CHAIRS' HANDBOOK
HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES

1. CHAIR TERMS AND TRANSITION

1.1 DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM CHAIR TRANSITION

Chairing a department or a program is a responsibility that all members of the faculty should expect to assume at some time unless significant extenuating circumstances can be demonstrated. The position generally is held for a period of three consecutive years to establish continuity and familiarity with the responsibilities of the position. An orderly rotation of the position in the department or program should be established by the members of the department or program in consultation with the Provost and the Dean of Faculty, with only tenured faculty members participating in the rotation of appointments.

Accordingly, tenured faculty members are expected to serve as Chair in three-year cycles. This is generally interpreted as following the order of when they received tenure. Some departments/programs however opt to have a standing chair, elect the chair every three years, or split/defer the tenure of a chairship (the latter is normally a result of an incoming/expected chair being unable to serve at the time of transition but agreeing to take on those duties later). The department/program is responsible for managing the timing and selection of chairs but should be respectful and equitable of the opportunity for all tenured members to serve as chair. While the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs defers to the department/program to manage its chair rotation, it retains the ability to mediate departmental/program disagreements and disputes over the appointment of a chair.

Chairs normally begin their term on July 1 and continue until June 30 of their third year. Chairs may start before or end after those dates (during summer recess) but should inform the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs of those changes. Normally, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will confirm chairs for the next academic year in late May and update on July 1 the Department and Program chair list.

In consultation with the Committee on the Faculty, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs agrees to the Chair's Relief Policy for each year of a chair's service and based on the size of the department/program. The Chair's Relief Policy can be found in Section 7.3 of the Faculty Handbook.

1.2 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest policies in the bylaws and Faculty Handbook assert that family members, partners, and associates should not participate or exercise supervisory authority in performance evaluations, classroom observations, assessments of courses and course evaluations, or tenure and promotion reviews; that they should not approve procurements, stipends, grants, or any other form of financial compensation; and that they should not participate in decisions involving campus resources such as offices or equipment. Faculty members, especially chairs, should notify the Provost and Dean of Faculty, if they have not already done so, of any such conflicts that may exist within the department/program.

Conflicts of interest do not necessarily mean wrongdoing, but do require recognition, disclosure, and equitable and fair management. Normally, this is achieved by simply recusing the chair from all deliberations and decisions involving their family members or associates. In such situations, a senior colleague, a recent chair, or another member of the program may act on behalf of the chair in those scenarios. Admittedly, not all departmental/program matters may be handled by assigning another member to oversee them. The department/program should have clear procedures and/or agreements about how these conflicts will be handled prior to the chair taking office or at the realization of the conflict. Chairs should discuss with their

department/program and/or the Provost and the Dean of Faculty ways to comply with the Handbook in these cases and notify the Provost and the Dean of Faculty of agreed upon protocols.

1.3 TRANSFER OF ACCESS TO DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

Toward the end of a chair's term, they should arrange to update the incoming chair on current departmental/programmatic matters that may carry over into the new chair's term. This is also a good time to familiarize the new chair with procedures, protocols, and documents of the department/program if not already shared with the rest of the department/program.

Current chairs should prepare (by the transition date—June 30-July 1) for the transfer of access to relevant documents. Many of these transfers (e.g., access to the budget on PeopleSoft and course evaluations) happen automatically through the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Others may require action on the part of the chair. Documents should be stored in an institutionally supported document management system, such as Canvas, Box, or OneDrive.

The following documents are recommended for continued storage, transmission, and maintenance by the chair. Copies of these documents may exist in other places on campus, but having access to relevant copies in a central locale may prove beneficial to the department/program in future endeavors.

- Department/Program Review Reports including External Reviewer Reports and Action Plans
- Faculty Review I, II, and III review reports and relevant letters from CoTaP and OAFA
- Updated Standards and Criteria (SAC) document
- Appointment/contract renewal letters for faculty members
- Staffing plans and leave schedules for the next four years or more
- Position requests for current and future/anticipated tenure-track lines
- Department/Program minutes, rules of order, and other organizational material
- Any significant curricular changes or revisions
- Communications and documents about ongoing, long-term issues and matters involving individuals outside the department/program.
- Other significant academic and department/program materials related to the curriculum, the faculty, and the operations of the department
- Other personnel correspondence concerning course releases, medical leaves, tenure clocks, and the like

1.4 DEPARTMENTAL/PROGRAMMATIC CULTURE

"No two departments are alike, and no two chairs are alike. Because of your personality, experience, and priorities, you'll do things differently than your predecessor, and your successor will not be a clone of you. That's actually better for your department and institution because new people bring new ideas and new approaches." (From Jeffrey L. Buller, 2012, *The Essential Department Chair: A Comprehensive Desk Reference,* second edition, pages 11-12, Jossey-Bass: California.)

The duties and roles of the chair are often dependent on the relationship that exists between the department/program and the chair, both in terms of the individual serving as chair and the historical role of the chair within the department/program. In some departments/programs, the chair has considerable— almost sole—responsibility and accountability for managing the institutional obligations and requirements of the department/program. In other academic units, the chair shares responsibility with a few to all members of the department/program. While some departments/programs are considerably collegial and interactive in their decision-making processes, others can be more hierarchical or more confrontational in their interactions.

These relationships nonetheless shape the duties and approaches that work—and do not work—for a department/program chair in a particular academic unit. They also provide greater clarity as to the expectations of the chair; the role of the faculty in decision-making, and in executive, academic, and budgetary policy matters; the ability to alter departmental/programmatic norms; and the relationship between the department/program and other campus constituencies. While this Handbook is intended to provide procedural routes to addressing institutional policies, chairs must find ways to navigate those routes in line with their own personalities and the culture of the department/program. Adding to the complexity, changing the culture, even if necessary, is not a quick and easy endeavor for a chair, especially working alone, and building consensus with others may be equally daunting.

The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs (OAFA) recommends that chairs communicate with their departments/programs about their perceived expectations as well as their challenges and goals for their tenure as chair. It is helpful to develop lines of communication about the expectations of the department/program and to be respectful of past protocols. Likewise, ensuring a culture of collegiality and clear decision-making (i.e., using Robert's Rule of Order, hearing out all sides on an issue, sharing institutional obligations when possible with others...) can be an effective first step in leading to change.

1.5 INTERNAL OPERATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING

As department/program operations and decision-making are best made as a part of a collaborative experience of the whole department, whenever possible chairs should involve the rest of the department/program in the process. While some areas of the chair's responsibilities should only involve the impacted individuals, broader operational issues and duties can be shared with others.

For chairs, it is often helpful to share some of the duties of the position with other department/program members. Chairing a search or review, attending admissions events, updating the website, arranging for speakers, and organizing events for majors are all activities that can easily be distributed within the department/program. Though the chair may remain responsible for those activities, delegating those activities can help in reducing the responsibilities of the chair, increasing the investment of others in those duties, and utilizing faculty colleagues in the operations of the department/program.

Moreover, chairs should involve the whole department/program in planning and deciding policies and activities that collectively affect faculty colleagues. Regular departmental/program meetings are useful in enhancing lines of communication within the department/program, developing and improving clarity around the aims of the discipline and curriculum, ensuring and addressing common challenges and concerns, and planning for future activities and events for faculty (e.g., reviews, searches, leaves) and students. Weekly, biweekly, or monthly meetings can play an important role in department/program decision-making and operations. Some recommendations for effective meetings include the following:

- Establish a set meeting time for the semester that minimizes/avoids conflicts. Communicate that early to the department/program and hold them as needed. (It is easier to cancel already-scheduled meetings than to schedule impromptu meetings during the semester.) Start and end meetings on time and schedule enough time for the meetings to be productive while allowing time for serious discussion and debate. Depending on your department/program and the issue, you may need one meeting per semester, one per month, or one every week/other week. Choose a reasonable schedule that is respectful of the time commitments of others, and encourage members to block off the time early in the semester.
- Create an agenda of major items that need to be discussed and decided and share with faculty colleagues prior to the meeting. Ask for additional items to discuss. Prioritize agenda items by urgency and significance of the matter. Not all agenda items have to be finalized by the end of the meeting; multiple meeting conversations about a major issue is not a bad practice (be sure though that the multiple meetings are not just about that one issue).

- Adopt and follow clear rules/agreements about how meetings will be conducted and decisions will be made. Be sure that the rules are fair to individual members while also building consensus and leading to fair decisions. (Revisit these rules periodically to ensure that they are achieving the intended purpose of the meeting.) Written rules for the conduct of meetings (Robert's Rules of Order, Democratic Rules of Order, etc.) are often helpful in organizing the process for deliberation and decision-making, especially in parliaments. It may be useful nonetheless for the department/program to write its own procedures for how decisions will be made. In many cases, these rules already exist but are not written.
- Ensure that everyone has an opportunity to speak on a subject, that their views are respected in the process, and that the final decision comes as close to consensus as possible. While the rules of order for the meeting may dictate this, the chair especially should work to ensure that everyone is heard in the process and that the process is fair to all members of the department/program, including those that were unable to participate (due to a scheduling conflict, leave, or other reason). While everyone may not agree on the final decision, it is important that all voices be respected in the process.
- Make decisions binding but not irreversible. Once the department/program has reached a decision, follow through and implement it. Ensure that the decision is doable and within the range of duties that the department/program can achieve (e.g., Make sure that it is not a violation and does not counter campus policies). Present opportunities to redress concerns about the decision if necessary at a later date, but also make sure those opportunities are not intended mainly to delay or forestall implementation. Establish expectations that encourage members to attend meetings regularly and accept decisions when they are not present.
- Record and share minutes from the meetings and the final decisions. A written record of proceedings may be useful in the future and sharing those minutes early ensures that everyone is clear on the decision. Minutes should be stored on an accessible, institutionally supported platform.
- Prepare for the meeting. Identify and organize relevant information for the meeting beforehand and provide members with materials to inform them on aspects of it. If established campus policies, comparative information from other academic units or institutions, best practices from other organizations, or past practices are required to make an effective decision, review them and provide them to the department/program. Talk with colleagues beforehand as well to get their sense of the issues involved.

Articulating the expectations of the department/program, related to office hours, syllabi, course objectives and preparation, classroom behavior and expectations, and the curriculum is an extremely important process for the department/program. Chairs should ensure that new faculty members in particular are made aware of these expectations and norms. While formal policies on these academic materials and practices are not required within departments/programs, they are helpful in setting the standards and expectations of the discipline.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF CHAIR DUTIES

I. Curriculum and staffing	Who should perform?	Administrative Staff Support Expectations
Annually submit a multi---year staffing plan that outlines staffing needs, to assist the Provost in determining contingent faculty hiring; ● Make recommendations to the Provost regarding continued employment of contingent faculty; ● Assist the Provost in determining departmental needs arising from faculty leaves;	Core Responsibility	Provide past enrollment data and teaching assignments to assist in planning (OAFA, Director of IR)

Prepare the necessary documents and make requests for new permanent faculty positions to advise the Provost in filling vacancies within the department;	Core Responsibility	
Coordinate teaching assignments and the department teaching schedule with the registrar's office (Feb–March);	Core Responsibility	Registrar's Office will provide a schedule template each semester for the coming semester.
Monitor enrollment and work in consultation with Associate Provost to meet departmental enrollment goals (November and April);	Core Responsibility	
Coordinate and sign off on departmental curricular proposals and make recommendations to CoAA;	Core Responsibility	
Mediate disputes among faculty with the support of OAFA;	Core Responsibility	
Observe and evaluate the teaching of tenure-track and adjunct faculty;	Can be Delegated	
Mentor pre-tenure faculty and adjunct faculty;	Can be Delegated	
Generate and update regular program assessment;	Can be Delegated	
Assigns students' advisors and sign major declaration forms;	Core Responsibility	
Hire and evaluate student staff (teaching assistants, interns);	Can be Delegated	All jobs posted in Handshake; supported by Academic Coordinators and HR.
Facilitate department/program reviews	Can be Delegated	Call will come from Vice Provost of Assessment.
Approve transfer courses	Core Responsibility	In coordination with Deans and Registrar.

II. Budget and resources	Who should perform?	Administrative Staff Support Expectations
Monitor the expenditure and allocation of funds;	Core Responsibility	Unimarket, Pcard, Independent Contractor Agreement; supported by Academic Coordinator.
Prepare and submit budget requests, including work-study needs;	Core Responsibility	
Ensure sound fiscal policies and procedures;	Core Responsibility	Academic Coordinators will provide guidance.
Oversee departmental space allocation and requirements in coordination with the Assistant Provost, Missy Weaver	Core Responsibility	
Manage allocation of department/program endowed funds	Core Responsibility	

III. Administrative duties	Who should perform?	Administrative Staff Support Expectations
Attend chairs' meetings and communicate relevant information to department/program members;	Core Responsibility*	
Oversee and schedule departmental meetings;	Core Responsibility*	
Handle student complaints and concerns;	Core Responsibility	
Supervise and mentor support staff, in coordination with Academic Affairs;	Core Responsibility	
Coordinate the selection of student awards;	Can be Delegated	
Serve as departmental liaison for admissions Events, prospective visits, and other institutional affairs;	Can be Delegated	
Serve as the departmental liaison on issues related to student retention and persistence;	Can be Delegated	
Schedule departmental events (speakers, lunches, senior presentations);	Can be Delegated	Academic Coordinators implement event plans, interface with offices on campus
Serve as the liaison for building--- related issues, maintaining instruments, facilities inspections, safety checks	Can be Delegated	

Represent the department in various ad hoc capacities (assessments and reviews, etc.)	Can be Delegated	
Oversee department/program website and communicate needed changes to Communications;	Can be Delegated	
Chair searches for new tenure track and contingent/part---time faculty	Can be Delegated	Academic Coordinators support search logistics, provide on--boarding to new employee (office, keys, computer, accounts, etc.)
Communicate with students regarding departmental events and affairs	Can be Delegated	Academic coordinators assist with communication.
Maintain inventory and control of departmental equipment and supplies;	Can be Delegated	Academic Coordinators can provide support.
Website maintenance;	Can be Delegated	Can be delegated to the Academic Coordinator to work with Communications (w/ faculty providing content).

May be delegated occasionally in case of unavoidable schedule conflicts

1.7 CHAIR'S CALENDAR

AUGUST	**Early/Mid-August** - New Faculty Orientation **Week before classes begin** - New Student Orientation; Opening Institute
SEPTEMBER	**Early September** - Last date for Chairs to meet with second-year faculty concerning contract renewal; 1st round of changes to draft of Spring Semester schedule due to Registrar
OCTOBER	**Early October** - Last date for meetings of new faculty with Provost and Dean of Faculty and Chair; Final round of changes to Spring semester schedule due to Registrar **Mid-October** - Board of Trustees Meetings **Third Monday in October** - Review II cases due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs **Late October** - Department and Program staffing plans due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs; Requests for sabbatical leaves due

NOVEMBER	**Mid-November** - Contract Renewal Recommendations from Departments and Programs for Second-Year Tenure Track Faculty due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs
DECEMBER	**Late December** - Notice to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs of pending retirements
JANUARY	**Early January** - Department Self-Study Report due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs for Reviews completed in Fall Semester; Last date for Chairs to meet with first-year faculty to review teaching **Fourth Monday in January** - Review III cases due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs
FEBRUARY	**Early February** - New course proposals due to Registrar; Round 1 Course schedule materials due to Registrar; Board of Trustees Meeting **Third Monday in February** - Review I cases due to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs (including temporary faculty in 3rd year)
MARCH	**Early March** - FSEM proposals due; Final course schedule materials due to Registrar
APRIL	**Late April** - HWS Day-No Classes
MAY	**May 1** - Last day to notify the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs of intention to undergo Review III in the upcoming academic year **Early May** - Board of Trustees Meetings
JUNE	**Late June** - End of Fiscal Year, all receipts for the current Fiscal Year submitted according to Business Office Policy. (Receipts submitted after this date apply to the next fiscal year.)
JULY	**July 1 -** New Chair Transition

In addition to the above Chairs' Calendar, The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs maintains on its webpage an updated schedule for the academic year, regarding major academic and campus events, important Dates and Deadlines. Deadlines and schedules related to the start of classes, the last day to

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submit grades, faculty meetings, and review schedules for the current semester can be found there. In addition, the Registrar Office maintains the multi-year Academic Calendar with other key registration dates. Though reminders are routinely sent prior to most due dates, Chairs are urged to note important deadlines early and to plan accordingly.

1.8 POLICIES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR CHAIRS

Along with the Faculty Bylaws, the Faculty Handbook, Sections 7 (Department/Program Chair Policies) and 8 (Department/Program Procedures) provide specific policies and procedures relevant to being to chair. The sections list the formal policies and procedures regarding faculty mentoring and advising, classroom observations, the chair's relief/compensation policy, requests for faculty appointment lines, hiring within a department/program, student employees, budgeting, and the deactivation of programs.

2. CURRICULUM AND STAFFING

2.1 CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

A major responsibility of the chair is oversight of the department/program's curriculum. This involves ensuring clarity around degree requirements, proposing new courses, scheduling courses, declaring/auditing majors and minors, and addressing programmatic needs and opportunities as they arise. This section of the Chair's Handbook outlines the chair's responsibilities in those areas.

As department/program faculty hold primary control of the standards and expectations of their discipline at the Colleges, the chair is responsible for ensuring that those standards are clearly articulated in institutional documents, are reflective of the norms of the department/program and are upheld consistent with the expectations of the department/program. In general, the requirements and expectations of each department/program are already established and the chair needs simply to continue existing policies. Nevertheless, departments/programs may decide to make changes to their curriculum, resulting from developments in the discipline, results of a program review, or staffing changes. There are two primary types of curricular changes that departments/programs tend to make, both require approval from CoAA.

2.1.1 CHANGING DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The first type of change is to the **degree requirements** for the major or minor. Departments/programs may decide to add, remove, or alter requirements for the degree in the academic program. These decisions should be made in full consultation and agreement with the faculty in the department/program and should be communicated to other faculty members that may be directly impacted by the change (e.g., adding, dropping, or requiring a course taught in or a prerequisite for another program). To submit degree requirement changes, chairs should submit such changes to CoAA, usually as a memorandum describing the proposed change(s), the rationale for the change, and the anticipated impact on the department's course offerings and students in the major or minor. Copies of the current and revised declaration/audit forms should also be submitted with the proposal. (The Registrar can help in creating a revised declaration/audit form.). CoAA may ask for additional information if needed to approve the proposal.

Normally, students should have the ability to complete the degree requirements of a major or minor in place when they matriculated. Most significant changes to degree requirements thus may be delayed for full implementation until the last matriculated class under the old curriculum has graduated. Changes to a minor can be approved simply by CoAA. Substantial changes to majors however often must be registered and approved by the New York State Department of Education, after CoAA's approval. The Office of

Academic and Faculty Affairs will submit revisions of a major to NYSED after CoAA's approval; final approval can take up to a year, but averages about three months.

Departments/programs proposing a new academic degree program or seeking to convert a minor into a major should complete the New Academic Program Proposal Form (also available on the Online Forms page), instead of submitting a memorandum to CoAA. The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will submit new major requirements to NYSED after CoAA's approval; final approval can take up to a year, but averages about three months.

Programs that wish to discontinue a major or minor degree program should submit a memorandum to CoAA describing the rationale behind their decision, the number of current students declared for the degree—and thus the impact of the change—and a timeline for dissolution. Note, as students should have the ability to complete the degree requirements of a major or minor in place when they matriculated, plans for dissolving a current degree program must allow for matriculated students to complete the degree.

2.1.2 CHANGING COURSE OFFERINGS

The second type of curricular change is to **course offerings**. Departments/programs may decide to add additional courses to their curriculum to address curricular need and/or interests. Course Proposal Forms for creating a new course, Bidisciplinary course, First Year Seminar, Readers College course, and off-campus program course are available on the Online Forms page. Normally, faculty members proposing a new course should submit the relevant completed form to the department/program chair. The chair will sign the form and send it either to other individuals for their signature if needed (i.e. FSEM and Bidisciplinary courses) or to the Registrar's Office for CoAA approval. The Chair of CoAA or the Registrar's Office will inform the instructor proposing the new course when the proposal is approved and may communicate with the instructor about any questions that CoAA has about the proposal.

A few additional short notes on completing Course Proposal Forms:

- Generally, only courses proposed by tenured or tenure-track faculty members are listed in the Catalogue as part of the department/program's course offerings. Temporary faculty should normally offer courses that are already in the Catalogue and generally may offer up to two specialty courses during a full-year appointment. Courses proposed by temporary faculty can count towards the degree requirements of a department/program.
- Chairs should ensure that class size of proposals at different levels (100-, 200-, 300-, 400-) are consistent with class sizes currently in use.
- A proposal checked as "repeatable for credit towards the degree" indicates that course material will be sufficiently different in different course iterations to permit students who repeat the course to get credit for each iteration.
- The Aspirational Goals of the Curriculum (quantitative reasoning, scientific inquiry, artistic process, social inequality, cultural difference, and ethical judgment) are certified through the completion of courses that have been approved by CoAA as addressing the Goal substantially or partially. CoAA recommends that (1) no course be listed as substantially addressing more than two goals and (2) no course be listed as partially addressing more than three goals. Chairs should make sure that course proposals adequately articulate and reflect their contribution to the Goals.
- Chairs may not sign as the department/program chair for course proposals for their own courses. A senior member of the department/program must sign instead, indicating the department/program's approval of the course. Departmental/program norms may dictate who can sign in lieu of the chair.
- Bidisciplinary and FSEM Course Proposal Forms require the signature of the director of each

program prior to submission to the Registrar's Office. The Associate Provost for Academic Faculty Affairs and Strategic Development currently serves as the director of the two programs.

- Should a department/program wish to remove a course from being listed in its regular offerings, the Chair simply needs to notify the Registrar's Office. This course will be deactivated in PeopleSoft.

2.2 UPDATING THE CATALOGUE

The Catalogue is the primary and official reference for information about the faculty, curriculum, academic policies, degree requirements, and courses of the Colleges. The electronic version of the Catalogue is updated regularly with changes as they are made. Each year, in the spring semester, the Registrar's Office asks chairs to review their official Catalogue entry for accuracy. Chairs should review the current faculty listing, program description, major/minor descriptions, and the course offerings and descriptions.

Intended to be a quick process, the review begins in February and finishes by the middle of the Spring semester. The chair and the department/program should review relevant areas for accuracy and ensure that details are up to date. Any new course offerings or curricular changes, as well as significant changes to course descriptions, must first be approved by the Committee on Academic Affairs before those changes can be made. Chairs are urged to remove courses that will not be offered in the next four years for the Catalogue. (The course will be deactivated in PeopleSoft.)

2.3 OVERSEEING ACADEMIC SCHEDULING AND PLANNING

The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs maintains on its webpage an updated schedule for the academic year, regarding major academic and campus events, Important Dates and Deadlines. Deadlines and schedules related to the start of classes, the last day to submit grades, faculty meetings, and review schedules for the current semester can be found there. In addition, the Registrar's Office maintains the multi-year Academic Calendar with other key registration dates. Though reminders are routinely sent prior to most due dates, chairs are urged to note important deadlines early and to plan accordingly.

In particular, the Registrar's Office will send scheduling instructions and reminders regarding the academic calendar, registration, and advising at key moments during the academic year. See Chairs' Calendar in Section 1.5.3, above.

2.4 COURSE SCHEDULING

Departments/programs and their chairs should take care in scheduling courses each semester to balance the interests and preferences of individual faculty members with the needs and wishes of students (majors/minors and non-majors) and the institution as a whole. Specifically, chairs should strive for balance among department/program faculty in their teaching loads (2-3 versus 3-2), teaching days (MWF vs TR), class times (peak times versus nonpeak times), and levels (introductory versus advanced courses) to help spread out course offerings across the academic day. Moreover, the chair should work to ensure that there are sufficient courses to meet student demand across class years. Finally, Chairs should coordinate with other relevant programs (particularly within a division) to avoid unnecessary scheduling conflicts.

Chairs should facilitate a collaborative process among department/program members to meet the needs described above. It is important for instance to avoid putting all introductory courses at one time or scheduling two or more related courses— courses which may attract the same cohort of students—in the

same class period. Similarly, prerequisites and the courses that follow should be offered in consecutive semesters to support students in moving through the curriculum. Working with the Registrar's Office, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs, and other departments/programs likewise can be extremely helpful in ensuring that the proposed schedule functions well.

Additionally, as part of the General Curriculum, the First Year Seminar program needs faculty members to teach FSEMs in addition to courses in their department/program. Many departments/programs already have cultures that support and encourage faculty members in offering courses outside of the department/program. The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs recommends that all departments/programs contribute at least one FSEM each year and that those with more than four faculty lines offer more FSEMs. The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs also encourages departments/programs to accommodate faculty members in supporting interdisciplinary programs.

Open registration provides an opportunity for chairs to make modifications to the coming semester's schedule based on student demand for courses and under- and over-enrollments. Note: Beginning in the Fall semester of 2024, any class offered at the 100- or 200-level that does not enroll six students will be canceled. Any faculty member with an under-enrolled lower-level course may choose to convert any canceled class into a set of independent studies or they may choose to teach a different course. OAFA will work closely with faculty who have had their courses canceled, and chairs should participate in these conversations.

2.5 MULTI-YEAR PLANNING

In addition to the academic year planning processes described above, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs requests that departments/programs provide a two-year Staffing Plan indicating the expected courses to be taught over the next two years and by whom. Moreover, the Registrar's Office has added a Projected 4-Year Course Offerings link to its site in the hopes of helping to communicate to students and the rest of campus the upcoming course schedules.

Staffing plans are due every October and should anticipate faculty and curricular needs in the projected schedule. These are opportunities for the department/program to discuss what courses will be offered in the near future and who will teach those courses and to identify curricular gaps that may need filling. While Staffing Plans are often approximations and can be amended, a realistic plan is useful for students in particular in planning their long-term schedules. Knowing when a particular course for instance will be offered again may help to alleviate some student anxiety. Multi-year planning gives students an opportunity to map out when they can and should take particular courses, helps to identify and address long-term curricular issues, and communicates to other faculty related or interesting courses to come.

Department/program chairs are encouraged to review the projected course offerings and to submit Staffing Plans to assist with this endeavor. The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs nevertheless urges departments/programs to create four-year plans that would also be advantageous to long-term curricular discussions and problem solving.

2.6 HIRING

2.6.1 POSITION REQUESTS

To request a tenure-track line, the department/program chair must submit a Position Request to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. The requests should focus on staffing issues, academic contributions

including to the General Curriculum, enrollment pressures, available facilities and office space, mentorship, and diversity of the curriculum and the faculty. Position requests are normally due by the first week of February and are reviewed by CoAA, CoFac, and CoDE. All of these committees make recommendations to the Provost and the Dean of Faculty, who ultimately decides which lines to approve for tenure-track positions. Departments/Programs authorized to hire normally are expected to conduct the search in the following academic year with the new hire starting in the subsequent year (i.e., positions authorized in 2024-25 will be searched for in 2025-26 and the new hire will start in 2026-27).

The HWS Faculty Recruiting and Hiring Handbook outlines procedures and timelines for all stages of hiring (at all levels), beginning with position requests and concluding with hiring decisions. Forms are included in the appendices. The Faculty Handbook, sections 8.1-8.4, offers further information as well as guidelines for hiring student employees (8.4.1).

2.6.2 HIRING A NEW POSITION

Once authorized to hire, whether for a tenurable or visiting line, the chair or another designated member of the department/program should follow the *Faculty Recruiting and Hiring Handbook*, in organizing the search. All necessary procedures and steps are laid out in the Recruiting and Hiring Handbook. Questions should be directed to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.

Though the department/program may have another person chair the search, the chair should monitor its proceedings to ensure proper and appropriate steps are being taken as defined in the Recruiting and Hiring Handbook. The Provost and the Dean of Faculty may require a search committee to redo steps that are skipped or may fail the search entirely, should oversights of the Handbook occur. The chair normally should meet with all candidates of searches, particularly around questions of courses and scheduling.

The Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will notify the search committee chair of the acceptance of an offer at the conclusion of a search. The Department/Program chair should be in touch with the new hire about scheduling and transition to the Colleges.

2.6.3 WELCOMING AND MENTORING A NEW FACULTY HIRE

Welcoming a new colleague is an important endeavor for a department/program as it helps to set the tone of interactions and experiences the new hire will have. It is important for the chair and other members of the department/program to reach out and welcome new colleagues to the department/program and campus. Moreover, for tenure-track faculty members especially, it is important for the Colleges to provide a supportive environment for their academic growth and development and their integration into the department/program. Chairs should take the lead in ensuring that new colleagues are familiar with the policies of the Colleges, acclimated into the campus and department/program, and mentored and supported by colleagues.

When a new instructor or professor is hired for a full academic year position or a single semester, the *Faculty Recruiting and Hiring Handbook* should again be consulted in addressing administrative and support needs of the new hire.

In the first year of service at the Colleges, whether in a visiting or tenure-track line, faculty members should be introduced to norms, culture, and expectations of the department/program and the Colleges. While the chair may not take a lead in this process, they should ensure that new faculty members are properly supported and welcomed. New faculty members should not accept or be assigned advisees in

that first year and should be discouraged from taking on significant service in terms of faculty governance, committee work, and other obligations. Chairs should also protect the time for new hires that have not completed their terminal degrees and provide support of the completion of degree requirements. Chairs also should identify ways of supporting new faculty member's teaching (finding a mentor, visiting classes, encouraging participation in workshops/sessions at CTL), and scholarship (support in finding internal and external funding, reviewing articles and chapters, inviting them to conferences).

2.7 PROGRAM REVIEW

The Colleges conducts once-per-decade reviews of all academic departments and programs to assess their contributions to the Colleges' mission. These reviews consider the ways in which departments and programs further the success of the Colleges through their contributions to the curriculum, the scholarship conducted by faculty and students, and their engagement in the life of the institution.

Each review includes (1) a self-study conducted by the members of the program, (2) an external review conducted by a visiting committee comprised of two faculty from other institutions, and (3) a response and plan developed by the program under review.

The specific process, schedule, and timeline for Program Reviews is detailed in the Department and Program Review Procedures on the OAFA website. The chair plays a key role in organizing and scheduling the review, though another senior person in the department/program may be assigned to fulfill that responsibility. In addition, the department/program chair is responsible for the implementation of the action plan.

3. BUDGET AND RESOURCES

Department/program budgets are assigned by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs in conjunction with the Business Office and the Finance Office. The budget cycle follows the fiscal calendar of the Colleges (July 1-June 30) and funds do not carry over from one year to another, unless in specific endowment accounts. Kenda Furgeson in the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs has access to specific budget amounts throughout the year and is available to assist chairs with understanding and accessing their budgets. Chairs also have access to their respective budgets through PeopleSoft. During New Chairs' Orientation, OAFA will work with new chairs to ensure they can access the department/program budget.

3.1 AUTHORIZED AND ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES

Authorized expenditures from department/program budgets follow the Expenditure Guidelines stated in the Faculty Handbook, section 8.4.2

Additional expenditure guidelines regarding entertainment and special gestures, independent contractors, and travel expense reimbursements can be found in the Policies and Guidelines section of the HWS Business Office's website. Reasonable expenses related to hiring and recruitment searches, faculty and department/program reviews, and individual start-up funds are authorized separately by the Provost and Dean of Faculty. Questions regarding authorized expenses should be directed to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.

Chairs should also be mindful of non-reimbursable expenses—charges that Colleges policy does not allow to be credited to a department/program account. These expenses are identified in a various parts of

the Policies and Guidelines sections of the HWS Business Office's website, specifically related to the Entertainment and Special Gestures Guidelines, the Travel Expense Reimbursement Overview, and the Unallowable Costs Policy. Of particular note in the Entertainment and Special Gestures, chairs should be aware that gifts of an individual and personal nature to acknowledge a major/significant life event; and events aimed at the entertainment and acknowledgement of students, faculty, and staff, especially events involving alcohol, are generally not reimbursable or allowable. Likewise, other personal expenditures, such as child and pet care, lawn/home maintenance, commuter costs, and charitable/political contributions are also not reimbursable or allowable under the Colleges' policies.

Chairs are reminded to stay within their allocated budgets and to avoid additional unallowable expenses. Though chairs are not authorized to augment their budgets without the approval of the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs, they may change expense accounts/categories within their budget.

3.2 REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING SUPPORT

Additional budgetary funds may also be authorized by the Provost and the Dean of Faculty for speakers or retreats for academic and curricular purposes. However, the chair normally should use the department/program budget, consistent with the policies of the Business Office, to cover these expenditures. Likewise, the chair may request support from other departments/programs to sponsor speakers and lecturers. Depending on the speaker, non-faculty offices may also be willing to contribute to the costs of a speaker.

While funds are limited, the chair may request that the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs cover some of the expenses of the speaker or retreat. Depending on the budget cycle and available funds, resources may be limited and chairs do not have a guarantee to the funds unless specifically authorized by the Provost and the Dean of Faculty. Chairs should use the Speaker Request form (https://www.hws.edu/pdf/CampusSpeakersRequestForm.pdf) and submit it to OAFA@hws.edu to request funding for a speaker. Note: Chairs should not commit to an event until funds to cover the event have been secured. Requests to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs should arrive at least two weeks prior to the event.

Whether funded solely by the department/program or partially by other campus sources, chairs should be mindful of the expenses incurred for the event and should exercise economical and reasonable practices in expending these funds. Using the campus guesthouse, Harris House, or one of the approved venues for lodging; inviting no more than four participants total (two students and two faculty) for meals at local restaurants; following the Colleges' policy regarding meals and drinks; and arranging to pick up speakers at the airport are important mechanisms to control these expenses without sacrificing hospitality. Similarly, using campus facilities, resources, and personnel for department/program retreats is also a financially responsible step to consider. Please work with your Academic Coordinator to complete the Independent Contractor Agreement and refer to the Campus Guest Checklist on the OAFA website for the most current guidelines, resources, and policies.

3.3 STUDENT EMPLOYEES

Departments/programs at times may use their budgets to pay a student employee for a short-term position to conduct relevant work for the office. Normally, for office work, the Academic Department Coordinator will handle this employment out of the department/program budget and, in a multiple-department/program office, use different budgets equitably to cover the costs. Note: All student positions must be posted in Handshake.

Should the chair or members of the department/program hire students separately from the Academic Department Coordinator, they are encouraged by the Faculty Handbook to use work/study students and to pay them at the current minimum wage rate. Section 8.4.1 of the Faculty Handbook explains this policy.

The Office of Human Resources manages a website on Student Employment for the Colleges. Job postings, information for students and supervisors, and steps for submitting a job posting are located there. Additional information on Student Employment through the Federal College Work Study program is available through the Financial Aid Office. Chairs are encouraged to work with their Academic Department Coordinator in using student employees. Alternatively, they can contact the Office of Human Resources for steps to follow or questions to address.

3.4 ACADEMIC SUPPORT STAFF

Staff members are essential avenues of support for the operations of departments/programs and specifically for chairs. Knowing the responsibilities and whom to contact about issues, questions, and problems can quickly speed of the resolution of those obstacles and make the job of chairing a little bit easier. Below are descriptions of academic support positions, their roles on campus, and their relationship to the chair.

3.4.1 ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT COORDINATORS

Academic Department Coordinators provide administrative and clerical support to faculty members in all aspects of their profession, including reception, answering telephones and relaying messages, typing, copying, and filing. A list of ADCs and their assigned buildings can be found on the OAFA webpage. Below is a list of some of their duties. Depending on their academic area, additional duties may also be included.

- Respond to inquiries requiring a broad understanding of work-area policies and procedures. Ensure that any inquiries are addressed and resolved.
- Resolve non-routine problems in a thorough and timely manner; use discretion in contacting the appropriate party to resolve a given issue and complete tasks.
- Compose and edit documents. Produce and coordinate class materials, including handouts, syllabi, exams, etc. Make photocopies and collate materials, such as grant proposals, tenure and promotion cases, and on-campus visits.
- Use various software, including PeopleSoft, Unimarket, Baseline, Outlook Office, Publisher and 25Live. Easily navigate the web and perform searches.
- Create and maintain data bases specific to the department (Excel, Access). Research and gather information for projects and faculty personnel reviews.
- Assist with faculty searches including job advertisement with discipline's organizations' listservs and/or their website's job posting pages. –respond to applicant inquiries, assist applicants with use of Interfolio, coordinate job candidate travel and overnight stays for on-campus interviews, compile interview schedules. If it is necessary for applicants to submit materials via a different method, the ADC may need to upload copies into Interfolio or Human Resources for appropriate training if needed.
- Assist with the coordination of campus events including IT needs, meetings and appointments, prospective student visits, travel arrangements, and catering.
- Oversee budget monitoring including checking purchases against statements and maintaining proper files. Follow up on purchasing/accounting discrepancies. Prepare purchase orders using Unimarket. Process payments stipends, faculty travel reimbursement, and honoraria.

- Maintain filing systems and monitor efficiency. Manage updates as needed specific to own area.
- Maintain office supplies and inventory.
- Assist with faculty office assignments including the following: order keys, name plates, furniture, coordinate office computer (desk top or laptop) with IT, Human Resources and other departments.
- Inform various campus offices of faculty away; forward mail as needed.
- Train and coordinate work of student workers.
- Provide support for Student Learning Feedback Forms.
- Assume other related duties as required or assigned.

Chairs should communicate with and work with ADCs on projects and needs of the department/program. Given their experiences and training, ADCs can be an important resource on purchasing supplies, completing reviews and searches, and assessing PeopleSoft.

3.4.2 LAB DIRECTORS, INSTRUCTORS, AND SUPPORT STAFF

Lab directors and instructors are generally hired in the sciences to assist with laboratory set-up, design, and instruction. Depending on their appointment, they may not have faculty status and may have limited teaching responsibilities. They may be included in department meetings and decision-making at the discretion of the department.

Regardless, they report to the chair of the department who serves as their supervisor and is responsible for their employment, work assignments, and performance reviews. Chairs should work with their department colleagues, lab directors, and lab instructors to ensure that lab responsibilities and duties are being met for the department as a whole. While ultimate decision on their employment and responsibilities rests with the Provost and the Dean of Faculty, department/program chairs are their immediate supervisors and should take necessary steps to ensure an effective work model.

3.5 FACILITIES RESERVATIONS AND VEHICLE POOL

Faculty members should use the 25 Live on-line classroom reservation system to book a room or to see availability: http://www.hws.edu/offices/registrar/ and click on Classroom Reservation System. Arrangements for accommodations in the Colleges' Guest House, Harris House, for official campus visitors is available through the office of Conferences and Events.

- *Houghton House:* This house is an instructional facility and office area for the Art Department, and an official College entertainment center. The first-floor dining room and kitchen, northeast porch, and large drawing room may be reserved for official College purposes, as arranged by the Facilities Coordinator.
- *The Henry W. Hanley Biological Field Station and Preserve:* The Hanley Biological Field Station and Preserve of Hobart and William Smith Colleges is a private area available for instruction, research, and nature study. Members of the college community are welcome to use it for activities including hiking, nature study, ski touring, and similar recreation. No rocks, plants, or animal specimens may be collected for any reason without special permission. If Chairs are interested in visiting the Hanley Preserve, please contact the Department of Biology for information on its location, use, and restrictions.
- *The William Scandling:* Hobart and William Smith Colleges' research vessel, *The William Scandling*, is available for use by qualified Colleges staff, and to outside institutions, organizations, and investigators via application. Use of the vessel may range from participation in pre-planned research

opportunities, involving students in the basics of oceanographic technique, to extended research voyages designed to meet the needs of the most sophisticated specialist. For additional information, availability, and cost, contact the vessel captain at 781-3758.

- *Campus Vehicle Pool:* The Colleges' vehicle pool consists of several vans and cars which can be rented for educational and departmental trips as well as athletic trips. A reservation must be in writing and received at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled trip. All drivers of Colleges-owned vehicles must furnish evidence of a current, valid driver's license and pass a general Colleges' driving test. Reservations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis through the Office of Conferences and Events: http://www.hws.edu/offices/conferences/van_form.aspx. Please plan ahead when reserving vehicles.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

4.1 STUDENT LEARNING FEEDBACK FORMS

As noted in the Faculty Handbook, Section 5.6, all members of the faculty are urged to create and use Student Learning Feedback Forms each semester for all courses taught. Information about SLFFs is available online at Online Course Evaluations Using Evaluation Kit and is updated each semester. Faculty members and chairs can access completed SLFFs from Academic Department Coordinators after the final date for grade submission.

Faculty members and department chairs are urged to review course evaluations regularly for the purposes of formative feedback. SLFFs are not to be used as evaluative tools. Chairs should assume responsibility for advising untenured members of the department/program in the use and assessment of feedback forms and for identifying areas that may need work before the faculty member's next review.

Chairs should take steps to ensure that feedback forms are examined with an eye towards the potential for implicit and explicit biases against faculty members based on the noted social positionalities. Chairs and faculty members may wish to consult the Office of DEI or the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs to identify ways of identifying and addressing these biases when they emerge.

4.2 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Classroom observations are a defined part of the review process for evaluating teaching effectiveness, and a completed classroom observation regimen normally consists of two observation cycles (a cycle is defined by two visits to the same class in one semester by the same faculty member). The chair is charged with assigning faculty members to conduct classroom observations with faculty members during this process. The rationale and procedures for classroom observations are set in Bylaws Section e.2.1.b.

4.3 CONTRACT RENEWALS

Department/Program Chairs play a central role in the review process for tenure-track faculty members. Contract renewals are the first significant step in the review process following the hire. Most initial appointments for a tenure-track position cover the first two years of a faculty member's hire. In order to extend their contracts to Review I, faculty members must pass the contract renewal stage, which extends their contracts an additional two years to a year past Review I. (Faculty members hired under an accelerated tenure clock may not require a contract renewal. The appointment letter will indicate whether one is needed, as well as the reminder from the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.)

Contract renewals are an opportunity for the department/program and the faculty member to assess their

relationship. As the focus is primarily on the faculty members' teaching, the renewal assesses their ability to contribute effectively to the curriculum of the department/program and to engage students successfully in their academic development. Scholarship is a secondary concern at contract renewal, and there are no expectations for community service at this stage.

In early September, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs sends out a reminder to chairs who need to do a contract renewal. By the third week of the Fall semester of the faculty member's second year, the chair should meet with the faculty member to discuss the process for contract renewal and materials that need to be reviewed. Based on the materials, the chair drafts a brief summary (1-2 pages) of the materials and provides departmental/program members participating in the renewal process a copy of the summary and access to the materials. Based on that meeting, the chair writes a letter to the Provost and the Dean of Faculty with a recommendation for or against the renewal. The letter is due by mid-November. CoTaP reviews any negative recommendations for procedural adequacy. The Dean of Faculty and the Provost normally follows the recommendation of the department/program, but ultimately holds the final decision. The Provost and Dean of Faculty notifies the faculty members of the final decision and extends the successful candidate's contract for two years—a year past Review I. Unsuccessful candidates have the right to grieve and to request a reconsideration. A negative decision does not renew the faculty member's contract beyond the end of that academic year.

The standards and procedures for contract renewal are explained in Section A.1.e.1., contract renewal, of the Faculty Bylaws. All candidates for tenure-track positions are given a copy of this section of the Bylaws during their campus interview with the Provost's Office.

4.4 FACULTY REVIEWS I, II, and III.

Section A.1.e, Standards, criteria, and procedures for contract renewal, reappointment, tenure, and promotion, of the Faculty Bylaws describes the standards and procedures for Review I, II, and III at the Colleges. Chairs should review the procedures and standards of the review process to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities in the process, as they may have been amended by the faculty since the chair went up for review. Additionally, the chair is responsible for ensuring that steps prior to the actual review of a candidate (SAC documents, campus observations, review of course evaluations, scheduling/planning for reviews etc.) are properly completed, as well as overseeing that faculty reviews—whether the chair serves as a member or not—comply with the procedures of the Bylaws. Amongst the duties of the chair concerning faculty reviews are the following (although this is not an exhaustive list):

- The chair ensures that the Standards and Criteria (SAC) document is up to date, reflects the views of the department/program, is consistent with the Bylaws, and has been approved by CoFac. The chair also ensures that new faculty members and those approaching a review are aware of the expectations as written in the document.
- The chair maintains copies of appointment and reappointment letters, contract renewal letters and responses, past review reports and relevant letters from CoTaP, the Provost and the Dean of Faculty, and any other correspondence regarding academic or professional conduct of members of the department/program. The chair may also want to maintain a list of departmental activities and services of faculty members. These materials should be transferred to new chairs as part of the transition process.
- Chairs are expected to meet with faculty members to discuss course evaluations and teaching support. They may also help untenured faculty members in planning the steps to a successful review, including advising on teaching and scholarly resources to address concerns that may arise at review.

- Chairs should ensure a schedule for classroom observations for faculty members as required by the Bylaws.

4.5 FACULTY LEAVES

The Chair is responsible for helping the department/program to plan accordingly for the absence of a faculty member during a leave. As departments/programs are not guaranteed a replacement during a leave, Chairs must be mindful to ensure adequate academic coverage, especially of course requirements, when faculty members take leaves.

Scheduling of leaves thus falls under the auspice of the department/program, specifically the chair. The Chair is responsible for scheduling and planning leaves in consultation with faculty colleagues and faculty members should work together to help minimize the impact of any one leave on the curriculum. An effective and clear four-year Staffing Plan can be helpful in this regard. Where possible, the chair should try to arrange schedules to have the smallest possible impact on the curricular offerings of the department/program. When this is not possible, the chair may request approval from the Provost and the Dean of Faculty for a visiting position either through the Staffing Plan document or through a request directly to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.

In late September, the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs puts out a call for untenured, post-tenure, and sabbatical leave requests. Individual faculty members are asked to submit a letter of intent for the leave during the following academic year to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs by late October. Requests are approved only for the following academic year and leave requests that cross academic years require different requests to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs and approval from the Board. Requested leaves will be confirmed with the department/program Staffing Plans. The Provost and Dean of Faculty will present leave requests to the Board of Trustees at its January meeting for final approval and will notify faculty members of that approval shortly thereafter.

All leave requests should be consistent with the applicable leave policy. Chairs should work with faculty members to ensure that they are in compliance with a sabbatical leave request, that the leave is properly accounted for in the Staffing Plan, and that the request for a sabbatical leave is submitted to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs in a timely manner.

4.6 MONTHLY CHAIRS' MEETINGS

Department and program chairs are responsible for attending monthly "All Chairs" meetings, which are organized and facilitated by OAFA, and for reporting necessary information out to department/program faculty members. A schedule of the semester's chairs' meetings will be transmitted at the beginning of each semester.

4.7 STUDENT SUPPORT

Students are expected to declare a major by the middle of their Sophomore year though they can do so at any time after their first semester at the Colleges. To declare a major or minor, a student needs the signature of both a faculty advisor within the department/program and the chair. Normally, the faculty advisor is expected to review the requirements for the major or minor and outline with the student how to complete those requirements. As the final department/program check on a student's declaration and audit forms, the chair reviews the listed courses and plan for the student to ensure that major or minor requirements are being effectively met. As identifying potential problems earlier is essential to effective

advising, the chair should be sure that the declaration form is in line with departmental/program expectations and upcoming course offerings. Disagreements about the requirements for the degree program should be settled with the advisor directly or with the department/program as a whole. Chairs may also want to use the declaration form as a way to monitor departmental/program enrollments and evaluate course demands within the academic unit (i.e., the need for more/fewer seminars or major-only courses).

Audit forms, though identical to declaration forms, are different in that they certify that students have met requirements of the major or minor and identify what additional courses are needed, if any, for completion of the degree program, rather than just providing a plan. This is usually the final confirmation from the department/program about degree requirements, though the Registrar's Office may have questions about a required course or requirement. The chair should communicate any changes to degree requirements to the Registrar's Office (see Curriculum Management and Administration above).

In addition to the registration of majors and minors, chairs also have an obligation to ensure that students are accurately informed and advised about the requirements of their respective degrees. Generally, faculty advisors take on this charge and the chair may confirm intended and stated requirements when signing off on declaration and audit forms. Chairs should also ensure that faculty advisors are clear about the requirements for the major and when necessary, clarify with the whole department/program those requirements. (As stated above, the chair should ensure that the Catalogue, website, declaration/audit forms, and other references to the department/program's curriculum clearly and consistently articulate those requirements.) Some departments/programs host informational sessions for all majors/minors to update them at one time about degree requirements, courses for the upcoming year, expectations of students in the classroom, and academic and career opportunities in the discipline. While this is not a formal expectation of departments/programs or Chairs, the approach does help in building a student culture and awareness of the curriculum.

Chairs inevitably will be contacted about student academic issues involving a particular course or department/program faculty from the students directly, the Deans, or the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Like faculty members, chairs are encouraged to refer phone calls from parents to the Dean's Office or the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Often, when the concern comes directly from the student, it is best for the chair to serve initially as a listening board for the student's issue. The chair should remain impartial. With fuller information (after contacting the faculty member involved or others that may provide additional insight into the situation), the chair should meet with the student, if necessary, to discuss the situation in light of the department/program's interests. In some instances, students simply feel that they have not been treated fairly; in others, they want special treatment. It is important for the chair to hear out reasonable concerns and to attempt to resolve the situation in a professional and respectful manner consistent with the interests of the department/program and the Colleges. In situations where the chair feels incapable of solving the issue, they should refer the student to the appropriate Dean (if the concern is about the student) or the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs (if the concern is about the faculty member).

Students often go to or are called to their respective Dean when they have academic and classroom issues. The Deans play an important role in advising and supporting students through the academic process and coordinating services with other offices and are regularly involved in student disputes and complaints involving individual faculty members and their courses. While some of these concerns are about the student's performance, others may relate to the impact of a course's syllabus, policies, or classroom interactions. In most cases involving students, the Deans will attempt to gather information from the faculty member involved and assist in finding a solution to the matter. In other cases, they may refer the matter to the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs for assistance in resolving the matter.

Chairs may also find themselves in a position to refer students (or to advise other faculty members to refer

them) to the Deans or other support services. Many faculty members are already aware of the needs of our students and cognizant of the support services available through Hubbs Health Center, the Counseling Center, the Deans, and related offices. If a faculty member or other campus individual brings the issue of a student perceived as needing assistance, chairs may take the lead in referring individuals to the appropriate office or encouraging other faculty members to do so. Respecting the privacy and confidentiality rights of students is essential in all such cases.

Moreover, and especially for academic issues, it is often essential to identify such issues early in the process. The earlier students are identified as struggling academically in classrooms, missing frequent classes, or seeming disconnected from the classroom experience, the sooner the Deans and others can assist them to ensure that they are getting the proper support and resources to be successful. Chairs should also encourage their colleagues to complete Midterm Progress Reports early and to inform the appropriate Dean when serious problems emerge. If there is a pattern of neglect or failure, it is more likely to be identified by faculty members reporting their experiences early. It is also helpful to keep an accurate record of attendance/nonattendance and academic difficulties to assist in documenting this pattern.