

# Chair compensation at HSU

**History:** The role of the department chair occupies a singularly difficult roll on University Campuses. Chairs have enormous responsibilities, but nearly zero power. They are not quite administration, but also not quite faculty (at least for their chair duties). A thorough report written for the Chancellor's Office in 2002 on Department Chair Duties<sup>1</sup> concluded, "*Chairs are expected to shuffle mounds of paper and respond to a multitude of requests from all levels, the administration, faculty and students. Chairs are expected to guide their departments in the present and help plan for the future, yet often they do not have the fiscal authority to distribute resources to best support these expectations...Chairs not only do not have the authority to do more than 'respond' to the requests of others, they do not have the time.*" This report acknowledged the increased workload expected of chairs at the time. Without question the pace of increased expectations and complexity of chair workload has only increased over the last decade and a half. Our campus has also seen a drastic increase in Chair Duties over the last 15 years. In particular the frequency and number of reports due through PREP far exceeds the expectations of a once every 7 years program review. Likewise, as the tenure track density has fallen on our campus, chairs spend a significant portion of their time finding and evaluating temporary faculty.

While the duties of department chairs has evolved over the years, the way in which assigned time for those duties is allotted on our campus has not. On our campus, each chair must negotiate with their Dean an FTE percentage of their chair duties. For instance, a chair with a 0.4 FTE chair appointment will have  $0.4(15 \text{ wtu}) = 6 \text{ wtu}$  paid at their "chair salary". Of those 6 wtu, 4.8 wtu will be culled from their teaching load [ $0.4(12 \text{ wtu})$ ] and 1.2 will be from their collateral duties [ $0.4(3 \text{ wtu})$ ]. Some chairs (and deans) may not even realize that these appointments are negotiable and simply agree to the historical assigned time allotted to previous chairs for that department. This type of historical compensation model clearly leads to inequity amongst chairs, particularly those who are willing to negotiate and those who don't know that they can.

**The Model:** To eliminate this inequity, several of our sister campuses have used a model based on measurable department size data to determine chair assigned time. We have chosen to use the model created at Sacramento State University<sup>2</sup> in the early 2000s (and still in use today) as it is currently used by several other CSU. This model uses both FTE and headcount data for faculty, students and staff and is included on the spreadsheet provided. The model is included with the reference materials.

**The Results:** Based on the Sac State Model, HSU's chairs are drastically under supported. In light of these results, cutting chair compensation further seems cruel and we need to work to implement a model based compensation model to eliminate inequities.

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<sup>1</sup> *The California State University Department Chair Survey Report*, Chu & Veregge, 2002.

<sup>2</sup> *CSU Sacramento FTEA Allocation Formula*, Noble, 2003.