Georgia State University

2016-2017
DEPARTMENT CHAIR LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES
Office of Faculty Affairs

November 7, 2016
Legal Hot Topics for Department Chairs
Kerry Heyward, Office of Legal Affairs

GSU’s counsel shares the common issues at the department-level that get referred to the Office of Legal Affairs. Approaches to proactively deflect these problem situations and processes when confronted with them will be discussed.

December 9, 2016
Developing a Departmental Culture of Collegiality and Inclusion
Kelly Alexander, University Ombudsman.
Greg Lewis, Department of Communication
Gertrude Tinker-Sachs, Department of Middle and Secondary Education

Chairs often have to handle tensions/difficult interactions amongst individuals or groups in the department. These can flare up during a faculty search or in the course of promotion and tenure deliberations. The implementation of new FLSA regulations has the potential to change relationships between faculty and staff and introduce new complexities. Some chairs also report on the challenge of fostering inclusivity and sensitivity amongst colleagues, particularly when the faculty is not diverse. This session will focus on approaches that chairs can take in handling these situations and creating a climate of collegiality and inclusion.

January 20, 2017
Assigning and Managing Faculty Service Loads
Elisabeth Burgess, Gerontology Institute
Michael White, School of Art and Design

Faculty committee service is essential for conducting departmental business. How should chairs distribute service loads so as not to overload those that are most willing/effective in these roles while motivating others to become better “citizens of the department”? To what extent should a chair “protect” junior faculty from service responsibilities? Are there differences in expectations (conscious or unconscious) in service expectations of male and female faculty members? This session will be an opportunity for chairs to share their experiences and exchange notes on best practices.
February 28, 2017

Advising Faculty on the Expression of Political Views
Kerry Heyward, Office of Legal Affairs
Sally Wallace, Andrew Young School of Public Policy Studies
Eric Wright, Department of Sociology

The issue of academic freedom and the expression of controversial political views has come into sharp focus at many universities in recent months. Questions that are being posed include: Are there legal limits to the extent that a faculty member, as a university employee, can/cannot express their political views? How do we negotiate situations when a faculty member’s expression of political positions may cause an unintended but significant (negative) impact on the institution? How should the right of faculty members to express their personal political views be balanced with the goal of ensuring an open and inclusive instructional environment? These and related questions will be taken up in this session.

March 24, 2017

Mentoring Assistant Professors about P&T
Laura Frederick, Dept. of Educational Psychology, Special Education, and Communication Disorders
Michael Crenshaw, Department of Physics and Astronomy

One of the critical responsibilities of a department chair is to ensure that newly hired junior faculty have a good understanding of the expectations for getting P&T at GSU, and receive regular feedback on their progress toward this goal. When should these conversations begin? Are they best imparted one-on-one or to junior faculty as a group? What is the role of the chair versus other senior faculty in the department? How do chairs counsel junior faculty in areas such as, for example, expectations for productivity, selection of outlets for research/professional work, engaging in multi-author collaboration vs. independent research, selection of external reviewers? What is the optimal point between being too prescriptive (faculty member feeling stifled) and being too vague (faculty member may drift in a wrong direction)? These and related issues will be taken up in this session.

May 1, 2017

Maintaining a Research Agenda while Serving as Department Chair
Mark Geil, Department of Kinesiology, Chris Henrich, Department of Psychology, Kathryn McClymond, Department of Religious Studies.

Department chairs often struggle to carve out time for their own research given their many administrative responsibilities. Time reserved for research frequently gets sacrificed to deal with unexpected crises or last minute requests. How can department chairs maintain their research agenda and productivity without neglecting their responsibility to the department? This session will provide a forum for strategies and practices that chairs use to remain engaged in their research projects.
June 6, 2017

International Student Recruitment in a Changing Environment
Lisa Armistead, Associate Provost for Graduate Programs, Wolfgang Schloer, Associate Provost for International Initiatives, and Heather Housley, Director of International Student & Scholar Services.

U.S. colleges and universities nationally are experiencing a sharp decline in international student applications and enrollments this year as a result of myriad factors including the new political climate. The declines are particularly steep for STEM fields which have traditionally attracted large numbers of international graduate students. What strategies can departments deploy to maximize their international student enrollment given this national context? How can they best manage the impact on their programs and budgets as a result of the inevitable decline in student numbers? This session will explore the national trends and patterns and provide a forum to discuss strategies for minimizing the impact of the decline in international students coming to GSU.