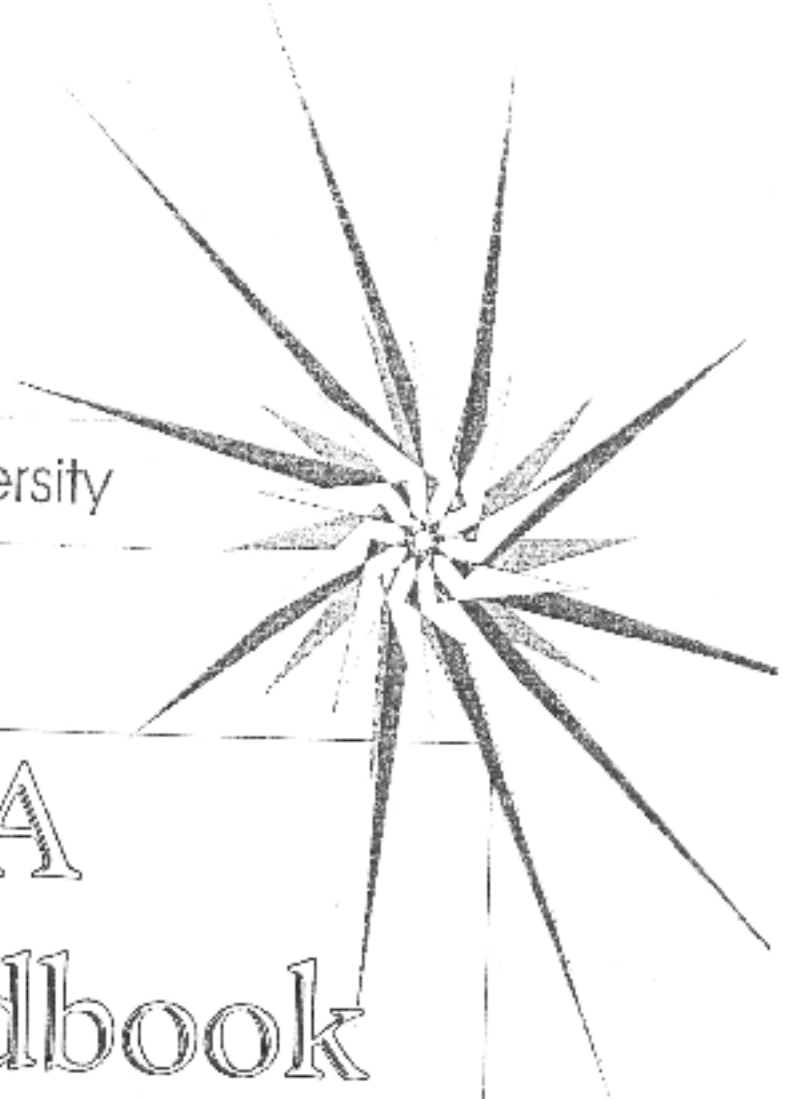


Youngstown State University



A
Handbook
For the
Department
Chair

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PREFACE

In January, 1993, Dr. James J. Scanton, Provost of Youngstown State University, established a Task Force to review the role and responsibilities of Academic Chairpersons. The members of the original task force were Bernadette Angle, Barbara Brothers, Terry Diederick, Tom Dobblesstein, Gordon Mapley, Patricia McCarthy, Susan Russo, Tom Shipka (chair), Frank Tarantine, and John Yemma.

A document was drafted that began to define the role of the chair in the complex society of university life. Among the recommendations of the original task force was that a standing committee be formed to continue to address the role and needs of the chairs and to help train new chairs in their various responsibilities. At the same time, the campus was immersed in the process of becoming an institution where each component of the campus would have a voice in the future of the university. With this in mind, communication became a major focus between colleges and departments.

This standing committee, referred to as the Chairpersons Development Committee, is composed of a representative chair from each college, assigned to a three-year term. Deans are not part of this group; however the committee will meet regularly with the provost and/or his assistants. Among the responsibilities of the Chairpersons Development Committee is the determination of agenda items for each University Chairperson meeting as well as the planning and organizing of special events such as retreats, workshops, and training sessions. The Chairpersons Development Committee is also charged with communicating issues and information to the other chairs in the various colleges and addressing issues of concern that are presented by other chairs.

INTRODUCTION

Roles & Responsibilities of Chairs

A vital leadership position in university administration is that of department chairperson. Working with the dean and the faculty, chairpersons provide departmental management while teaching and continuing to develop as professionals. Since the faculty unit recommends the department chair, there is a natural inclination for that body to feel that the chair will act as a strong advocate in representing the needs of the faculty. While this is an honorable role, the chair must also serve as an administrator and leader of good academic practice and appropriate departmental goals as they relate to the strategic plan and mission of the college and university.

The chairperson deals with a variety of individuals within and outside the university setting. As such, chairs must be comfortable dealing with faculty, upper administration, alumni, prospective students (and families), community leaders, public school educators, counselors, advisors, and professional colleagues.

"The chairperson's job, obviously, is difficult and complex. A brilliant university or college administration with inept chairpersons *cannot* survive; an inept administration, with the help of a group of brilliant chairpersons, usually *can*."

Alan Tucker
Chairing the Academic Department

The role of the chair may at times seem paradoxical; since the dual assignment of teaching responsibilities and administrative leadership can become a challenge during the course of an academic year. A delicate balance must be achieved in order to be successful in this role. Our colleagues must not perceive us as administrators with minimal faculty responsibilities and concerns or as faculty with minuscule administrative duties. Chairs must be respected in *both* arenas of the academic community. The chair must *assist* faculty in *shaping* the department's future within budgetary and other constraints. While attending to these tasks the chair must maintain a *life-line of communication* between the students, faculty, and other administrators.

The issue of rewards for chairs is more varied and, in some cases, intangible. In our daily tasks, it is true that we often lose sight of the positive things that connect us to our chosen career. Chairing a department gives us a much closer look at the broader college and university missions. The collaboration between departments, the sharing of information and -yes- commiseration with other chairs generates a bonding that goes far beyond the collegiality of one's department. The job is never routine since each and every day offers new challenges and rewards, as well as new tasks that serve to generate energy and growth. For those who thirst for a taste of administrative work, this assignment offers an opportunity to explore that option, while keeping a hand in teaching and research. For some chairpersons, the rewards are truly altruistic, such as the pleasure of growing and shaping a department as a fundamental part of the college and university.

This handbook is an attempt to define the duties of a chair in the broadest terms. Certain categories of activities and responsibilities have been enumerated and, in other sections, items have been organized to make tasks easier.

It is the intention that this be a fluid document that will be periodically updated to meet the changing needs of a developing university. If you are an experienced chair, it is our hope that you will put forward your ideas and suggestions so that the next edition may provide further assistance for the future. If you are a new chairperson, it is our sincere hope that this document may assist you in your role as an academic leader. Truly, the job is complex and multi-faceted, requiring stamina, organizational proficiency, and interpersonal skills. Attention to detail is a crucial ingredient in a recipe that must also include a healthy dose of visionary focus. A chair needs patience, a sense of humor, a willingness to defend departmental concerns, as well as a knowledge of when to compromise, and a good sense of the role of the department in the college and the university. Above all else, a chairperson needs the support of faculty, staff, students, and other administrators. Beyond that, the chair needs to know that he or she is not alone. There are many who are working with the same issues, the same paperwork, and the same time constraints. There is some comfort in unity, and the knowledge that you are an important part of the academic team. Those elements that make a chairperson's job *"ambiguous and frustrating are the same elements that also make it challenging and interesting."* (Tucker)

ILLUSTRATIVE DUTIES OF ACADEMIC CHAIRPERSONS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH FACULTY AND DEANS

Department Governance

- ▶ Ensure the Efficient Functioning of the Department
 - Plan, convene, and conduct meetings of the department
 - Establish department standing and ad hoc committees
 - Encourage department faculty and staff to communicate ideas for improving the department and its services
 - Delegate appropriate department administrative responsibilities to individuals and committees
 - Appoint program directors and coordinators as necessary
 - Implement policies defined in the department governance document

- ▶ Act as a Leader in Representing the Department Within and Outside the University
 - Work collaboratively with the dean on matters relative to the department and the college
 - Serve as an advocate for the department
 - Serve as one of the department's representatives to the Dean's Advisory Council
 - In consultation with the Dean, negotiate and implement agreements with University Outreach, and other campus and off-campus entities, consulting administrators, faculty, and staff in the process

- ▶ Carry Out Actions Related to Planning and Evaluation of the Department
 - Develop and implement departmental mission, short-range and long-range goals, and policies in the context established by the college and university mission and goals
 - Determine what services the department should provide to the university, the community, and the state
 - Oversee development and implementation of the department assessment plan
 - Prepare the department for accreditation and program review

Communications and Public Relations

- ▶ Represent the Department to the University and Larger Community
 - Serve in an administrative capacity on various college and university committees

- Participate in community projects as an institutional representative upon appointment by the President of the university or another appropriate university official
- Propose desirable academic and administrative improvements in the college and university
- Document and communicate the department's needs to the dean and other appropriate decision-makers
- Serve as the department's principal liaison to individuals and organizations on and off campus, including professional societies and accrediting agencies
- Represent the department at various university and community events where a department presence is appropriate

• Coordinate Activities That Provide Information About the Department

- Process requests for information
- Complete forms and surveys requiring department action
- Direct requests for expertise to appropriate faculty members
- Process departmental correspondence
- Coordinate departmental events and functions, including guest speakers
- Host invited speakers and other official visitors to the department
- Conduct student and community tours of the department

• Promote the Department and the Faculty

- Develop and maintain cordial relations with the local media
- Assure that significant accomplishments of department members are brought to the attention of appropriate administrators, staff, and media
- Develop and maintain a positive image of the department on and off campus

Instruction

• Manage Tasks Related to the Scheduling of Classes

- Schedule classes offered by the department, consulting with faculty prior to submission of the schedule to the dean
- Issue permits for closed classes
- Determine appropriate class sizes for all courses
- Monitor department student credit hour production and oversee departmental ratios
- Hire, schedule, and mentor part-time faculty in consultation with full time faculty

- Approve admission of students in the "Sixty-Plus" program to courses in the department
 - Determine and monitor courses with lab, computer, or technology fees
- ▶ **Oversee Material Related to Instruction**
- Assure that textbook selections comply with the Agreement
 - Monitor the ordering of textbooks by department faculty
 - Act upon requests for emergency loans of textbooks from the YSU Bookstore
- ▶ **Coordinate Faculty Issues Related to Instruction**
- Establish course rotation projections
 - Assure that summer teaching assignments conform with the department rotation policy
 - Act upon requests of academic administrators to teach in the department
 - Assign faculty to advisement duty
 - Monitor faculty compliance with the Agreement in respect to syllabi, office hours, explanation of grades, retention of records, submission of grades, and other responsibilities to students
 - Assure that faculty conform to the department governance document
- ▶ **Ensure the Integrity of Instruction and Course Content**
- Monitor programs of study for students
 - Monitor academic progress of department majors, including requirements for the minor
 - Facilitate review, updating, and improvement in departmental curriculum and academic programs
 - Approve appropriate course substitutions
 - Monitor various assessment procedures utilized by the department

Personnel

- ▶ **Coordinate Appropriate Staffing Needs of the Department**
- Submit requests for replacements and new positions
 - Submit recommendations regarding the appointment, salary, and rank of prospective faculty members
 - Recruit, evaluate, and interview candidates for faculty and staff positions
 - Write and post job descriptions for all student assistant positions
 - Identify and hire qualified student workers
 - Assist newly appointed faculty and staff in the transition to YSU employment

- Assign substitute faculty as necessary
- Designate work appropriate to faculty and staff

▶ Encourage Faculty Professional Development in the Following Ways

- Evaluate faculty performance in teaching, scholarship, and service
- Help mentor probationary faculty
- Conduct tenure reviews
- Counsel probationary faculty at least annually as required by the Agreement
- Develop appropriate recommendations on promotion and tenure
- Nominate or recommend appropriate faculty for Distinguished Professor Awards
- Develop appropriate recommendations on applications for grants from the University Research Council or other granting sources, for sabbaticals and Faculty Improvement Leaves, for reassigned workload, and on other applications requiring an administrative recommendation at the departmental level
- Foster the development of each faculty member's special talents and professional interests
- Foster good teaching in the department
- Stimulate faculty scholarship, reassigning workloads as justified and as economically feasible
- Encourage faculty to apply for sabbaticals, FIL's, and reassigned time for special projects
- Encourage faculty to participate in state, regional, and national professional meetings
- Promote and conduct department colloquia and/or department speakers' programs
- Encourage faculty to participate in discipline-connected service in the community
- Facilitate periodic in-service training for faculty and staff to improve performance and to integrate new technologies, systems or procedures
- Disseminate literature and other resources aimed at improving teaching, scholarship, or university service
- Attend professional meetings
- Remain active as a researcher and publisher
- Read literature and attend conferences and workshops to improve one's performance as an administrator

▶ Oversee Issues Related to Faculty/Staff Performance

- Hold Step-One grievance hearings and render a disposition
- Recommend and justify termination for cause when appropriate
- Place appropriate materials in faculty or staff official personnel files
- Maintain department "working files" of faculty and staff, assuring reasonable access to such files

- Consult with the dean and various personnel officers on department personnel problems as appropriate
- Review student evaluations of faculty teaching
- Supervise and evaluate department clerical, technical, and student staff

▶ **Manage Contract, Salary, and Other Related Issues**

- Consider and act upon requests for exclusion from a particular scheduled evaluation by chair or by students
- Act upon requests for various types of leaves
- Arrange for reports by faculty on activities during sabbaticals or F.I.L.s
- Make recommendations on faculty applications for university payment of expenses for pursuit of a terminal degree or other advanced studies
- Recommend appropriate salary increases for degree completion
- Notify faculty of non-compliance issues risking forfeiture of pay, and implement forfeitures if appropriate
- Act upon requests by faculty to report for duty after the start of the contract period or before its completion
- Calculate and monitor faculty work-load
- Prioritize and oversee travel funds in conjunction with departmental travel policy
- Comply with the institutional policy on affirmative action
- Enforce institutional policies at the department level, including those on sexual harassment
- Promote knowledge of and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, including those related to disabilities, safety, research, and the environment

▶ **Promote Collegiality**

- Keep faculty and staff informed of actions of department, college, and university committees and other relevant activities and projects
- Attempt to promote harmony and reduce conflict among faculty and staff
- Provide leadership in issues of diversity

Student Relations

- Participate in department, college, and institutional recruitment and retention activities
- Develop a system of advisement of majors and other students in the department
- Advise and counsel students
- Review senior evaluations of majors
- Determine YSU course equivalents for courses at other universities to assist transfer students

- Respond to requests or inquiries by Student Government or various student organizations
- Hear, investigate, and act upon student complaints or suggestions related to the department
- Arrange for department assistance to college advisors upon request
- Evaluate applications for admission to the department's graduate program and for graduate assistantship in the program
- Develop and implement a program to strengthen the teaching of graduate assistants
- Write letters of recommendation for students seeking admission to graduate school as well as employment references

Budget Resources and Office Management

- Prepare the annual department budget
- Document and propose desirable changes in the annual department budget
- Propose additional department budget lines as necessary, including restricted gifts accounts
- Administer the department budget, making transfers as necessary and approving purchase orders generated on the mainframe
- Solicit suggestions from the faculty related to equipment and facilities
- Supervise all department space
- Monitor the distribution of office space as determined by the faculty governance documents
- Conduct an annual inventory of department equipment
- Apply for grants from foundations, government, and other appropriate sources
- Assure that faculty and staff reimburse the university or the department when appropriate
- Monitor and contain charges to the department budget
- Seek supplemental funding outside the department in the event of shortages in specific budget lines
- Manage department facilities and equipment
- Assure that department facilities and equipment are properly maintained, safeguarded, and in compliance with safety standards
- Act upon requests by faculty and staff for keys
- Maintain department records in accordance with institutional policies and the law, including student records
- Assess department needs for space periodically
- Oversee departmental relocations, expansions, and renovations

Auxiliary Unit Supervision

- Recruit and select personnel
- Supervise and evaluate personnel
- Prepare, propose, and administer the budget
- Set priorities
- Oversee facilities

Compensation and Benefits

Contract Length

The contract of chairs will be for the period of August 15 through August 14 (12 months)

Salary

For the "chair year" (August 15 through August 14) chairs will receive 11/9ths x their nine month faculty base plus a flat stipend. For 2001-2002, the stipend is \$3365.00. The flat stipend will be adjusted each year according to the average annual increase in administrative salaries. In addition, if one-half of the previous total is less than \$30,000, the difference between one-half of the total and \$30,000 will be added to the salary. Chairs of large departments based on full and part-time FTE - currently English, Math, Teacher Education and the Dana School of Music - will receive an additional stipend ranging from \$4000 to \$2000 to compensate for the size of the department and the corresponding workload (i.e. > 50FTE = \$4000, > 40 FTE = \$3000, > 30 FTE = \$2000).

Administrative Workload

Chairs are expected to spend a minimum of 20 hours per week on administrative duties.

Teaching Load

Chairs will normally teach 12 sh hours per academic year plus 3 sh hours during the summer. Chairs may negotiate a lighter teaching load in consultation with their dean. Reasons for a lighter load may include size of department, special projects such as preparation for accreditation, and significant committee responsibilities.

Chairs will receive extra compensation for teaching more than 3 sh hours during the summer. Chairs do not receive overload compensation for teaching more than 12 hours during the academic year.

Vacation

Chairs are eligible to take twenty-two days of paid vacation annually. Any vacation days not used in a given year may be rolled into next year's vacation time, with a possible accumulation of 40 days total.

Chairs should fill out the form, Vacation Request Professional/Administrative Staff, prior to the date of vacation.

Chairs are compensated for any unused vacation days at the time the chairs retire or return to faculty status.

Faculty will not be paid to substitute as "Acting Chair" while a chair is on vacation or engaged in a Research Professorship. However, with the agreement of the Provost, Dean, and Chair, when the Chair has an extended absence, a "Department Coordinator" may be selected. This coordinator will be expected to maintain normal departmental operations but will not have the full responsibilities or authority of a chair. Payment for this coordinator will be computed by assigned WH. WH assigned will be contingent on a variety of relevant factors (e.g., someone with limited responsibilities serving for a month might get 1WH, while someone serving for six weeks during a period of extensive responsibilities might receive 4WH). Funds for these WH will come from college's allocation for part-time faculty.

Chair's Leadership Awards

Five awards of \$1000 are available for chairs who have achieved distinctions in departmental leadership. This \$1000 award will be added to each chair's salary and maintained as part of salary computations as long as the recipients remain as chairs. Chairs may not earn this award in immediately successive years. The selection of the recipients is as follows. Nominations will be provided by deans during the fall semester. They will be reviewed by a committee consisting of two deans, two faculty members, and the Assistant Provost, with final decision made by the Provost. Committee members are selected by the Provost. The decision will be made by December 1.

Sabbaticals for Chairperson

The policy of the YSU Board of Trustees provides for up to three sabbaticals each year for nine or twelve months for academic chairpersons. The purpose of these sabbaticals is to enable chairpersons to pursue substantial scholarly or professional development activities.

Specifics include:

1. The sabbaticals involve a full assignment to scholarly or professional development activities. A chairperson is eligible for a sabbatical if he or she has not received one either as a faculty member or a chairperson within the past seven years and will have served at least two years as chairperson at the start of the sabbatical. The sabbatical can be awarded for a nine or twelve month period.

Twelve month sabbatical leave recipients will receive 100% of their nine month budgeted faculty salaries for the period of their leave. Nine-month sabbatical leave recipients will also receive 100% of the nine-month budgeted faculty salaries and will have the option of teaching and chairing during the summer. Insurance and STRS provisions will continue during the sabbatical period.

2. The application procedure will be as follows. The application will be submitted to the dean of the chairperson's college. The dean will submit the application with a recommendation to a committee consisting of one dean, one chairperson, and three full-time faculty. The committee will submit recommendations in order of priority to the Provost, who will award the sabbaticals.
3. Applicants are asked to provide a statement detailing substitute administrative arrangements resulting from the sabbatical. The statement will not be used to evaluate the merits of the proposal and will be detached from the proposal. The ultimate funding of a particular proposal may, however, depend on the suitability of the substitute arrangements.
4. Upon completion of the sabbatical, recipients are required to submit a written report of the results of their work to the dean of their college. The dean will forward the report, along with his or her written review, to the provost for inclusion in the chairperson's personnel file. Recipients of sabbaticals must return to the university for a minimum of two years of full-time service following the leave (or reimburse the university for the full amount of the salary provided during the leave).

Research Professorships

Up to 16 sh annually will be allocated, normally in blocks of 3 to 9 sh for research professorships. The purpose of these research professorships is to support chairpersons in their scholarly activities, including but not limited to those that lead directly to publication.

Specifics include:

1. The research professorships may be awarded in a variety of hour combinations depending on requests.
2. The application procedure will be as follows. The application will be submitted to the dean of the chairperson's college. The dean will submit the application with a recommendation to a committee consisting of one dean, one chairperson, and three full-service faculty. The committee will submit recommendations in order of priority to the provost, who will award the research professorships.
3. Upon completion of the research professorship, chairpersons are required to submit a written report of the results of their work to the dean of their college. This is for inclusion in the chairperson's personnel file. The dean will forward the report, along with his or her written review, to the provost.

The Watson Award

This \$1500 award is provided for outstanding chairpersons who are nominated during the period that the Distinguished Professorship nominations are requested. Typically one or two chairs annually receive this award which is presented at the Annual Honors Convocation in the spring.

Reference Materials and Events

In addition to the training sessions provided for new chairs, there are ongoing retreats and seminars on various topics each year. Excellent conferences also exist at the annual February conference sponsored by the Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development. The following is a partial list of reference materials available for chairpersons.

Newsletters

The Department Chair: A Newsletter for Academic Administrators, Anker Publishing Company, P.O. Box 249, Bolton, MA 01740, (508) 779-6190.

Academic Leader: The Newsletter for Academic Deans and Department Chairs, Magnoa Publications, 2718 Dryden, Madison, WI.

CSDC, a newsletter for the department chair, published by Washington University, Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling Psychology.

Books

Atwell, Robert, and Green, Madeline F. *Academic Leaders as Managers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

Arreola, Raoul. *Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 1995.

Buckingham, Marcus, and Coffman, Curt. *First, Break All the Rules*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1999.

Gmelch, Walter H., and Miskin, Va. D. *Leadership Skills for Department Chairs*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 1995.

Selden, Peter and Associates. *Improving College Teaching*. Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 1995.

Tucker, Allan. *Chairing the Academic Department*. Education Series on Higher Education. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1993.

Tucker, Allan; Gmelch, Walter; Higgerson, Mary Lou, and Hecht, Irene. *The Department Chair as Academic Leader*. American Council on Education, Oryx Press, 1999.

Maxwell, John C. *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1999.

Maxwell, John C. *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork*. Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2001.

Current University Documents (Chairs should keep on hand)

Part-Time Service Handbook
YSU-OEA Agreements (Faculty, APAS,
Classified)
YSU 2000
Code of Conduct
Travel Policy Booklet
Academic Senate By-Laws

Outcomes Assessment Plan
Department and College Mission & Goals
Statements
CUFS Guide
Development of Academic Infrastructure
Graduate Policy Handbook
University Guidebook

YSU Academic Department Chairs Evaluation Form

Name: _____
Department: _____
College: _____
Evaluating Dean: _____
Evaluation Period: _____ Return to Provost's Office by: _____

Chairs are expected to establish goals and objectives along with projected activities designed to assist in the successful management of the department within the mission of the college and university.

All academic department chairs hold certain responsibilities in common. These responsibilities are addressed in the "Handbook for the Department Chair" and are referenced in evaluating effective performance.

Section A: General Administrative Responsibilities

1. Department Governance: Establishes objectives and activities related to the mission and goals of the department in support of college and university strategic plans.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

2. Planning & Organizing: Demonstrates ability to logically and successfully plan, schedule and manage duties; delegate/assign work to others; marshal people/materials to accomplish goals; assure appropriate staffing of the department; and use time efficiently.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

3. Problem Solving/Decision Making: Demonstrates ability to anticipate, analyze and define problems; understand the overall impact of decisions; and interpret information effectively.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

4. Communication/Public Relations: Demonstrates the ability to foster and share expectations of the university with faculty and staff in a positive manner. Communicates effectively the needs of the department (personnel, space, finances) to the dean, while developing collegiality/cooperation among faculty and administration.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

5. Personnel Relationships: Demonstrates the ability to recognize and reward faculty in accordance with their contributions to the department; improve/maintain the department's image and reputation both on and off campus; and establish trust between members of the faculty and the administration.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

6. Professional Development of Department: Demonstrates the ability to guide/lead academic and curriculum development; stimulate or rejuvenate faculty vitality/enthusiasm; foster the development of each faculty member's special talents or interests; and encourage research/scholarship activity in the department while maintaining a personal commitment to professional growth.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

7. Enrollment Performance: Demonstrates the ability to lead and guide the department in targeted enrollment goals through the development of consistent recruitment strategies while maintaining a focus upon student retention and graduation rates.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

8. Diversity Goals: Demonstrates the ability to address departmental diversity goals through the promotion of curricular development as well as recruitment of a more diverse faculty and student population.

Evaluator's Comments/Recommendations:

Section B: Performance Development Plan

This space is provided for the chair and dean to jointly define strengths and areas of further development.

I. Administrative strengths:

Actions projected to capitalize on strengths:

Actions dean will take to support chair in actions identified above:

II. Administrative areas of further development:

Actions projected to assist development:

Actions dean will take to support further development:

Section C: Comments

Evaluator's comments and recommendations regarding chair's progress and achievement related to goals and objectives set in Sections A and B:

Dean's Signature: _____ Date _____

Chair's Comments:

Chair's Signature _____ Date _____