REPORT OF THE
ACADEMIC SENATE TASK FORCE ON
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

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REPORT OF THE
ACADEMIC SENATE TASK FORCE ON
DEPARTMENT CHAIRS

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Executive Summary

Background

In 2001 the CSU Academic Senate (CSU AS) conducted a systematic statewide survey of Department Chairs and Program or School Directors due to a "long standing concern… about the roles and responsibilities of department and program chairs."   The CSU AS distributed the final survey report to all CSU campuses in 2002. At SJSU, the Academic Senate considered the CSU AS report, along with a subset of SJSU data, and adopted a Senate Management Recommendation (SM-S03-2, March, 2003) calling for the creation of an SJSU Chair Task Force on Department Chairs. The 13 members of the task force represented chairs, deans, faculty and several administrative units; they meet from June, 2003 through February, 2004.

Guided by the goals of the CSU AS report, the Task Force focused on enhancing "…roles, rewards and resources" for Chairs and Directors, and improving "…training, recruitment, and retention of chairs with the end of making them more enduring and effective leaders of their departments."

The Task Force addressed four major areas: Chair Job Descriptions and Evaluation Procedures; Chair Roles and Relationships with Deans (especially regarding budget authority); Chair Workload Assignments; and Chair Training & Development (including job satisfaction).

Chair Job Descriptions and Evaluation Procedures

The Task Force developed a generic chair position description and recommends that the campus adopt it, adapting it to the specifics of the individual's assignment. The Task Force also recommends that the campus use this generic job description as the basis for Chair evaluation instruments to be completed by respondents from multiple sources (deans, administrators, other chairs/directors, faculty, staff, and students). The Task Force developed four evaluation instruments for different constituencies and recommends the campus adopt them.

Other key recommendations include the importance of the Dean meeting with each incoming Chair to identify and formalize the specific expectations of the position and of an annual meeting with the Dean for an informal evaluation of the FTE/A funded Chair appointment. The Task Force recommends that we continue with the current policy of formal evaluation and review by the Dean every four years

The Task Force recommends that the campus continue its current practice of fiscal management in which Deans and Chairs have the flexibility to establish modes that work well for the Colleges with specific unit needs. The campus should continue the recent practice of providing an annual fiscal management training session for all new Chairs. Deans should be encouraged to provide Chairs and Directors with discretionary funds where possible to allow Chairs to foster creative initiatives within the unit, to reward deserving faculty, and to improve faculty morale.

Campus communication with and among chairs and other campus units will be improved if the University continues to recognize and support the University Council of Chairs and Directors (UCCD), possibly giving it formal status analogous to the Council of Deans. In addition, the University should conduct an analysis of critical management information flow, networks, and pathways on campus and make recommendations for their improvement.

Chair Workload Assignments

The Task Force found that *SJSU under allocates FTE/A, particularly for larger departments.*   This is true both in comparison with a reference institution (CSU Sacramento) and with respect to the effort required in actual workload. Non-chair faculty members also perform a significant amount of administrative work, paid with FTEF (assigned time) instead of FTE/A. This practice distorts an understanding of the actual administrative workload burden across the university and, because it assigns instructional dollars to pay for non-instructional administrative responsibilities, it also affects the calculation of unit SFR, which has budget implications. The campus should investigate the extent and implications of this practice.

Although no formula will perfectly capture all of the dimensions of workload, the CSUS formula adequately accounts for the significant differences among departments based on the multiple factors of each department's profile. In overall allocation, *CSUS Chairs are assigned more FTEA than SJSU Chair for the same work.* The report includes the CSUS formula and its application to current SJSU institutional data. FTES and FTEF alone are not reasonable measures of workload. Factors such as number of majors, faculty headcount, and responsibility for program accreditation must also be considered. *The currently allowable maximum FTEA for a unit is set at 1.0, which is too low for some large and complex units. The University should raise the maximum allocation for those units.*

Specific workload recommendations include: replacing the current SJSU allocation formula with the CSUS weighting methodology; including FTE/A allocation to support accreditation and reporting requirements; conducting an Academic Senate review of FTEF/FTEA assignments and workload; and modifying the allocation formula at SJSU to increase FTEA to 1.5 or higher for large and complex departments.

In order to deal with the growing responsibilities for paperwork emanating from faculty recruitment, staff recruitment and evaluations, and the implementation of new campus technology, the Task Force recommends allocation of FTEA for "Associate Chair" assignments. Adding such a role would also assist with succession planning and summer coverage for Chairs and Directors.

Chair Training & Development

The Task Force recommends the formalization of the campus role of the Chair-in-Residence position following an evaluation of the position. The Task Force recommends the development of a formal Chair training program, under the direction of the Chair-in-Residence, that identifies training appropriate to the Chair's evolution in the position, and the training needs of both new and experienced Chairs. The report outlines specific training modules and topics, on and off cam

Academic Senate Department Chair Task Force Recommendations

(Note on usage: the word "chair" should be understood throughout as shorthand for "chair and/or school director.")

Background

In 2001 the CSU Academic Senate (CSU AS) focused its attention on a "long standing concern…about the roles and responsibilities of department and program chairs." Specifically, the CSU AS was aware that "at many campuses there is a rapid turnover of chairs and many chairs feel overworked and under-rewarded." In the context of planning for future development of the CSU, the CSU AS appointed a seven-member faculty Task Force on Roles and Responsibilities of Chairs. That group conducted a systematic statewide survey of department chairs and program or school directors and submitted a report and recommendations in 2002. (The CSU AS report is available at: http://www.geolog.com/FAC/ChairsTF.htm and will not be reproduced here.) The CSU AS distributed copies of the report to the local campus Senates and recommended, among other steps, that "each campus establish a committee on the 'status of chairs' to develop e   m and

1. Chair Job Descriptions and Evaluation Procedures;
2. Chair Roles and Relationships with Deans (especially regarding budget authority);
3. Chair Workload Assignments; and
4. Chair Training & Development (including job satisfaction).

We organize our findings and recommendations according to these categories, citing the original CSU task force recommendations where applicable.

Chair Job Descriptions and Evaluation Procedures

The CSU survey found that two-thirds of all CSU chairs had "zero hours of formal preparation before they assumed their positions." Further, once on the job, chairs lack clear expectations for their performance. Indeed, in many cases they were surprised to learn what they spent their time doing. In this regard, the CSU report made four recommendations that guided our inquiry and response in this area:

1. *Campuses should provide chairs with job descriptions and other details of their duties so they are fully informed of what is expected of them before they assume their roles.*
2. *Campuses should have reasonable expectations of chairs given the amount of time and resources available to them.*
3. *Campuses should review the tasks that chairs are expected to perform to assure they are appropriate and manageable within the constraints of the chair's administrative appointment.*
4. *Campuses should evaluate and reward chairs based on their job descriptions.*

Our data indicated that many chairs had never seen a job description. Although we were able to obtain a generic description from Faculty Affairs (1991; see Appendix), which a few chairs had seen, and some from other CSU campuses, it became clear that there was no standardized position description. We then developed a standardized generic position description for SJSU chairs and directors (Appendix). We recognize that no chair can effectively perform all of the functions on the position description, and that different units have different needs arising at varying times, as conditions change. We therefore view the position description as a flexible guide that will help the Dean and unit faculty give specific direction to the unit's chair and fully to inform an incoming chair what is expected of her/him. We recommend that:

1.0 the Senate should adopt the proposed chair position description as the generic standard for chairs and directors;
1.1 the chair position description should be used as a guide at the local unit level in setting specific expectations for unit ch

We considered recommending a category weighted performance evaluation process, such as SJSU Human Resources uses for staff performance evaluations, but decided that there are too many variables for a generic weighting scheme. We concurred that some Deans and department faculty may wish to establish general category weights (e.g., for administration or faculty development) as part of setting specific expectations, which would then guide performance evaluation.

criteria (e.g., teaching and research standards) should not be used to evaluate the chair's performance in the chair role.

Chair Roles and Relationships with Deans

A major recommendation in the CSU task force report is that "campuses need to give chairs the resources they require to be effective leaders." The elements contemplated here include giving chairs *more authority and control over budget* (and other financial resources), *more training* (and support for training), and *more access to information from administration*.

The control of fiscal resources emerged as a problem in the CSU survey based on the frustrations of chairs who experience the burden of high expectations for the development of their units and their faculty, but are given few resources, or control over resources, to accomplish this. Some respondents believed that if chairs were given control of department salary and supplies budgets, they could make cost-saving, efficiency decisions that would yield surplus funds to invest in department development.

The CSU report thus recommended that chairs be given "dollar-based budgets" and the ability to "roll funds forward from year to year," with discretionary control over "saved dollars." This seemed to be less of an issue for the SJSU chairs in the survey. We conducted a survey of current fiscal procedures in all of the colleges and determined that there is great commonality among colleges in how they handle fiscal management. We started from the understanding that the Dean, as an MPP appointment, has statutory responsibility for the fiscal management of the college; chairs, who are not MPPs, do not have such responsibility. Fiscal management in the colleges has evolved in terms of local college cultures and the relationships between Deans and chairs in a college. In some cases, the Dean retains centralized control over salary dollars; in other colleges, the Dean turns over salary management to some, or all, of the chairs in the college. In all colleges, Operating Expense and Equipment (OE&E) funds are allocated directly to departments and managed there. At the same time, we recognized that departments vary enormously in their fiscal needs and complexity. At one extreme, departments purchase little beyond telephone, copying, and basic office supplies; at the other extreme are departments with labs, performance programs, and other special needs. Furthermore, some departments have accumulated CE Trust or other discretionary foundation endowment funds, which provide some fiscal flexibility, while other departments have few if any such funds. Based on these considerations we recommend that:

3.0 the campus continue to allow Deans and chairs the flexibility to establish modes of fiscal management that work well for the colleges in the context of specific unit needs; i.e., that we do not attempt to impose a uniform fiscal management model on these procedures;

  3.1 we continue the recent practice of providing a fiscal management training session for all new chairs; and

3.2 Deans be encouraged to provide chairs and directors with discretionary funds where possible to allow chairs to foster creative initiatives within the unit, reward deserving faculty, improve faculty morale, etc.

Chairs' Access to Information from Administration. Although the campus has identified some general "communication problems," we believe that chairs generally have access to the kinds of management information necessary to lead their units; this did not appear to be a major issue in the SJSU survey data. Indeed, there is perhaps too much information, coming from too many sources. The recently activated University Council of Chairs and Directors (UCCD) provides a monthly forum for university officials to brief chairs on major campus developments. Deans, Associate Deans, and college financial administrators also communicate directly with chairs. Other campus administrators work through the UCCD mailing list to provide relevant system information. In this regard, then, we recommend that:

4.0 the university continue to recognize and support the University Council of Chairs and Directors, possibly giving the UCCD formal status analogous to the Council of Deans; and

    4.1 the university conduct an analysis of the critical management information flows, networks, and pathways on campus and make recommendations for improvement.

Chair Workload Assignments

The CSU survey found wide disparity in both workload assignments and workload compensation for chairs across the system. The CSU report treated those concerns under a general recommendation for equitable treatment of chairs "regarding their conditions of appointment." A primary recommendation called for all chairs to have the option of a 12-month appointment (or appropriate compensation for unpaid work). At SJSU, however, all but three chairs of small departments (of the 56 total chairs and directors) are already in 12-month appointments. More germane is the CSU report's recommendation to "establish an advisory committee to review the means used to determine the percent of administrative appointment and the length of the chair's contract." We therefore accepted this as part of our task force mandate.

Chair terms at SJSU are four years, compared with three years at most CSU campuses. Ideal term length involves a balance between the training and start up costs related to frequency of turnover, and the stability gains associated with the longer term. Some say that it takes the first three years to learn the role fully. Others point to the shorter term as providing more opportunities for new ideas, "new blood," and new leadership opportunities to emerge. We decided that, absent significant complaint at SJSU, there is no need to change the length of chair term at this time.

according to campus-specific "legacy" formulae (i.e., there is no CSU system allocation formula) that depend mostly on Full Time Equivalent Faculty (FTEF) in the unit. FTEA is accounted separately from FTEF to give an accurate picture of actual administrative workload and to make a measurable distinction between administration and instruction. The current formulae are somewhat insensitive to differences in workload complexity across units that may seem by some measures to be of equal size. To compensate, Deans have the discretion to use more or less than

The current formula for allocating FTEA is based largely on FTEF (though "complexity" is a term used in the IPAR document), as follows:

    .2 FTEA for 10 or less FTEF
    .4 FTEA for 10.1 to 20 FTEF
    .6 FTEA for 20.1 to 30 FTEF
    .8 FTEA for 30.1 to.40 FTEF
    1.0 FTEA for 40.1 or more FTEF

The neat linear relationship between the FTEA allocated and the 10 unit increments of FTEF supervised is not arbitrary; but neither is it sensitive to actual conditions. The relationship suggests accurately that there is a commensurate increment of workload with an increase in the size of the unit, as measured by faculty allocation (FTEF). However, in practice it is not uncommon for a chair to supervise twice as many individual faculty members as the FTEF number. Thus, one department has an FTEF of about 11 with 15 individuals; another has an FTEF of about 11 with 27 individu

Though no formula will perfectly capture all of the dimensions of workload, the CSUS formula adequately distinguishes the significant differences between departments, based on the multiple factors of each department's profile;

In overall allocation, CSUS chairs are assigned more FTEA than SJSU chairs for the same work;

We need to continue to make, and refine, the distinction between what chairs actually do (workload) and how they

recommendations to rationalize (categorize and standardize) administrative assignments and to separate them from true faculty instructional assignments;

5.6 The Senate should undertake a more detailed "time/motion" study of actual chair workload, determine the full range of actual administrative activity, and

efficient, including ways to distribute it appropriately between chairs, faculty, and clerical staff;

    6.1 The Provost should make available an additional allocation of FTEA to support "Associate Chair" assignments in some departments from time to time. This would accommodate a "sharing of the burden" that would allow chairs time for creative (e.g., strategic planning) work. It would also be valuable for training incoming chairs, or taking advantage of the experience of outgoing chairs;

        6.1.1 Associate Chairs could be set up to cover summer chair duties so that chairs could have sustained time for research and/or renewal;

        6.1.2 The Chair in Residence, working with the UCCD, should survey chairs to determine the demand for such support and recommend a distribution program that would provide it; and

    6.2 The Senate should undertake an analysis of the level of clerical support and office costs in terms of unit size and complexity and make recommendations to improve cost efficiency. We noted in our analysis that some units seem simply too small to be set up as independent departments, when all of the costs are considered. Though it is beyond our charge to make recommendations for specific changes, we believe the Senate should investigate whether such independent disciplinary groups warrant the institutional costs incurred by department status.

The tendency to blame "bureaucracy" for workload is endemic to modern organizations. Nonetheless, much of the bureaucratic paperwork is necessitated by programs and initiatives and procedures that are themselves set up and regulated by statutes that call for procedural regularity, oversight, fiscal responsibility, etc. It is not possible to make all of this "go away" simply because it is time-consuming and not enjoyable or creative. There does seem to be sufficient frustration, however, to warrant a more careful examination of what units are expected to do and how that might be improved. One theme that recurred in our discussions was the increasing complexity and paperwork involved in hiring and evaluating clerical staff, as well as in conducting faculty searches.

Chair Training & Development

attendees evaluated as successful. Growing out of that effort the Provost endorsed the Chair-in-Residence concept and funded it as a trial at .2 FTEA per semester for AY 2003-04. The purpose of this experimental position is to coordinate and implement training, development, and information initiatives for SJ

8.6 the Provost continue to support the travel and registration costs for new chairs

8.16 to encourage faculty appreciation of chair work, all new faculty have a chair-related training session as part of new faculty orientation activities. (This was attempted for the first time with the orientation of new faculty in August, 2003.);

Conclusion

The Task Force responded to the report's general sense of frustration, low morale, job dissatisfaction, and high turnover among chairs with an overarching recommendation that the campus community should make the role and work of Chairs/Directors more transparent to the constituencies they serve. Much of what needs to be improved for Chairs/Directors starts with a generally inadequate understanding of what chairs actually do, what they have responsibility for, and the limited authority and resources they have to make changes. The tension between high responsibility and low authority is particularly acute.

Chairs and Directors have come to occupy a critical position in the administration and management of the modern university. The size, scale, and imperatives of the CSU system add even greater complexity to their work. While SJSU chairs normally serve slightly longer terms than the CSU norm, and while they generally report less dissatisfaction with the job, there is still a significant turnover, causing the added expenses of re-training and errors made while learning the job. At the same time, the legal, regulatory, fiscal and administrative contexts that shape us are changing quickly. Amidst this change is an increasing sense that the both the CSU system, and the campus, allocate insufficient resources to meet the demands of the job. Assuring the efficiency and success of our campus as we make the paradigm transition from a state-supported to a state-assisted institution will require vigilant attention to the way we implement our mandates and accomplish our mission at the operational level. In that arena, nothing could be more critical than ensuring that our corps of Chairs and Directors has both the resources and support they need to fulfill their responsibilities and the assurance that creative, committed, and talented colleagues will be prepared to step forward and replace them when the time comes.

The SJSU Academic Senate has taken a major step toward improving conditions by establishing this Task Force on Department Chairs. Now they must act quickly on the recommendations.

Report of the
Academic Senate Task Force on Department Chairs

Appendices

A. SJSU Academic Senate Management Recommendation (SM-S03-2)

B. Roster of Task Force Members

C. Chair Roles and Responsibilities

D. Chair Evaluation Forms
   Deans, Chairs, and Administrators
   Faculty
   Staff
   Students

E. CSU Sacramento FTEA Allocation Formula

F. FTEA Allocation Spreadsheets
   60/40 Weighting Ratio of Majors to FTES (CSUS norm, Applied to SJSU Data)
   70/30 Weighting Ratio of Majors to FTES (Applied to SJSU Data)
   100/0 Weighting Ratio of Majors to FTES (Applied to SJSU Data)

Appendix A
Senate Management Recommendation SM-S03-2
Creation of Task Force on Department Chairs

This recommendation can be found at: http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/SM-S03-2.pdf

SM-S03-2

At its meeting of March 17, 2003, the Academic

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Appendix B

**Academic Senate
Task Force on Department Chairs
June 2003 through February 2004
Members**

Department Chairs:
Howard Combs, *Marketing*

Dennis Jaehne, Task Force Chair, *Communication Studies*

Sigurd Meldal, *Computer Engineering*

Robert Milnes, *Art & Design*

Carol Ray, *Sociology*

Deans:
Michael Ego, *Applied Sciences and Arts*

Gerry Selter, *Science*

Senators:
Gilda Pour, *Computer Engineering*

Dominique Van Hooff, *Foreign Languages*

Other Administrative Unit Representatives:
Joan Merdinger, *Faculty Affairs*

Sandy Dewitz, *Institutional Planning and Academic Resources*

Deborah Weakland, *Human Resources*

Beth Von Till, *Lecturers, Center for Faculty Development & Support*

Appendix C

Roles and Responsibilities of

5.   Supports and fosters the professional development of faculty.

6.   Practices consultative and collaborative decision-making.

7.   Assists in maintaining morale and productive and civil relationships among faculty. Works as a mediator between/among faculty if needed.

7.   Works with faculty to establish and coordinate appropriate unit committee and non-committee activities.

CURRICULUM/PROGRAM

1.   Encourages currency and improvement in the quality of courses, curricula and programs in consultation with faculty.

2.   Works with faculty and staff to formulate and execute program plan review processes and outcomes assessments.

3.   Produces a schedule of classes that is balanced and responsive to students' needs in consultation with faculty.

4.   Supervises the operation of curriculum-related activities as appropriate (e.g., labs, studios, clinics).

5.   Works with faculty and staff to ensure the currency and presentation quality of the catalogue.

6.   Oversees and works with faculty to promote quality student advising.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

1.   Works with faculty on student recruitment and retention initiatives, which may include outreach, department orientation, awards, competitions, social events, clubs.

2.   Interacts effectively with students; objectively listens to students' concerns and suggestions for improvement and responds appropriately

3.   Oversees student petitions and forms.

STAFF

1.   Oversees recruitment, recommends hiring, and oversees orientation/training of staff to support unit's goals.

2.   Evaluates staff and provides feedback on performance.

3.   Supports and supervises staff

Appendix D. 1

CHAIR EVALUATION INSTRUMENT
Chairs and Administrators

1. Demonstrates knowledge of university policies and procedures
2. Formulates effective strategic plans to achieve her/his unit's goals
3. Displays logical decision-making skills
4. Shows initiative and takes independent action when needed.
5. Champions her/his unit's welfare and goals
6. Listens well
7. Communicates concisely and clearly
8. Acts as an effective liaison between the unit and college/University
9. Comprehends and takes into account the larger structures in which her/his unit is embedded.
10. Cooperates productively with college or University colleagues
11. Demonstrates sensitivity to and awareness of diversity issues.
12. Follows through and completes projects in a timely manner
13. Prepares for and contributes effectively to meetings
14. Shows knowledge about and concern for students' educational needs.
15. Responds to requests for information in a timely manner
16. Treats others with civility and respect.
17. Assures safe and efficient use of facilities and equipment
18. Administers the unit's budget and resources equitably.
19. Administers the unit's budget and resources efficiently.
20. Administers the unit's budget and resources transparently
21. Works with faculty and staff to assure the orderly operation of the unit's administrative offices; refines or revises its organizational structure or procedures as appropriate
22. Participates in fundraising activities as appropriate
23. Is accessible

(Note: If you scored any item below 3, please explain below.)

COMMENTS:

Appendix D2

CHAIR EVALUATION INSTRUMENT
Faculty

Program Direction/Leadership
1. Communicates a vision of long-term program development
2. Collaborates with faculty to formulate effective strategic plans to achieve goals
3. Displays logical decision-making skills
4. Shows initiative and takes independent action when

Appendix D3

CHAIR EVALUATION INSTRUMENT
Support Staff

Unit Direction/Leadership

37. Attends to educational needs and goals of diverse students
38. Is accessible and helpful to students
39. Responds to student complaints promptly and appropriately

Faculty Affairs
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Appendix D4

Chair/Director Evaluation Instrument
Students

Academic Unit: _____

During the past _____ semesters, have you communicated directly with the
chair/director of this department or school in his or her capacity as chair/director (i.e., not

Appendix E
CSU Sacramento FTEA Allocation Formula

CSUS Department Chair Support Model
Prepared by Paul N. Noble
Associate VP for Academic Affairs
CSU, Sacramento
October 31, 2003

In fall, 2002 an ad hoc group consisting of Richard Guarino (Associate Dean, College of Business Administration), Paul Noble, Joseph Sheley (Dean, College of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Studies), William Sullivan (Dean, College of Arts and Letters) and

The scores computed from this formula ranged from 3.6 for the smallest department to 85.6 for the largest. When all 48 departments were entered into a spreadsheet and sorted by score, the following observations were made:

Thirteen of the departments had a score that was significantly larger than the rest. There

Appendix F
SJSU FTEA Allocation Spreadsheets
(With selective weighted ratios of Majors to FTES)

Department	Faculty				Faculty			FTEA/C
	#	FTEF	Reg FTEF	Normal	Reg #	Temp FTEF	Normal	