

Role Description, Department Chairperson, College of Humanities and Sciences

According to the CBA, the department chairperson shall “represent the interests of individual faculty members and [the department] to the dean, and accurately present the positions and requirements of the Administration to the faculty within the unit.” Subject to the authority of the dean, chairpersons are responsible for:

- scheduling classes;
- arranging teaching hours and assignments;
- meeting the needs of students in graduate and undergraduate programs consistent with University policies and procedures and unit standards;
- serving as the first line of appeal for complaints or disputes concerning the department;
- submitting budget proposals and administering the approved budget;
- making recommendations regarding curricula, programs, personnel matters, and departmental concerns; administer operation of the unit office;
- handling routine business of the department;
- and performing other responsibilities as assigned by the dean (CBA 16.220).

From the perspective of the Dean’s Office, other assigned responsibilities include:

- maintaining the morale of office staff and ensuring they are treated with respect;
- ensuring that pre-tenure faculty are mentored effectively;
- meeting established deadlines for course schedules and curriculum proposals;
- keeping faculty members informed of changes in University policies, procedures, and professional expectations;
- assisting with student recruitment to UM and your department*;
- assessing departmental programs on a regular basis;
- ensuring that students have access to advising within the department;
- staying connected with alumni and development matters;
- negotiating hires – especially lecturers and adjuncts.

*this means promoting students to enter and complete your programs. This is really a department wide concern that should be coordinated by the Chair.

Clarifications of Summer issues and responsibilities:

- The Academic Year chair should notify the H&S Dean's Office at the end of Spring semester if a different faculty member will serve as department chair for the summer (and receive all or a portion of the regular Summer stipend);
- Chairs, or faculty serving as department chairs during the 10 weeks of summer semester, are expected to maintain at least four posted office hours per week (over at least 2 days) so that students and other UM staff members may know their availability;
- Chairs, or their representatives, are expected to support the summer Freshman Orientation program by holding departmental advising meetings during the two face-to-face orientation sessions and by being accessible by phone, email, and/or posted office hours during the online registration period in late July;

- Chairs receiving a summer stipend sometimes supervise an occasional independent study or internship to help students graduate in a timely manner;
- Vacations during the instructional period for a modest period (e.g., up to a week) may be taken with prior notification to the Dean's office. Chairs are responsible for identifying a back-up chair during such absences;
- Availability in August prior to the beginning of the contract year isn't necessary for most department chairs; however, either the chair or a representative should be available in case of an emergency*;
- Historically, chairs in a few large departments have had significant summer obligations and, as a result, have received some additional summer salary support from the Dean's office. The salary received by these chairs is scaled to the amount of work they need to perform during the summer.

*Chairs must insure offices are open from 8am -5pm Monday through Friday or that backup arrangements are made. (This is based on State Law)