3.5) for the official responsibilities of the department chair.

Interact with Graduate Program Directors (GPD)

Depending on whether your department has one or more graduate programs or is in a primarily graduate-only academic unit or college (e.g. College of Education and Human Development and McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies), there may be more than one graduate program director (GPD) who coordinates all activities related to program recruitment, curriculum, and course assignment and scheduling.

GPDs have dual reporting lines. Because a graduate program resides within a department and is an integral aspect of a department's overall academic offerings, the GPD reports to the department chair. However, s/he/they is also accountable to the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, who ensures program quality and consistency of policies and implementation across all graduate programs on campus.

Department Chair Terms and Styles

Length of Term and Transition to a New Chair

- Chairs receive a stipend from the Provost and are awarded one or more course release by their deans. See the Chair Compensation Model.
- Department chairs are appointed by the deans, upon recommendation by the departments.
- Departmental recommendations are put forward to the deans based on elections conducted on terms specified in departmental constitutions.
- The usual length of term for a chair is 3 years, though some department constitutions specify otherwise. Chairs can be reelected for additional terms, subject to departmental by-laws.

Before ending your term as chair, you should:

- Advise anyone considering the position to review this handbook;
- Think about ways to help transition the new chair, especially if the person has not chaired the department before;
- Invite the prospective chair to observe or participate in one or more key task; for example, planning out the course schedule for the next year (an especially important topic with which the incoming chair should be relatively familiar);
- Discuss things that are on the horizon that will need to be dealt with during the new person's tenure as chair;
- Discuss issues especially relevant to your department;
- Ensure your files are in order, so it's easy for the next chair to find things.

Department Cultures and Chair Styles

Departmental cultures can be perceived by department members as falling anywhere along the spectrum of being enriching and fulfilling, at one end, and dysfunctional and debilitating, at the other. Intermediate points of the spectrum might be marked as efficient and utilitarian, or minimally functional. You might inherit a department with a rich and supportive culture or one that requires serious repair to undo years of damage. In all cases, it is imperative that you begin your term as chair by speaking with each faculty member to discuss what they both appreciate and find problematic about the department. You might also solicit ideas from them about how they would like to see camaraderie maintained and/or built.

Factors that contribute to department culture

- department size and nature (undergrad only, UG/grad, grad only, number of majors and/or programs)
- proportion of tenured to pre-tenured faculty
- number of senior faculty
- number of non-tenure-track (NTT) faculty
- expectations people have about time commitments (e.g., time spent in one's office, departmental research, teaching and service cultures, attendance at departmentally sponsored events, departmental socializing off campus, etc.)
- incorporation of student input into departmental decisions
- a tradition of hierarchy or egalitarianism
- degree of delegation and how much is done by the chair
- reliance on collective (or independent) decision-making
- degree to which pre-tenured faculty or NTTs are included in decision-making

As department chair, you will have a significant impact on the life of the department. Consider whether you align with old patterns, or whether your style will necessitate adjustment to a new way of doing things for your faculty members.

Factors that contribute to the style of a department chair

- The balance between exercising control over all aspects of the department and delegating tasks to competent colleagues.
- The amount you interact face-to-face versus with e-mail communications
- The use of a hierarchical or democratic model
- The degree that you are approachable for professional and/or personal problems
- The degree that you are comfortable with numbers and attuned to data (e.g., budgets, enrollment information, etc.)

Attributes of department culture that one should strive to cultivate in all departments

- collegial
- functional
- supportive
- open-minded
- communicative
- cooperative
- inclusive
- empathetic

Managing Faculty Relationships

As department chair, it is important that you understand the dreams and apprehensions of each member of your faculty (pre-tenured, tenured Associate Professor, tenured Professor, and non-tenure track). You should inform yourself of the particular challenges faced by faculty of color and international faculty and be sensitive to the challenges faced by all faculty in balancing professional and family responsibilities. The Office for Faculty Development can help direct you to appropriate resources.

You will not, of course, be able to fulfill all of these dreams or address all the apprehensions of your faculty members, but your awareness of them will enable you to advocate effectively for the department with your dean, help chart a meaningful trajectory for curriculum development and faculty hires, understand the day-to-day complexities of teaching, and respond effectively and constructively to students.

As department chair you have responsibilities in taking your faculty through the process of major personnel reviews. These tasks are described in Article VI (6.4) of the Red Book.

Conducting Searches

Generally, searches are conducted by a group of faculty from within the department, and one person from that group is designated as chair of the recruitment/search committee. The search committee chair should keep the Department Chair informed at each stage of the process. Thus, though many of the ongoing actions, such as scheduling meetings of the search committee or determining the semi-finalist list are the responsibility of the search committee chair to coordinate, as department chair you should be informed at key stages of the process. It is especially important that you be informed by the search committee chair of any challenges facing the committee, and that you meet periodically with the search committee chair to get a quick update.

Quick Overview of Process

This section is intended to provide you a broad overview of the search process. Your Dean likely provides details specific for your college. Additionally, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Inclusive Excellence and Belonging assists in ensuring that all posted positions invite a broad spectrum of qualified candidates and that at every stage of the hiring process attention is paid to fairness and equity.

Pre Search

- The department chair must submit a formal justification and a request for replacing the position to the Dean.
    - The request should clearly delineate the programmatic need in the context of quantitative measures such as student IFTE to full-time faculty ratio, number of majors to full-time faculty ratio, and ratio of tenure-stream to non-tenure-track faculty. Each opening can be an opportunity to think not only about departmental priorities, but also about strategic college- and university-level needs.
    - The formal request should come out of broad discussions within the department and should reflect the department's strategic plan.
- While searches may begin at any time, to be assured of a robust applicant pool, most tenure-

track searches are advertised in early Fall (sometimes even in Summer) so that the recruiting process can take place through the fall semester and winter months and offers can be extended by no later than early Spring.

Search

- The approved position is posted in appropriate and high-impact venues suggested by the department and subject to approval by the Provost's Office, which consults with the department if budgetary constraints call for modifying the number of venues in which the position can be advertised.
- The semi-finalist list gets narrowed down to three or four finalists. (Please note that individual deans may limit the number of candidates for whom they will reimburse search-related expenses.) The finalist list must also be approved by Dean, Provost and the Human Resources office. No one may be invited to campus until all these approvals have been received.
- Next, the finalist candidates are brought to campus for interviews and activities.
- It is important for the department chair to have an exit interview with the candidate toward the end of the visit. Give the candidate a chance to ask any final questions s/he/they may have. Tell the candidate what you project to be the timetable for the search, and when to expect a phone call. Ask if there's anything that affects the candidate's timetable.

Making the decision

- If the Dean approves of the committee's recommendation, s/he/they will sign and forward the necessary forms to the Office of the Provost. The Provost's Office will coordinate with HR . No offer, verbal or written, can be made or even hinted at until approvals are received from the Provost. The Provost's Office will respond to the Dean.

The offer and its aftermath

- Discuss the terms of the offer in advance with your Dean and decide who will make the offer and discuss terms with the candidate. It is typically the Dean who makes the formal offer.
- The Dean will extend a reasonable amount of time for the candidate to consider the offer, usually one to two weeks, depending on circumstances.
- The search is not complete until the offer has been accepted in writing. After a verbal acceptance over the phone, the Dean will send out a written offer letter after first seeking approval for its terms from the Provost's Office. The candidate's written response to that letter seals the search, and they will be asked to sign an Offer and Acceptance form (sometimes called "the contract").
- Should the candidate not be a U.S. citizen, extra work may need to be done by the College regarding visas and other pre-employment matters. The Office of the Provost and HR have a good deal of experience with these matters and will assist the candidate.
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Supporting New Tenure System Faculty

Start-up Funds

Funding to initiate a new faculty member's academic career and begin or establish scholarly research is negotiated between the candidate and the university at the time of appointment. These funds are called "start-up funds" and are intended to support the "starting-up" of tenure system faculty member's research, and they have an expiration date. See New Faculty Start-up for more details.

Summer contact

Be sure that you have the newly hired faculty member's contact information for the summer, as information will be sent to the individual from various offices. The Dean's Office will contact (or designate the department chair to contact) the new tenure-stream faculty member to discuss computer needs, and confirm the date for the New Faculty Orientation, which is stated in the offer letter. You should work with the Dean's office to confirm what office space the new faculty member will use and ensure it is readied at the time of the faculty member's arrival on campus.

You will also need to discuss course assignments and descriptions, technology needs in the classroom, or other matters that demand attention. While it is best not to overburden the new faculty member with emails or phone calls, as s/he/they might be finishing a dissertation, completing another job, or preparing to move, it is imperative that you impress upon the new hire the importance of getting all of the paperwork submitted as soon as possible so that the faculty member can get a UMass Boston employee ID number assigned. Without the ID the faculty member will not be able to get services essential to start planning courses.

Therefore, plan your communications with the new hire so that they are substantive and necessary, not distracting. On the other hand, let new faculty know that you are available to them if they need questions answered or doubts clarified.

Campus-wide New Faculty Orientations and Assistance

The Office for Faculty Development holds a university-wide new faculty orientation for tenure- stream faculty each August. Faculty will have the opportunity to meet with their academic Dean and the Provost, and many other key people of interest to new faculty.

Each month, Human Resources (HR) holds several benefits workshops for all new benefitted employees. New employees can also view Benefits at a Glance and some of the other benefit plan descriptions on the HR page before the workshop. New faculty are informed of the benefits workshop dates at the time of orientation.

- PLEASE NOTE: For new benefitted employees, there is a 60-day waiting period for health coverage from the Group Insurance Commission. Tenure-system faculty who need coverage during their first two months of employment can ask HR about assistance in covering the gap during the waiting period.

Additional Assistance

New faculty will receive assistance with the following, but *chairs should check to ensure that these processes are proceeding*. Often, particularly for IDs and email, the process breaks down and new faculty are not able to get IDs and email accounts as soon as they should, making their first few weeks of the semester particularly stressful.

- **ID:** Once HR has assigned an employee ID number, faculty may obtain their UMass Boston ID at the BeaconCard Office. Faculty will be able to obtain an ID at New Faculty Orientation IF they have an employee ID number.
- **UMass Boston Email Account:** Getting email at UMass Boston is a process that involves HR, IT, your Dean's Office, the Office of the Provost and your department. It is important that the Chair ensure that this process is progressing. Your department must request an email account for new faculty. This form should be sent to new faculty with the New Hire Forms. It must be signed by the new faculty member and you. Faculty must also obtain an employee ID number (assigned by HR once all paperwork is complete) in order to set up the account. Information on how to set up email can be found on the Getting Started page of the IT website.
- **Keys:** New faculty members will need to fill out a Key Request form to get keys to their assigned office, the building, and to other locked resources, such as technology cabinets. Your department's administrative assistant or office manager will be able to help with these matters.
- **Phone:** Professional calls may be charged via an assigned, individualized telephone authorization code. Here, too, the department's office manager/administrator can help initiate the process.
- **Office supplies:** Let new faculty know what they can expect from the department and what they will need to bring or supply on their own.
- **Photocopying:** Inform new faculty of departmental policy regarding photocopying and give them access codes, if applicable, to department copy machines and materials.
- **Computers:** For help on anything regarding computing or setting up instructional technology, the faculty member may confer with the Dean of Faculty and the Associate CIO, who will communicate with them in the weeks leading up to their arrival on campus.
- **Canvas and Educational Technology:** An email will go out from the faculty liaison to new tenure-stream faculty regarding how to set up Canvas and other educational technologies. PLEASE NOTE: This email should also be forwarded from the Chair to TT/NTT faculty since IT will not have access to new faculty contact information. If faculty are not entered in the UMass Boston system (i.e. if they do not have an ID), there may be delays in getting Canvas set up in time for their first semester.

Other things to do to help new faculty learn about UMass Boston and your department

Making new faculty feel welcome as integral members of the department conveys to them that you want them to succeed. New faculty members' level of satisfaction and comfort with the university is almost always a direct reflection of how they feel about their departmental home. An effective department chair will:

- Encourage faculty to attend the Chancellor's dinner/event for new faculty in the fall semester (usually in October).
- Show new faculty the faculty/staff "landing page" on the UMass Boston website; this page

serves as a gateway to much information that new faculty will want access.

- Give them the names and contact information for all other members of their department, pointing out persons who are also new or recent hires to help develop connections and ease their way.
- Show them how to access the technology in the classrooms they will use and/or how to contact Technology Support and AV Services for assistance.
- Share documents that will help the new person learn about the make-up, concerns, and plans of the department (e.g., any recent curriculum proposals or a recent AQUAD report).
- Explain the structure of the curriculum and how this new faculty member's courses fit into that structure.
- In the first departmental meeting or two, explain some things during the meeting (who's who, acronyms, etc.). Take some time to de-brief afterwards. This debriefing is a good opportunity to give some institutional history that will explain the things that may happen at department meetings.
- Discuss expectations one might have for students (and what students expect of us).
- Talk about grading practices, and the University policy on incompletes and academic standards. If you are comfortable doing so, invite the new person to sit in on your courses (and/or those of other members of the department, once you have secured the consent of these members). Remind them that they may invite you to sit in on their course as well.
- Check in with some regularity to see how things are going and to give the new person a chance to ask questions. Encourage other members of the department to do the same. Other recent hires in your area will be a good source of information about what was mysterious to them. Delegate to other members of the department any of the above that you do not have time for, or if you think someone other than you could be more effective.

Helping in the Professional Development of Faculty

The tenure and promotion criteria and review process are outlined in detail in the Academic Personnel Policy (Red Book). This section of the chairs' handbook provides suggestions related to mentoring and professional development. Please also see the Resources for Major Faculty Personnel Reviews. As chair, you should also be familiar with the deadlines listed in

The Master Academic Calendar, which is produced by the Provost's Office each year. Note that the document is also published in an alternative summary format to define the roles and deadlines for each of the major faculty personnel actions (AFRs, leaves, reappointments, promotion, tenure, and post-tenure reviews). Access this version on the Provost's office website.

Teaching

UMass Boston is known as a "research university with a teaching soul." Good teaching is something that one never stops working toward. Faculty members should be encouraged to:

- Engage with the Center for Innovative Teaching (CIT), which plays a key role in fostering and cultivating a university culture that values excellence and innovation in teaching and learning.

CIT offers programs and initiatives that provide opportunities for faculty for professional development in their pedagogy.

- Attend CIT forums each semester and the annual conference held in collaboration with Educational Technology each May.

Apply to CIT seminars (currently held in the spring but may eventually be held fall and spring) where tenure-track faculty meet weekly in small groups of 8 – 10 for an entire semester to discuss pedagogy and innovate practices. This seminar should not be seen as relevant for only those tenure-track faculty who express concern about their teaching. All faculty should be encouraged to apply. The Dean and Chair must discuss and agree to the implications on the number of courses taught by the faculty member if the faculty member's application to a CIT seminar is accepted:

- The semester-long seminars held by CIT are confidential in every aspect – what takes place in the seminar cannot become part of the faculty member's personnel file. CIT seminars are structured to be reflective and interrogative spaces for improvement of one's pedagogy free from the pressures of review and assessment.
- Express any concerns about new faculty teaching and encourage them to find someone to talk to about it: you, others in the department, their faculty mentor(s), colleagues in other departments. A mentor can, at the invitation of the faculty member, visit her/his/their class and offer suggestions on pedagogy.
- Be familiar with the offerings of Academic Support Programs. ASP offers tutoring and a variety of other services to students. Faculty should be aware of what programs they offer and how students can access their services.
- If the faculty member will be teaching online courses, make sure that s/he/they has the opportunity to sit in on some "chats" with model instructors.

Research/Creative Scholarship

To help your faculty be productive scholars:

- Articulate early and clearly department, college, and university expectations for research/creative performances/scholarship.
- Encourage pre-tenured faculty *who have completed at least one year at UMB* to apply (usually Spring semester) to the Junior Faculty Research Seminar (JFRS). JFRS meets every monthly throughout the academic year to foster productive research and scholarship, and to break through the sense of isolation that may accompany the period of building one's dossier for the tenure decision. It is facilitated by two faculty members.
- Emphasize the importance of the Annual Faculty Report (AFR). The AFR is a faculty member's opportunity to list all that s/he/they do professionally in a given year. Advise them to devise and contribute to a system for keeping track of their work in each of the major categories of review: 1) teaching, 2) research/scholarship/creative activity, and 3) service. Faculty can enter information into the electronic AFR on a rolling basis and have it serve as a system for keeping track of their work.

Additionally, you should encourage faculty to

- Make their achievements known to the department (through you as chair). You, as department chair, should announce the accomplishments of new, tenure-track, and tenured faculty at department meetings. Convey the department's sense of pride in these successes. It is your responsibility to pass on the information to the Dean and Provost, for inclusion in the Provost's monthly report and/or other university publicity materials. Research and scholarship accomplishments should also be brought to the attention of the Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives.
- Enhance professional development by networking outside the University and make connections with scholars who are doing research in similar areas.
- Be on the alert for suitable opportunities to present their research or scholarship at local or national conferences and apply to do so; advise them not to let their UMass Boston annual conference travel entitlement go unused.
- Seek funding from internal sources.
- Apply for outside grants or fellowships. In your capacity as chair, you should pass along pertinent information that comes across your desk. Faculty applying for outside funding must follow the guidelines of the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs (ORSP).
- Apply for faculty travel money from the Dean's office.
- Seek help from the Office for Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) to identify funding sources and for help in writing and vetting proposals. Information can be found on their website.

Service and Faculty Governance

Service to the university, to the department, and to the university community is an integral part of being a faculty member at UMass Boston. It is the responsibility of the department chair to clarify that all full-time faculty are expected to be part of the work of the University and to come together collectively and cooperatively to solve University-related issues.

- Although department chairs should protect untenured tenure-track faculty from too much University service, they should feel a sense of belonging and understand the importance of their voice in governance issues.
- Avoid conveying the impression that service is a distraction. The university's current and future health depends on the participation of all its faculty in committee work at all levels (department, college, and university). Of course, one should never place junior faculty in committees that are excessively time-consuming or those whose end results are in the distant future. Strategically selected committee work can invigorate the faculty member by making her/him/them feel that s/he/they are a valued member of the campus community.

Additionally, let faculty know that it can be especially rewarding – and a good first stage of building a significant service record—to embark on service activities that grow naturally out of their research interests or that involve them in their discipline's professional organizations or with stakeholders in their field.

Relationship to Tenured Faculty

Mentoring Mid-Career Faculty

Mid-career faculty should also be mentored. The road to tenure is so demanding that once a faculty member achieves tenure, s/he/they can sometimes feel that the rest of one's career is anti-climactic and involves simply maintaining the status quo. Nothing could be more wasteful to a university. Mid-career faculty are the nerve center of the department/university, and without their participation, the department cannot achieve its goals and remain a dynamic force for change and innovation. They are crucial to assessing the department's and institution's visions, sharpening goals at department and university levels, and ensuring effective implementation of articulated initiatives. Some of the suggestions and resources in helping in the professional development of pre-tenure-track faculty apply to tenured faculty.

Mid-Career Faculty Seminar

Every year, the Office for Faculty Development runs a year-long mid-career faculty seminar (MCFS) that brings together a cohort of 5-10 mid-career faculty from across the university in monthly meetings to share aspirations and concerns about their professional path ahead and strategize on how to build a robust case for promotion to the highest faculty rank of Professor. These monthly discussions are deeply reflective, frank, and supportive. The MCFS is co-facilitated by two senior faculty members at the rank of Professor, and they help the participants chart a meaningful and fulfilling path ahead for the next 5 – 10 years of their life at the university. The Provost's office issues a Call for Applications each year for the MCFS; encourage the Associate Professors in your department to consider applying.

Simultaneously, as department chair, you can offer immediate and "localized" support. There are a number of ways in which you can signal your interest in the life ahead for Associate Professors.

Some suggestions:

- Once a faculty member receives tenure, sit down with her/him/them and chart a three-year plan of research, teaching, and service.
- Make a genuine effort to stay interested in the teaching and research/creative work of tenured faculty. Offer to look at work in progress.
- Encourage them to participate in departmental, college, and university-level colloquia or brown bag lunches.
- Encourage them to apply for grants and to continue to attend conferences. Make sure they know about and take advantage of the conference travel and research funds at the college level.
- If you see that there may be an issue with their keeping up in the field and/or with technological developments related to the field or to teaching, give encouragement and point them to available resources or to peers who might be able to reinvigorate them; you might even offer to engage together in some aspect of new developments. Point them to workshops available from ORSP, the Library or IT, for example.
- Be aware that the professional life-course continues to have its ups and downs after tenure. Significant midlife transitions are normal. Just when one thinks everything is settled, the ground can shift, whether in one's personal life or in professional interests. Be as supportive as you can during these changes. You

can also consult with the Dean about any concerns you have; s/he/they can play an important supporting role to you, to the faculty member, or to both.

- Publicize the accomplishments of tenured faculty to the department and to others in the university administration and research office.
- Celebrate significant accomplishments and encourage collegiality.
- Help the newly-tenured or newly-promoted faculty member see the big-picture of the university – the several types of contributions that one could make to the work of the university;
- Suggest useful matches between the faculty member's particular strengths and the department, college, or university committees and academic initiatives that would benefit from those skills.
- Encourage mid-career faculty to involve themselves in work both inside and outside the department. Post-tenure is a time of rich opportunity; it is a moment to enlarge the scope of one's vision in order to explore the myriad possibilities for participating in and affecting important niches in the wider landscape of the college and university.
- It is important for faculty members to know that in order to advance from Associate to Full professor, they should demonstrate active scholarship, reflective teaching practices, and continued meaningful service of a robust and vibrant quality. Promotion to full professor is a significant achievement, and because it is the highest rank that a faculty member can attain, the review process for this promotion is every bit as rigorous as the review for tenure and it involves external reviewers' assessment of research, scholarship and creative activity. Therefore, department chairs should encourage tenured faculty members to aspire to this rank. See the Red Book and Policies and Procedures on the Provost's website.
- After tenure, faculty members go through Periodic Multi-Year Review (PMYR) once every seven years. Department chairs should remind tenured faculty of this requirement and encourage them to complete the review in a timely manner. The PMYR is not as involved as a promotion or tenure review, but it does require the faculty member to do a personal statement explaining her/his/their accomplishments and activities in the three areas in which one is evaluated. Consult the link on the Provost's website for details.

In whatever stage they are, tenured colleagues are a great resource. They might have been department chair before you, so ask for their counsel and help. They may become the department chair after you so involve them in decisions and tasks; in this way, your tenured colleagues are not only helping you but are also learning valuable information and skills for the future.

Evaluations, Promotions, and Leaves

Annual Reviews

- All faculty undergo an annual faculty review (AFR) which serves as the basis for major personnel reviews.
- The AFR is an essential instrument of feedback for all faculty; but it is particularly useful for probationary faculty (tenure system faculty who are as yet untenured and NTT faculty who are in the probationary period) as a guide for areas needing improvement.
- For new faculty, the first AFR will be due in the fall of their second year, as it is a report of their activities

from the prior academic year.

- Make sure your DPC is elected in a timely manner (typically in April or May), before the end of the academic year, so that faculty coming up for a major personnel review are informed of who will be evaluating their file. The OFD offers two workshops, in late Spring and early Fall, for DPC and CPC chairs. Please ensure they know about these workshops.
- You will need to share with the person under review the departmental feedback regarding their work. (See the Red Book.) It is difficult to convey critical news, but, if at all possible, we should keep the faculty member's interests in mind. It will be particularly difficult for new faculty members to improve if they do not know what the department thinks are their weaknesses. And of course, knowing what we perceive as their strengths is also very helpful. If a faculty member's work is unsatisfactory, it is your responsibility as department chair to work with the individual on a development plan. You should, of course, consult your DPC and the Dean in this matter.
- For additional details on evaluating NTT faculty, see the section on Evaluation of NTT Faculty.
- Encourage faculty to talk with members of the Department Personnel Committee (DPC).
- Refer them also to the Faculty Staff Union's "Guide to the Tenure Process."
- The primary purpose of Periodic Multi-Year Review (PMYR) is to assist tenured faculty in their continuing professional development. The PMYR process evaluates performance over a number of years and ensures that the talents of faculty members and their contributions to the University are maximized throughout their careers. PMYR goes through the DPC and then straight to the Dean – It does not go through the CPC.
- The Academic Personnel Policy (Red Book) provides for the annual possibility of a notice of non-reappointment for any probationary faculty member (someone on the tenure-track who has not yet achieved tenure) as well as any non-tenure-track faculty member. Such decisions are made in consultation with the Dean; in the case of a full-time faculty member, there is prior advice by a faculty committee. Non-reappointment is to be distinguished from dismissal for cause.

Resources

- OFD collaborates with the Provost's office and the FSU to hold an annual 4th Year Review & Tenure Process Workshop usually in the spring semester. Faculty in their second and third year should be encouraged to attend. This workshop begins with information from the Administration and the Union followed by a panel of recently tenured faculty who present their experience and insights about the process. The final part includes a question and answer session.

Leaves

- An application must be submitted for faculty sabbaticals and leaves.
- For information see the Policy on Sabbatical Leaves.

Relationship with and Role of Non-Tenure-Track (NTT) Faculty

Types of non-tenure track appointments

Non-tenure track (NTT) faculty contribute in important ways to UMass Boston, and your department may oversee several types of NTT positions. Non-tenure track faculty may be part- time or full-time faculty, and their FTE percentage may fluctuate according to the needs of your department and the courses offered in a given semester. NTT ranks include Lecturer, Lecturer I, Lecturer II, and Senior Lecturer. Additionally, NTT faculty include clinical, visiting and research professorships.

NTT faculty may be recent doctoral graduates who are looking for a temporary position on their way to a tenure-track job, professionals invited to teach in a particular sub-area, or long-term faculty who have been part of the university community for several years.

Another type of non-tenure-track appointment is an affiliated non-salaried faculty position, called "Adjunct" appointment. Such appointments may be approved when the candidate, for whatever reason, seeks academic recognition at or through UMass Boston and such an appointment is consistent with the goals of the University. Review the Adjunct Faculty Policy and Procedures documentation.

Whatever the position, non-tenure track faculty should be integrated into the department where possible (without burdening NTT faculty with inappropriate responsibilities) and should always be treated with professional regard and consideration and as important members of your faculty. Benefitted NTT appointments may include service obligations. These need to be clearly spelled out in the terms of the offer and need to be considered as part of the annual faculty review.

Orienting new faculty in non-tenure track positions

New faculty in NTT positions need as much help when they are first appointed as do tenure- system faculty; see the section of this *Handbook* on "New Faculty." It is important to realize that NTT faculty do not attend a formal orientation event, but they should attend a HR benefits workshop when or if they become benefitted. (OFD also has several online resources that are helpful, and each semester the OFD and the Provost's office set aside several hours for new NTT faculty to get further insight into university operations, practices, and policies once they have viewed the online materials. As Chair you should orient new NTT faculty to the department and the University and ensure that they are aware of the resources available to both them and their students.

Professional Development and Reviews

As chair, you should understand these processes and make sure your NTT faculty are aware of them. NTT eligibility for benefits can also be found here. NTT faculty may be hired without a competitive search (except in rare instances). OFD can direct you to appropriate individuals on campus who can help clarify your understanding on any aspect of these matters.

Please also see the *Teaching* section in the *Helping in The Professional Development of Faculty* and the *Merit and Annual Reviews* sections above. Many of the points in those sections apply to NTT faculty.

Place in the department

Should non-tenure track faculty be included fully in departmental matters and meetings? The appropriate level of involvement may vary according to the particular department's constitution, the type of NTT position and other specificities of context, but it is a good idea to include NTT faculty on the departmental mailing list so that they are informed of everything. Invite them to meetings and events, while also making clear which of these meetings are professional obligations and which are extended as a matter of courtesy. If you are uncertain what level of obligation (e.g., advising, overseeing independent studies) are appropriate for a particular type of non-tenure track position, you should consult with your Dean and the FSU.

Faculty Retirement and Emeritus/Emerita Status

Faculty members who are nearing or contemplating retirement have likely contributed in significant ways to the department, college, and university. One approaches retirement with both pleasure and anxiety; the anxiety can be particularly acute if one is unsure how one's impact on the department and the university will be remembered or appreciated after retirement.

You certainly do not want to, nor should you, convey any kind of pressure or be the first to question someone about their plans; in fact, it is illegal for you to raise the issue of retirement unless the faculty member brings it up with you. Usually, the information will come to you in the natural course of conversation. When it does, you might:

- Appreciate the difficult and/ or complex transition ahead of them;
- Discuss how they wish to retain their connection to the department and what formal or informal "legacy" they wish to leave behind. Retired faculty desire different levels of connection to the department; some return to teach in the summer or to fill in when sudden teaching vacancies arise; some wish to be involved in the mentoring of new faculty or mid-career faculty; some want to ensure that an initiative they began or helped to set in motion is not discontinued when they retire, and some are unsure and need help to envision the next step;
- Consider how not to make promises that you will not be able to keep. However, you should think creatively with them about how they can still be involved with the work of the department, college, or university, if this is what they desire;
- Refer them to speak with the Dean and the Provost to see if there are initiatives out of those offices in which they could volunteer or offer their services if they are interested in some kind of post-retirement contribution of their expertise;
- Refer faculty members interested in a phased retirement plan to check with the Dean about possible arrangements that would allow a faculty member to transition in stages to full retirement;
- Refer faculty members who have questions about retirement benefits to Human Resources and the State Retirement Board for issues regarding benefits after retirement;
- Understand that retirees can provide useful historical perspective that might help in your understanding of a current complex departmental issue and could lead to your making a more thoughtful decision than in the absence of such perspective;
- Inform the department of a colleague's planned retirement and initiate the process of making a case for refilling the position.

Expediting the Granting of Emeritus/Emerita Status

Retiring faculty members who are at the rank of Professor may wish to file for Emeritus/Emerita status so as to maintain a professional identity post-retirement. The procedure for this process is on the Provost's website. The departmental recommendation goes to the Dean for approval. If the Dean concurs, the file is sent to the Provost, who makes the final determination.

Handling Complaints and Problems Concerning Faculty

A chair's contact with department students is likely to include complaints about faculty. The range of problems that can occur is wide. Here are some typical scenarios:

Student Complaints about a Faculty Member

The most common sort of complaint students come to you about is related to a course. It may be a complaint of unfairness in grading, or that a course is seriously disorganized, or that faculty absences have been excessive, or that the workload in a course is extraordinary in comparison to other courses. In these cases, here are some things you can do:

- Give the student a hearing and listen to the story. Assess the level of severity of the problem. For example, is this a relatively circumscribed problem of personality conflict, or is a student's education being seriously compromised? Determine whether or not you need further information.
- Ask if the student has already tried to resolve the problem by talking with the professor directly. If the student has not approached the faculty member, you could direct the student to do so as a good first step.
- Present some possible options for action and ask them what they would consider most helpful. (This does not mean you necessarily will follow their preferences, but it is good to know what the students think.)
- If they would like you to talk to the professor about the issue, and you think this is appropriate, determine what level of confidentiality they would like you to maintain regarding their conversation with you.
- If you talk to the professor about the issue, maintain good communication with the student regarding the process.
- If there is a problem with a grade, you can offer to read through or have a colleague read through the paper to offer feedback to the student and/or advice to the faculty member, but let the student know that the faculty instructor is the only person who can change her/his/their grade.
- Counsel the students, when appropriate, to make the best of the situation: to balance whatever strengths the course may have with its problems, and to get from the course whatever they can. If appropriate, encourage students to consider the situation as a learning experience in how to work with people.
- If you decide to talk to the faculty member about issues raised by students, be sure to present your comments as "student perceptions"; (If you have heard the same complaint from multiple sources, you definitely should talk to the faculty member.) The faculty member may have a very different perspective of the same situation, and you will want to hear that view as well. If the faculty member thinks the student perceptions are flawed (e.g., the course really is well- organized), you can open a discussion about what might be changed to bring perceptions in line with reality. Keep in mind the difference in vulnerability between pre-tenured and tenured faculty.
- If the situation is particularly troubling, and you are not sure what to do, seek counsel from others, perhaps another senior colleague in the department, your academic Dean (for academic issues(and

the Dean of Students (for academic, behavioral, and other non-academic issues).

- Your role as department chair is focused primarily on academic issues, such as student complaints about the clarify of a faculty member's syllabus, excessive tardy return of graded assignments, frequent late arrivals to class or absences by the faculty member, and lack of office hours. Acquaint yourself with the minimum requirements that a faculty member must meet (typically sent out as a broadcast message by the Provost's office at the beginning of each semester) and ensure that all faculty in your department are aware of these expectations. The appeal process for academic issues proceeds from faculty member to Chair to academic Dean to Provost.

- The Dean of Students most typically gets involved when there are student behavioral issues within the classroom (such as unacceptable language or actions, displays of rage, medical complications that affect classroom demeanor, and emotional breakdowns).

- Student and academic issues can frequently overlap. It is important that you know that both the academic Deans and the Dean of Students are always available to help and advise you.

- Certain student complaints are dealt with through a different channel. Most notably, sexual harassment is covered by the University Policy on Sexual Harassment.

Faculty Member's Complaint about Faculty Colleague

- Review the advice for dealing with complaints from students; some of the same advice will hold in this situation.
- Assess the level of severity of the complaint and take into account factors that may be contributing to conflict and/or misunderstanding (such as gender, seniority, cultural differences, personality differences). Unfortunately, these situations can lead to ongoing discomfort in the workplace and therefore need to be handled with appropriate care.
- UMass Boston's Office of Ombuds Services is also a resource to utilize.
- It is probably best to seek advice from the Dean sooner rather than later.

Illness or Personal Situation as Impediment to Faculty Member's Performance

- If work is being affected by illness or some other personal difficulty, consult with the Dean for anything that goes beyond a few days of difficulty.

- If a faculty member will be gone more than three days, s/he/they should consult the Sick Leave Bank Policy & Guidelines and fill out the appropriate forms, available at the Human Resources website.

- Chairs are responsible for ensuring that faculty and staff absences are duly reported every pay period.

Academic Leader of the Department

Department Curriculum and Research Culture

Chairs play a key role in the department curriculum and research culture. Central to the identity of a department is its curriculum: the courses that are offered, at both graduate and undergraduate levels, for both non-majors and majors, and the structure of the requirements for the graduate program(s), major(s) and minor(s) in the department. Curriculum is an area where the big picture is very important and, also, where the big picture is easily lost. Some things to consider:

- What are the goals of the department's curriculum—for majors, minors, graduate students, and non-majors?
- Are these goals well-supported through the current offerings of the department?
- Is the major serving well those students whose primary post-graduation goal is employmemt as well as those students who wish to pursue graduate work in the discipline?
- How up-to-date is your knowledge about graduating majors' ability to articulate the skills that they have gained through the department's curriculum?
- What is currently considered by graduate schools to be the most important preparation for graduate training?
- How up-to-date is your collective knowledge about the preparation students need for other pathways?
- To what extent do your courses contain practicums, hands on research and/or service-learning?
- In the case of graduate programs, how up-to-date is your collective knowledge about employment opportunities in your field and the preparation students need to maximize their chances of attaining a suitable position?
- Does your curriculum engage other departments in interdepartmental collaboration?
- In what ways can you facilitate research collaborations of your faculty members with those in other departments?

The more the department is in the habit of thinking about these issues, the stronger will be the sense of department identity. Talking about the curriculum can help build collegiality, can help newer members of the department feel invested in the mission of the department, and can help you articulate departmental goals and achievements, both internally and externally. Consider including students in some of these discussions, knowing that their perspectives can inform consideration of central curricular issues. Students will certainly appreciate being included. If you have not routinely been discussing the large curricular issues, here are some occasions that can serve as a stimulus to such discussion:

- your departmental AQUAD (Academic Quality Assessment and Development) review is imminent
- one or more colleague will be retiring soon
- one or more new colleague has recently been hired
- there have been significant new developments in your field, which raise both curricular and staffing issues

- the department is experiencing a significant change in enrollments or in number of majors (either declining or expanding)
- students are expressing considerable interest in areas not currently covered by the department
- strong majors have not been getting into graduate school
- the department has not considered the curriculum as a whole for ten years or more

Consider talking about the curriculum in the context of a departmental AQUAD. (See above for more on departmental reviews and self-studies.) Whether or not you do a review, the occasional half-day or day-long departmental retreat off-campus can be useful as dedicated time for the department to talk together. In such settings, with fewer distractions or interruptions, you are likely to accomplish as much in a one-day meeting as you have all year in sporadic, short, department meetings. A retreat can be especially useful to jump-start a large- scale discussion or to wrap one up.

- It is important for chairs of graduate departments to work collaboratively with GPDs and to construct regular opportunities for them to discuss the role of their programs within the overall departmental framework.

Departmental Retreat

Before scheduling a department retreat, make sure that there is a reason for doing so. Department retreats are essential at points of major transition or if your faculty have not had an opportunity to discuss significant curricular and other academic issues. A retreat can be especially useful to discuss:

1. changes to academic programs,
2. assessment of learning outcomes at every stage of the curriculum,
3. new courses needed or courses that should be redesigned to meet present department goals/objectives,
4. gaps in the curriculum that might necessitate new hires, and
5. strategic planning. If there are troubling divisions and tensions within the department or some other type of crisis, it may be a good idea to engage in some community building, through the use of an external mediator. A retreat can then take place after such a mediated discussion.

Let your faculty members know that you are planning a retreat and tell them your reason for doing so. Solicit their input via email, and make sure that you respond to each person who writes to let her/him/them know if and how you will be incorporating their suggestion into the agenda for the retreat.

If your department's budget allows, hold the retreat off-campus or at some location that creates the sense of a special place for a special task. While holding a retreat on campus may be convenient, you run the risk of faculty members seeing the retreat as simply an extended department meeting and not as a conversation requiring visionary thinking and deep reflection.

A retreat can be one full day or two half days. Longer retreats can result in diminished returns. Articulate clearly your goals for the retreat. During the retreat, assign one or two faculty members to be note takers. Identify these people before the retreat, so that you are not asking for volunteers at the retreat. Good note takers are those who understand the department's structure, have some familiarity with the department's history, and who are not themselves invested in particularly contentious issues. Make sure that at the end of the retreat you recapitulate what you have accomplished and the next steps you will take as a department. Send out a report of the retreat as promptly as possible with a timeline for implementation of next steps.

Consider bringing in an external facilitator (who could be a faculty member from elsewhere within the university) to mediate discussion if the department is particularly divided. A good facilitator will enable all members of your faculty to be heard and will not permit a few individuals to dominate the conversation.

If you are planning a department retreat, please inform the Office for Faculty Development. We may have suggestions of people you should contact to learn from their recent experience, and we would like you to share with us the success or challenges you encountered at your retreat so we can serve as a resource to other departments considering a retreat.

Department Curriculum

The Procedures for University Approval of New Academic Degree Programs, Program Changes and Program Termination can be found on the Provost's website under Forms and Policies. The Procedures for University Approval of New Academic Degree Programs, Program Changes, and Program Termination can be found in the same location.

Changes made to undergraduate departmental and interdepartmental majors and minors should be submitted to the Academic Affairs Committee of your college, after which they must be approved by the Faculty Senate of each college, the Faculty Council, and the Provost.

Changes made to graduate programs should be submitted to the appropriate collegiate governance body for approval, after which they are sent for serial approvals by the collegiate dean, the Graduate Studies Committee, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, the Faculty Council and the Provost.

Individual new courses

The initiative for a new course can come from a variety of sources:

- a faculty member wants to do something new;
- students express interest in a new offering;
- the department is seeking to connect with college needs (e.g., courses that will fulfill a graduation requirement like writing courses).

You must remember to set aside enough time for a course proposal to go through all the stages of college and university governance.

In some circumstances, you may choose to give a new course on an experimental, one-time basis under the Special Topics rubric. Note that graduate Special Topics courses must be approved through shared governance in Curriculog before they may be scheduled.

Because the initiative for a new course most often comes from an individual faculty member, it is possible for the curriculum to develop in an unplanned manner through the addition of a number of individually originated proposals. When talking with a faculty member about a new course, make explicit the need to balance individual interests with departmental needs. In some departments all new courses are discussed by the department as a whole; in other departments, the conversation is more likely to be between the individual proposing the course and the chair. Wherever the conversation occurs, the goal is to balance the importance of having faculty teaching what they want to be teaching with the needs of the department and its students. The more recently you have talked about the "big issues" (listed above), the easier it will be to strike this balance.

All new course proposals go through several levels of review – the department curriculum committee, department chair, the Academic Affairs Committee of your college, the Faculty Senate of your college, and the Collegiate Dean. Graduate courses, depending on the College, may skip some steps in the collegiate process but also are reviewed and approved by the Graduate Studies Committee, the Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education, and the Faculty Council.

If the change to an existing course description represents a substantial change in the course content, the department may submit it as a course change but must also supply the same supplemental materials and syllabus as if it were a new course.

Course Scheduling

- You should follow University and College scheduling instructions to ensure that you schedule evenly across the whole spectrum of standard class time-periods and that, inasmuch as possible, your classes are in compliance with the standard scheduling rules and standardized classroom time periods (of course, there will be courses that require non-standard time blocks, and these should be brought to the attention of your Dean).
- The number of sections you may offer in a given semester is set by your Dean.
- Within the parameters set by your Dean, you will want to examine your enrollment data from the previous year to inform your scheduling for subsequent semesters.

Time Schedule

- Class schedules are generally due at least six months in advance of a given semester.
- For the summer and fall terms, class schedules are normally due at the end of December or early January.
- For the spring term, class schedules are normally due in August or early in September.
- The exact dates for scheduling are issued by the Registrar to the Colleges and are published in the Master Academic Calendar.
- If some of your department's courses (film courses or senior seminars, for example) require non-standard time blocks, make sure that you make this request to the Dean's Office early on in the scheduling process, as non-standard times have to be approved every semester at the Provost's level.

Contacts

- Make sure you know and connect with the person in your Dean's Office who coordinates and does the scheduling for your College. This person is a key resource for you, both in scheduling courses and in resolving conflicts related to course scheduling.

Staffing

- Chairs who do not have sufficient graduate students or NTT staff already on their priority lists (please see Prioritized Course Assignment on the Appreciate the difficult website for more information) to cover all scheduled sections should begin recruiting NTT faculty as soon as their class schedules have been determined (e.g., as early as December for summer and fall term classes and as early as September for spring term classes).
- In deciding whether or not to rehire probationary NTT faculty members, you should review at minimum their student course evaluation results; you may also wish to review their enrollment patterns, request brief self-assessments from them, and/or meet with them to discuss their successes and challenges.
- Some chairs send the finished schedule to all of the NTT faculty on the roster to ask if they believe they have priority for a course that they have not been assigned. If you do not have courses for an NTT faculty member on the priority list, you should consider whether s/he/they may be qualified to teach courses s/he/they has not previously taught before, assigning these to NTTs lower on the priority list or to probationary NTT faculty.

Course Offerings

Offering the right mix of courses (so that the entire span of the curriculum is covered, including required courses and attractive electives) is part of the core mission of a department chair as you work to ensure that you are providing appropriate resources for students to meet their degree requirements and successfully move through their majors. The nature of this task varies considerably and will depend on your department's size, the number and types of degree programs offered, and the extent to which your department contributes to UMass Boston's general education program.

In the middle of the summer, each chair receives a printout showing enrollment numbers for the courses being offered.

Problems are of two kinds: over-enrollment and under-enrollment. The Dean and Registrar monitor course enrollments and will contact you if they notice red flags. You may be asked to cancel under-enrolled courses; if that occurs, make sure that you work with the faculty members affected to come up with acceptable alternatives. Sometimes, faculty members may have no choice but to teach a course with which they are not entirely comfortable, if an under- enrolled course that they had originally been assigned to teach is cancelled. Help them understand the situation, and as far as possible assure them that they will not have to face such disappointments on a regular basis.

Over-enrollment

Each faculty member with an over-enrolled course will receive a copy of the roster and wait list from the registrar.

As Chair, you have several options for managing over-enrollments, and should be in touch with the Dean or Registrar should you choose any of these:

1. Ask the instructor whether s/he/they would be willing to let in one or more additional student. This option is feasible only if the designated classroom has sufficient space. Help the instructor balance the pros and cons of adding enrollments vs. maintaining the set cap (providing guidance here will

be especially important in the case of pre-tenured and NTT faculty).

2. If unmet demand is especially high, speak with the Dean about the possibility of opening another section of the course. Opening additional sections is done by petition to the Dean; after that conversation, the chair may arrange for the students to be transferred by Registrar into the new section.

Under-enrollment

- The Dean monitors under-enrollment.
- Any undergraduate course with fewer than 12 students enrolled within two weeks before the start of classes or any graduate course with fewer than 8 students enrolled at the same time will raise a red flag and is subject to cancellation by the Dean. Such cancellations are always considered on a case-by-case basis.
- If there is low enrollment, you might wish to advertise courses through email to the Advising Collaborative or through campus flyers.
- For the future, in cases of low enrollment, you should reexamine your scheduling patterns. Are you offering an unrealistic number of electives or advanced courses, for example? Is there a need to re-conceptualize courses so that they will draw more students? Is there a need to recalibrate the balance between what faculty want to teach and where student demand lies? Is there a pattern of a particular faculty member chronically drawing low enrollments? If so, it may be time to determine the reasons for the low enrollment and, if warranted, provide the faculty member with professional development options.
- Is there a pattern of many courses in the department, taught by more than one faculty member, getting low enrollments? See the section on "The Department Curriculum" for some questions that could guide a wider departmental conversation.

Course Cancellations

- In the event a course is canceled, tenure-stream faculty should be assigned to teach another course. Such reassignment may set up a “bumping” situation, where tenure-system faculty bump out a scheduled NTT, who in turn may bump out another NTT who is further down on the priority list than s/he/they is.
- An important note concerning the timing of cancellations: the FSU contract specifies that, when no replacement course can be found, bumped out NTT faculty may be compensated up to 8% of their salary for any course cancelled after the first day of classes; there is no required compensation if a course is cancelled prior to the first day of classes.

Assessment

Assessment of learning outcomes is a university priority. Our effectiveness as an educational institution depends on the instruments we use to determine whether or not our students are learning the skills we think we are teaching them. Departments should view assessment as an opportunity to determine more accurately how effective our curriculum is and to make improvements either to it or to student-related departmental culture. Effective assessment projects do not need to take on everything in an academic program at once, nor do interventions need to be onerous. Good assessment plans are focused on a limited number of elements at each stage and provide "feedback loops" that can be invaluable in determining where you can best and most efficiently effect improvement in your department.

Department Chairs play a crucial leadership role in ensuring that there is good faculty buy-in to outcomes assessment, which is first and foremost a tool for program improvement.

Outcomes assessment IS:

- A tool for program improvement.
- A tool for clarifying program goals and objectives for students.
- A means by which we may demonstrate accountability to public audiences external to the University

Outcomes assessment is NOT:

- An evaluation of an individual course.
- An evaluation of an individual instructor.
- An evaluation of individual students.

How is outcomes assessment done?

Faculty in a program set out the knowledge, skills and dispositions they expect a student completing the program to possess. In other words, how does your program define a successful student?

A good assessment uses more than one type of measure: Direct measures (e.g. samples of student work, pass rates on licensure examinations, portfolios); Indirect measures (e.g. student- self assessment of their learning, retention or graduation rates, course or assignment grades).

Faculty examine the evidence at key points in the curriculum to see if students are achieving the learning outcomes;

Typically, units design rubrics to use in evaluating student work.

Where are we now?

- Since 2009-2010, departments have been asked to create outcomes assessment protocols at the time of their AQUAD reviews. (*Note*. In some departments, only certain programs go through AQUAD rather than the department as a whole.)
- All undergraduate and graduate degrees that are not nationally accredited will create assessment protocols as their AQUAD occurs.
- After the protocol has been created, it will be implemented in subsequent years, and the information will be used by program faculty to improve their offerings.
- For General Education, the University has received a grant through the Vision Project that will allow us to work on outcomes assessment for main features of the General Education Program.
- The Provost has appointed a University Assessment Council whose charge is to advise the Provost on the design and implementation of undergraduate learning outcomes assessment with particular attention to university-wide reviews.

- The Faculty Council has appointed an Assessment Sub-Committee of the Academic Affairs Committee. Its charge is to provide faculty feedback on proposed assessment policies and procedures.

What comes next?

- Departments that have gone through AQUAD will be implementing their assessment protocols this spring/summer.
- As new departments go through AQUAD, they will articulate their learning goals for students and assessment protocols.

Advising

Advising is crucial in facilitating retention and graduation of students. All the research and literature point to the central role of advising as part of the academic experience. Every college has its own advising structure (CLA, CM, and CSM have specific advising for certain categories of first-year cohorts, and CNHS uses group advising for its Nursing and Exercise and Health Sciences majors). Some colleges have special advising coordinators who are available to explain the intricacies of general education requirements to departmental faculty.

A student needs advising for the general education curriculum as well as the major. Undeclared majors are typically advised by the University Advising Center. Declared majors receive their advising within departments; these advising sessions, which should take place minimally once every semester during the pre-registration period, should ideally be holistic and focus on the student's overall academic progress (in the major as well as in the general education curriculum).

The requirements of the general education curriculum can seem daunting to faculty; therefore, it is important that you provide them with the necessary training in the university's general education requirements for your college. As department chair, you can help your faculty develop a culture of advising. Explain the centrality of advising to student retention and graduation rates, and impress upon your faculty that improving these rates is a key focus of the university's strategic plan. Advising is as critical a part of a faculty member's teaching responsibility as classroom teaching. Our students in particular, many of whom are the first in their families to be going to college, need guidance and support as they make their way through college. They need encouragement, a clear explanation of the requirements, and help in navigating their way through them. An advising session is an important opportunity to have a close and meaningful academic conversation with students about their intellectual goals, their desired professional aspiration, and their experience in their courses.

If your college has an advising director, please invite that individual to a department meeting each semester, if possible, to help initiate new faculty into the particularities of general education requirements and refresh continuing faculty members' memories of these requirements. Make sure that your faculty understands the requirements of the major. Some departments identify one faculty member as the "go to" person for questions related to the major; though every faculty member in the department should receive adequate training about the requirements of the major, this designated individual can serve an important function in answering particularly complex questions.

You can set the departmental tone about advising – it should not be viewed as a chore or an ordeal; rather, it is a tremendous opportunity each semester for faculty members to connect with students and to mentor them in the achievement of their "dreams."

Resources

- The Office for Advising Excellence website has useful information that you may find helpful.
- The College of Liberal Arts has a Faculty Advising Resources web page.

Handling the Day-to-Day Tasks

Strategies for Survival

1. Delegate. While departmental cultures vary on how much is done by the chair and how much is delegated to others, department chairs should make a conscious effort to divide up tasks.
2. Seek Counsel. When faced with a difficult issue, do not hesitate to seek advice. Resources include:
   - a previous chair in your department,
   - other departmental chairs,
   - your Dean and the Dean's staff,
   - the Office for Faculty Development (OFD).
3. Refer to the AQUAD Recommendations. If your department has undergone an AQUAD (Academic Quality Assessment and Development) review either immediately before or a few years before you assume the position of chair, consult its assessment and recommendations to help you set priorities for what you should address. An AQUAD review helps the department identify its strengths as well as challenges it may be facing (in the curriculum, staffing, facilities, alumni/ae success, etc.), and can help set an agenda for change. If your department is scheduled to undergo an AQUAD during your time as chair, welcome the process as a significant opportunity for assessing the core academic functions of the department. Guidelines, planning and self-study templates can be found on the AQUAD page.

Budgets and Financial Transactions

Once you have been appointed chair, you will be in charge of the departmental budget. The outgoing chair should review the budget and explain the basics to the incoming Chair. If you need additional assistance or have questions, you should contact the Assistant Dean in your Dean's Office who has been assigned budget oversight responsibilities or contact the Provost's Office. They can meet with you to answer any questions or concerns you might have.

While you are not required to do so, some chairs, at the beginning of the year, make copies of the budget for everyone in the department. This way, everyone knows how much funding is available, and what allocations are expected in the various expenditure categories. If you have a new person in the department, it is a good time to explain matters related to the budget. You might also distribute the end results of the previous year's budget if you would like others in the department to see how the year finished up. Some chairs set up a budget advisory committee within the department.

kYou, as department chair, have signatory authority over all expenditures in all accounts. Here are some important points and resources:

- It is important that the department stay within its annual budget.
- UMass Boston has three general types of funds: state, trust, and sponsored project funds.
- Check the budget every month or two to see how you are doing. This review is done most easily by keeping what is called a "shadow" budget in the department. If you keep track of expenditures using a shadow budget, you should check these numbers against the FAIR system at some point.

- If you find yourself consistently overspending in a particular category, talk to the Dean about reallocation within the budget, decreasing expenditures or possibly increasing the amount in that category.

- Mistakes happen. If you see a line that looks odd (e.g., a large amount spent where you think it unlikely), go into the transactions to see where the money was spent. It is not uncommon for a charge to be debited to the wrong account number. If you have any questions, ask the Assistant Dean of your college or the Provost's Office for help. If needed, the transaction can be traced back to the original paperwork.
- See UM-Plan Budgeting and Planning for help with understanding budgets at UMass Boston. See also Policies and Procedures and budget planning forms.

Delegating

The multiple demands on a department chair make it necessary to delegate. Although your style and department culture will vary from other chairs and departments, some general strategies for dealing with such demands are listed below. Departments will be stronger if they make a conscious effort to divide up tasks.

Here are some of the tasks or areas that are easiest for the chair to delegate to others or that the GPDs of the graduate programs take care of for their individual programs:

- club advisor
- organizer of social events for majors
- information on internships, careers, and/or graduate school in your discipline
- information about alumni/ae
- information about achievements of current students
- updating the letter for prospective students sent out by the Admission Office
- updating the department webpages
- collecting and analyzing assessment data
- cultivation and stewardship of donors
- supervision of special departmental funds
- some of the tasks involved in a faculty search
- arrangements for guest speakers

When dividing up tasks, play to the experience and strengths of individual faculty members. For example, if a previous chair has a strong relationship with a donor to the department, ask that person to continue stewardship. If one person has strong organizational skills, ask them to take on arrangements for guest speakers.

As chair, you still have the overall responsibility for seeing that all of these tasks get done, which may mean that you have to remember to remind someone else about what s/he/they have been assigned to do. What if delegating a particular task is not working, even with reminders and some discussion with the person you've asked to take charge? First, determine what you can accept as “sufficient,” even if you would like to see the task executed perfectly. If that does not solve the problem from your perspective, then rotate the task to someone else, and ask the first person what they might prefer to do instead.

Planning and Running Department Meetings

Why meet?

- Do not hold department meetings only to socialize. Make sure that there are real issues to be discussed and decisions to be taken. A regular schedule of department meetings – once a month is typical – helps to keep faculty members informed of ongoing and emerging academic matters and also builds a sense of shared purpose and community. Try to find a block of time that is workable for the majority of faculty members. There are always going to be some faculty members who teach during that time block, so it becomes particularly important that you share comprehensive minutes after the meeting and follow-up with those faculty members who could not attend to discuss any questions they may have.

What to discuss?

Among the substantive matters to discuss are the following:

- curriculum (courses that need to be revamped or new courses that the major requires),
- making the case for new faculty lines (where are the gaps in the department’s expertise, where is the department likely to see retirement, and so on),
- need for support staff and issues regarding them,
- the importance of advising, particularly before course registration every semester,
- the department’s role in college or university initiatives,
- planning for an AQUAD review,
- specific crises that have been brought to your attention,
- departmental handbook,
- developing effective mentoring models,
- voting on finalist candidates following their campus visits,
- sharing good news about accomplishments or activities of department members,
- sharing reports of university committees others are on,
- sharing admissions progress in various programs, and
- sharing recruitment strategies for programs.

How often to meet?

- No more than once a month, if possible. However, if there is an urgent issue that cannot wait until the next department meeting, and a discussion cannot be conducted via email, then you may have to call a department meeting. Some department constitutions may specify the number of meetings required.
- Votes on finalist candidates for a faculty position typically require their own meetings and should not be folded into regular department meetings.

How to help ensure that meetings are productive?

- Come with a clearly articulated agenda that you have distributed prior to the meeting to your department members.
- Any material that is part of an agenda item requiring action (such as a new course proposal to be reviewed and voted upon) should also be distributed a few days prior to the meeting.
- It may be helpful to elect yearly a department faculty meeting secretary, or assign a different person at each meeting to perform the function of taking care of meeting minutes. If some faculty speak for too long and veer off point, it is your responsibility to intervene and suggest that others might wish to offer comments. Though it is important that you not humiliate any member of your department publicly by implying that what they are saying is of minimal value, it is also important that you learn how to create opportunities for all members of your department to speak.

Working with Administrative Staff and Other Support Staff

The daily life of the chair can be made easier through effective use of support staff that might be available in the department. Chairs may supervise part-time and full-time employees who are temporary or permanent staff and may be members of either the Classified Staff Union or Professional Staff Union. Their bargaining agreements, available on the Human Resources website, contain guidelines/regulations concerning their hiring, evaluation, merit, and supervision. Non-benefitted temporary employees may include hourly, salaried, or seasonal student and non-student workers.

As the department chair, you are also responsible for overseeing professional and classified staff in your department. The professional staff may be directly under your supervision, whereas the classified staff may report to a professional or another classified staff member. In either case, you are ultimately the individual who ensures that specific departmental tasks assigned to professional and classified staff members are adequately and competently fulfilled. In addition to periodic meetings with these individuals where you discuss particular challenges or issues that might arise during the semester, it is important that you review your professional staff annually. The department business manager and the lab manager are examples of professional staff positions.

As the supervisor, you are responsible for determining the goals for the year and the priorities you need the staff member to follow. Classified staff are reviewed on their hire date and professional staff are reviewed in July. At this annual review, communicate clearly how the staff member's performance compares against your expectations for the role, and also register any issues raised by the staff member. Let the staff member know the ways in which s/he/they has met expectations, and the areas in which there could be improvements. This review should also be written up formally and a copy placed in the personnel file. However, there are specific rules about documenting performance; please contact HR for more information.

Whenever assigning a particular task, be sure to give clear detailed instructions:

- If not obvious, explain the context of the job.
- Explain step by step what needs to be done.
- Clearly indicate the day or time by which you need the job done.
- Give ample lead time. The occasional rush job is understandable, but not as a common practice.
- Ask if s/he/they has any questions about the job.

Additional Sources of Help

- Talk with your Dean's Office
- OFD can also point you in the right direction to get the help that you might need

Maintaining the Department Website

It is important that as a campus community we maintain www.umb.edu and all its sub-sites according to best practices and at the highest quality possible. This includes making sure your department's site is continuously updated.

Your Department's Web Editor(s)

- Each department should have a web content editor (WCE). The WCE should consult with the Office of Communications and the UMass Boston Web Editor on website design and producing effective content.
- Editors should get training and support regarding the content management software that is used to update your website from the Web Editor.

Keeping your Department's Site Up to Date

- Department websites may include "News" and "Events" sections that need to be updated on a frequent basis. All your departmental events that are open to faculty, staff, and students should be listed with a description and logistical details, so the university community is aware of them and must be removed when the event has ended.
- Faculty information should be updated each semester.
- If some of your faculty have not yet had their picture taken for posting on the department web pages, you should encourage them to do so. Creative Services schedules several open sessions each semester.

Policies and Branding

- Web Services provides training and guidance for editors including style guides and latest resources.
- You may familiarize yourself with the overall UMass Boston Brand styleguide at Creative Services .

Fundraising and Stewardship

In the language of university advancement, "cultivation of donors" refers to building a relationship with potential donors and educating them about the possibilities of a gift to the University. "Stewardship of donors" refers to maintaining good relations with people who have already made gifts to the University.

Why should a department chair be involved in any of this when there is a whole office of University Advancement dedicated to this purpose? Because sometimes our connections, or our interaction with someone already in conversation with the Advancement Office is just what is needed to help initiate or clinch a gift.

There are many ways to make a gift to the university, but gifts to departments tend to come in three forms:

- cash gifts to current funds,
- cash gifts to increase or supplement endowed funds, or
- gifts in kind (such as lab equipment).

Gifts, especially in the form of endowed funds, can be an enormous resource, opening up enhanced opportunities for faculty and students. Gifts might fund faculty research, outside speakers, departmental colloquia, library expenditures beyond the college budget, and prizes and scholarships for majors--depending on the gift agreement. All funds must be used in accordance with [A Note Concerning Grants and Gifts.]

Please contact University Advancement if you have questions about art or gifts as there are strict IRS guidelines on acceptance and documentation.

Department chairs have played, and will continue to play, an important role in these gifts, in either the cultivation or stewardship phase, or both.

Cultivation, Stewardship & Fundraising

Cultivation

University Advancement (or the Chancellor) may approach you about a potential donor. They might ask you to work with the department to write up a proposal for a donor. They might ask you to meet with the donor.

If, instead, a potential donor has approached you, let the Advancement Office know, and they will give you advice about what to do next. You can contact the Director of Stewardship or the Director of Development for your college. Keep up your end of communication with alumni/ae who might be potential donors. Cultivation can be a very long process, over many years. It can also happen that even a long series of pleasant contacts will come to naught. This outcome is a normal part of the process and should not discourage you from trying with another person.

Stewardship

The process does not end with the giving of the gift. It is an important matter of courtesy to keep in touch with the donor. At a minimum, you should work with Advancement to craft a letter telling the donor how the income from the fund has been used in the last year. Sometimes this letter comes from the chair, sometimes from Advancement; check with the Director of Stewardship in Advancement to see what the practice is for a particular fund. Even if Advancement sends out a report, the donor will very much enjoy hearing directly from the department. Copy the Advancement Office on any correspondence with donors. See a sample end-of-year letter. As department chair, you may be the principal investigator for one or more endowed fund. An important aspect of stewarding endowment donors is spending the annual interest allocation in the manner outlined by the donor in the endowment agreement. Each August, University Advancement will send you a comprehensive overview of the endowed funds for which you are PI. Should you have questions about how to spend the funds, please contact the Director of Stewardship.

Fundraising

Have an idea about fundraising for the department--for example, an appeal to alumni/ae for support of a particular project? Any solicitation of funds must be done in close consultation and cooperation with University Advancement, as it is important to ensure that faculty and University Advancement are not working at cross-purposes. You will want to talk with University Advancement about issues of timing, audience, and purpose; they can also provide a list of departmental alumni/ae with current contact information. If you have a good idea, they will help you realize it and ensure that you are recognized for the effort.

All checks or gifts from donors must be processed through University Advancement to insure proper receipt and credit to the donor. Please send any cash, check or credit card gifts that you receive to University Advancement as soon as you can so that the gift can be received, acknowledged, and added to your budget in a timely manner.