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## **Basic Principles of the Role of the Academic Lead** *Including Selection, Appointment and Performance Supervision*

Each degree and credit certificate program the university offers using self-support funding is subject to all standard CSUN academic policies and practices. Each self-support degree and credit certificate program is offered by the relevant CSUN academic department (or college for multidisciplinary programs) and is under the full academic oversight of that department/college. The department/college applies the same academic standards to the self-support programs as those that apply to any other program in the department/college.

To further ensure that each self-support program receives focused academic attention, the Tseng College has created the role of the academic lead.

1. The dean of the college in which the program has its academic home selects the academic lead for each program (usually in consultation with the relevant department chair/chairs). The selection is then discussed with the dean of CSUN's Tseng College. If the dean of the Tseng College concurs, the agreed-upon candidate is then confirmed by the dean of the college that is the academic home of the program in a written statement or email sent to the dean of the Tseng College.
2. The appointed academic lead works regularly and collaboratively with the department chair for single discipline program and with the dean (or associate dean) of the college for multidisciplinary programs to define, implement, and approve decisions related to the program. However, the final responsibility for the overall performance of each academic lead resides with the dean of the college in which the program resides.
3. The academic lead should be a tenured faculty member of the college, given the challenges that may face a non-tenured faculty member responsible for oversight of the instructional performance of tenured faculty members. Generally, it would be a member of the faculty in the department in which the program resides for a single discipline program. For multidisciplinary programs, it would generally be a member of the faculty from one of the departments represented in the program's multidisciplinary curriculum.
4. Given the primary duties of the academic lead, the faculty member selected should have recognized achievements in instructional excellence in the field. The academic lead should be a faculty member able to guide and mentor other faculty members/instructors as needed and engage faculty in the ongoing improvement of the instructional excellence of the program.
5. The academic lead serves for two years from the time of appointment by the dean. The term can be proposed for renewal by the dean of the college in which

the program has its academic home, or a new academic lead can be proposed. If the dean of the Tseng College concurs with the proposed approach, the appointment goes forward. For renewal or a new appointment, the process outlined in item 1 above is followed.

6. If the academic lead fails to perform effectively in the role or violates any standards of academic integrity, the term of the academic lead may be ended at once by the dean of the college in which the program resides. For example, the academic lead is expected to align decisions with a focus on the academic quality and instructional excellence of the program, and the academic achievement of the students. Decisions that are primarily made to advantage or avoid conflict with colleagues may be grounds for the dean of the college in which the program resides to end the term of service of the academic lead. The dean of the Tseng College would alert the dean of academic college in question that the performance of the academic lead is not in keeping with the standards and practices for CSUN self-support programs.
7. Academic leads cannot assign themselves to teach a course in the program for which they serve as academic lead. If they are to teach in the program, that assignment must be approved in writing by the chair of the department in which the course has its academic home, and by the dean of the college in which the program resides.
8. The primary responsibilities of the academic lead are to provide oversight of the instructional quality of the program, resolve instructional issues with faculty member(s), encourage and support instructional innovation and improvement, respond to academic questions from students, and resolve academic issues that any student in the program may have. Working collaboratively with the department chair(s) and the Tseng College's assistant dean for program development, the academic lead also participates with the faculty team assigned to the program for the development and ongoing refinement of the program.
9. The academic lead ensures that those assigned to teach in the program are prepared to teach successfully. The academic lead provides coaching and mentoring for all faculty teaching in the program in order to support instructional excellence and an optimal faculty/student experience.
10. The academic lead introduces new instructors to the learning goals of the program, how one course builds on others in the program, and how the course the new instructor will teach fits into the full program. The academic lead also introduces new instructors to effective instructional strategies for midcareer students that are the focus of the program. If a faculty member joins the program later than the initial curriculum integration phase, where the courses and their interconnections are discussed, the academic lead is also responsible for bringing that new faculty member up to speed on the various other courses in the program and how they relate to the course the new faculty member will be teaching. The academic lead should also introduce the new faculty member to others teaching in the program, in order to establish the connection amongst them, so they can further discuss the course connections.

11. The academic lead should also be aware of the 125% rule regarding additional pay that is applicable to all faculty at CSUN being compensated through the additional pay system. The 125% rule should be conveyed by the academic lead to all faculty teaching in the program and also inform the faculty that they are responsible for managing their workload related to the 125% rule.
12. For online programs, the academic lead ensures that each instructor works effectively with the instructional design team in the distance learning unit in the Tseng College. The academic lead ensures that each instructor keeps with the online course production schedule developed for the program and each course within the program.
13. The academic lead monitors the instructional excellence of the program and addresses problems as they arise if assigned instructors are not meeting expected obligations. This includes showing up on time to class, teaching for the full scheduled class time, providing timely feedback to students on assignments, being active and engaged at the expected levels for any online courses, and submitting grades on time. The academic lead keeps the department chair informed if issues raised are significant and/or recurrent. The academic lead also engages the chair of the department in which the program resides (or the dean for multidisciplinary programs) to address instructional problems that might put the reputation of the program and the academic achievements of the students at risk.
14. For single discipline programs, the academic lead works with the department chair to make instructional assignments. For multidisciplinary programs, instructors are recommended and then reviewed and approved by the chair of the department in which the course resides. Once the list of instructors for each cohort of the program are approved by the appropriate department chair, the full list of instructors must be approved in writing (email is acceptable) by the dean of the college in which the program has its academic home. The dean's approval of the instructional assignments is sent to the dean of the Tseng College.
15. Once the program is offered, the academic lead works in close collaboration with the assigned Tseng College program manager/coordinator (the administrative lead) for the cohort/program throughout the planning and running of the cohort/program, to identify and respond to instructional concerns or academic issues facing students.
16. Occasionally, an initial program offering may not launch due to insufficient enrollment. When that happens for the first time, plans will be made by the Tseng College to make a second attempt to launch the program in the following semester or academic year. During this "gap year", the academic lead is expected to continue reviewing the student applications on a rolling basis, keep faculty informed and engaged regarding the program, and provide support for any promotional efforts as requested by the associate dean of the Tseng College.