CAHNRS Support Program for Unit Leaders

Professional Development, Duties and Responsibilities, Compensation, CAHNRS Administration Partners, and End of Service Transitioning

1.0   Introduction

In many respects, the position of Department Chair, School Director, or Research and Extension Center Director can be the most difficult and challenging job at the university. Unit Leaders (which is henceforth used as the all-inclusive term for Chairs and Directors) must report to and work collaboratively with the Deans and Associate Deans of the College, and with the unit faculty, staff and students, who in turn report to and are supervised by the Unit Leader. As a result, Unit Leaders often act as intermediaries for information, requests, and directives that relate to these two groups, and Unit Leaders are sometimes "caught in the middle", acting as interceders when one side fails to appreciate the information conveyed, or disagrees with a request or directive.

The duties and responsibilities of Unit Leaders are complex and demanding, often requiring the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon, the fortitude of Beowulf, and the determination, humility, honesty, and leadership skill of Gandhi. For all of its difficulties and challenges, the position of Unit Leader can be very rewarding. The Unit Leader often has the most important and demonstrable impact on the daily lives of faculty members of any administrator in the University. A Unit Leader can help improve the morale, enhance the productivity, and foster the impact and reputation of his or her Unit, thereby advancing prospects for growth and investment in the Unit. In the process, the Unit Leader can accumulate a great deal of additional human capital in the form of management, leadership and interpersonal skills. As a result, chairs can become good candidates for higher administrative positions, or become very effective rank-and-file faculty leaders upon returning to the faculty of a Unit.

Unlike more senior administrators, Unit Leaders live in close proximity to the faculty whom they supervise and often return to the faculty after they complete their service as chair. As a result, they run the risk of encountering various forms of retribution for having made unpopular decisions relating to annual review content, tenure and promotion guidance or recommendations, salary recommendations, hiring decisions, teaching/RA/TA/Committee assignments, and other resource allocations even when such decisions are defensible and/or even optimal within an overall Unit resource and operational setting, and supported by Senior Administration.

2.0   Intent of Support Program

The overall intent of the program discussed in this document is to:
   a) support Unit Leaders with knowledge, mentoring, and skills they need to successfully carry out their duties and responsibilities as Unit Leaders,
   b) clarify the principal duties, responsibilities, and authority pertaining to the Unit Leader position,
   c) delineate the enhanced compensation package Unit Leaders will receive during and after successful completion of service,
   d) elaborate on the support Unit Leaders will receive from CAHNRS Administration for effectively executing their duties and responsibilities during their tenure as Unit Leader; and
   e) describe additional CAHNRS and Senior Administrative support that will be provided to Unit Leaders for facilitating an effective, productive, and overall successful return to the faculty upon completion of service.

The issues above are addressed in the sections below.

3.0   Unit Leader Development and Administration Partnering

The **CAHNRS Unit Leader Development and Administration Partnering** component of the Support Program contains a formal modular set of presentations and workshops designed to equip Unit Leaders with the principal knowledge and leadership skills that will facilitate successful execution of their duties and responsibilities and provide strong leadership to their unit. All new chairs in CAHNRS will attend this program in their first year of service. At the start of the program, more senior Unit Leaders will also attend the program in order for the entire cadre of Unit Leaders in CAHNRS to have a consistent and homogenous understanding of policies, procedures, and operational behaviors in the college, and thus provide consistent and coherent communications between the leaders of CAHNRS. The presentations and workshops will avoid an inordinate focus on "mechanics" associated with issues and topics and instead concentrate on the use of tools, strategies, and behaviors that lead to positive, defensible, and impactful outcomes.

Another component of the program will be a quarterly meeting of Unit Leaders to discuss, among peers, any issues, concerns, suggestions, or opportunities that may be of interest to this CAHNRS Leadership group. A more senior Unit Leader will solicit and prepare the agenda for each meeting, chair the meeting, and report back to Senior Administration any relevant issues that the group of Unit Leaders want the Administration to be aware of and/or consider. The Chair of these "Unit Leader Peer Meetings" will rotate each quarter, and the Chair will receive support from the Dean's assistant in preparing materials for the meeting.

A final ongoing component of the program is the pairing of the Unit Leader with a particular Associate Dean of CAHNRS, who will stand ready to interact with the Unit Leader, whenever requested or needed, to discuss any issues of importance or concern, answer questions of a procedural, policy, or operational nature, and provide general or specific guidance and advice if/when asked. This pairing is in no way meant to provide "micro-management" of a Unit, and cannot be used as a forum for decision making for the unit. Rather, it is a source of information, experience, guidance, and mentoring regarding the impacts of issues and decisions, with the expectation that the Unit Leader will then process the feedback received from this and other sources, and make decisions as he/she feels is in the best interest of the Unit.

3.1 Unit Leader Workshop and Presentations

The formal workshop and presentations component of the Unit Leader Support Program consists of interactive sessions with CAHNRS Senior Staff and Administration designed to enhance the knowledge and skills base of Unit Leaders in support of their responsibilities and duties, and includes a related project involving strategies and action steps to implement the strategic vision/plan of the Unit.

3.1.1   Interactive Workshop and Presentations

The following workshop modules will be presented to Unit Leaders over the course of an academic year (suggested topics are listed below, but they can be revised as appropriate and needed).

Module I. Funding (Led by D. Holbrook).
- Effective use of revenues generated by Academic Programs.
    - Understanding what resources are available and how they can be used.
    - Enrollment-based budgeting
    - Distance learning
    - Certificates and professional education
- Developing cost/revenue structures to support facilities and services.
- Managing a financial portfolio (F&A, state dollars, fees, gifts, accruals, service centers) for maximum impact.
    - Understanding what sources of funds can be used in certain situations that, for example, draw employee benefits or tuition waivers.
- Developing strategies for cost sharing effectively with the college.
- Policies and procedure related to grant submission, management and reporting.

Module II. Staffing (Led by S. Yaezenko)
- Faculty and staff development
    - Using annual reviews and other mechanisms to monitor and enhance performance.

- o Rewarding success: monetary and non-monetary incentives.
- Classified and AP staffing plans and management.
- Conducting position audits within a unit to update job duties and align with current needs.
- Position planning
    - o Building pinnacles of excellence
    - o Supporting the strategic vision for the unit
- Developing best management protocols for college wide implementation.
- Dealing with personnel issues – who and when to call.

Module III. Leadership (Led by K. Kidwell, supplemented by R. Koenig and J. Moyer)
- Unit-level governance:
    - o Implementing an effective organizational structure for involvement of faculty, in the form of advice and guidance, to inform governance of a Unit by the Unit Leader.
    - o Planning and conducting effective faculty meetings.
    - o Development and implementation of strategic visioning/planning for a Unit's future
    - o Enrolling faculty/staff into actively supporting the manifestation of the Unit's strategic vision/plan.
- Effective communication with faculty/staff
    - o Creating transparency in the culture.
    - o Accurate, honest, and frequent messaging.
    - o Facilitating constructive conversations.
- Delegation: avoiding the "servant leader" trap
    - o Effective use of committees and task forces.
    - o Succession planning for leaders within the unit: identifying and developing future leaders.
    - o Create a vision for leadership enhancement for faculty, staff and graduate students within the unit.
- Building community and connection within the unit.
    - o Share best management practices among units.
    - o Developing a team-oriented, collaborative, and collegial Unit culture
- Navigating Dissention and Conflict
    - o Having difficult but necessary conversations
    - o Dealing with a difficult faculty or staff member
    - o Policy and Procedural Options for addressing and mitigating unacceptable behavior and/or performance
- Leadership of the Three CAHNRS Functional Areas
    - o Academic Programs: Expectations of Units and Unit Leaders
    - o CAHNRS Office of Research Expectations of Units and Unit Leaders
    - o Extension and Outreach: Expectations of Units and Unit Leaders
- Presentations and case studies from CAHNRS units (Department/Centers/Programs) who have successfully implemented alternative strategies. Examples:

- o Increasing revenue generation from the enrollment-based budget model (SES,HD).
- o Johnson Hall Business Center as a working model for CAHNRS.
- o Service centers as successful revenue generators and self-supporting units (pesticide program, creamery, analytical equipment service centers [CSS])
- o Successful partnering between Pullman and R/E Center units and/or R/E and subject matter centers (example?)
- o Other?

In addition to the workshop modules identified above, it is mandatory that all Unit Leaders participate in the Chairs/Directors Workshop Series sponsored by the Provost Office, and attend all presentations that are appropriate to the Unit Leader's background and training, within 1 year of accepting the position. More details can be found at the following website: http://hrs.wsu.edu/Department+Chairs+and+Directors+Workshops

3.1.2. Strategic Planning Project

Every Unit has some rendition of a strategic plan, which may in fact need to be refreshed when the university's revised plan is approved in 2014 and/or when the CAHNRS plan is revised shortly thereafter. Over the course of the academic year, in conjunction with the interactive workshop/presentation component of the Development Program identified above, Senior Administration will engage each Unit Leader in a project to develop a formal action plan for implementing their Unit's strategic plan/vision. The end product of this project will be an explicit written document outlining executable steps for making operational changes, and measuring progress towards the achievement of the Unit's strategic plan/vision.

3.2   Unit Leaders ⟺ Associate Deans Advisor Pairings

The purpose of pairing Unit Leaders with Associate Deans of CAHNRS is to enhance joint administrative effectiveness and leadership among CAHNRS administrators and Unit Leaders and facilitate problem solving and strategic planning within each Unit.   Strengthening the connection between college administration and unit leadership will increase transparency and foster a culture of trust that can not only lead to better problem solving, but will also contribute to their prevention.

Each Unit Leader will be associated with an associate dean (AD) who will stand at the ready to act as the "first responder" and/or advisor/mentor for this individual. Unit Leaders are encouraged to contact their assigned AD as needed to discuss departmental or personnel matters, or to seek input or advice on departmental, college or university related policies and issues. The AD can also serve as a sounding board and/or as the first point of contact between the Unit Leader and CAHNRS Administration concerning important issues that develop within the unit.

3.2.1   Characteristics of Partnerships

- The first partner assignments will be announced in early January, 2014, and will be updated as needed.
- Unit Leader will be encouraged to contact their partner AD whenever they feel it would be useful to answer questions, seek advice, or solicit a "second opinion".
- ADs will work with each partner Unit Leader to establish a regularly scheduled check in meeting (monthly, quarterly, or as is felt appropriate for the Unit Leader) to ensure that a relationship is established and maintained.
- ADs will stand ready to attend at least two faculty or staff meetings per calendar year for each assigned unit, at the request of the Unit Leader, to discuss and respond to concerns or important college or university initiatives.

3.2.2   Initial Unit Leader ⇔ Associate Dean Pairings

Executive Associate Dean Kidwell
- AMDT
- HD
- SDC
- Food Science
- SES
- Mt. Vernon

Associate Dean Koenig:
- Hort
- CSS
- Entomology
- Plant Pathology
- Wenatchee
- WSC/VE

Associate Dean Moyer:
- IBC
- AS
- BSE
- SoE
- Prosser
- Puyallup

4.0 Responsibilities and Authority of Unit Leaders

4.1 Faculty Manual Guidance

Section I.A.3.a of the Faculty Manual describes the following duties of a department chair or School Director at Washington State University:

- *Subject to the approval of the Dean of the college, a department chair or school director is responsible for organizing and supervising the courses of instruction offered by the department, distributing the teaching and research load, caring for the equipment and facilities assigned to or in the custody of the department, and allocating and supervising department funds.*

- *When a department or school has teaching and/or research programs at sites remote from the location of the headquarters of the department or school, some of the responsibilities rest with or are shared with the Campus Dean or Director of the remote station. Such shared responsibilities include care for equipment and facilities, supervision of funds, and day-to-day supervision of teaching and research activities.*

- *The department Chair makes recommendations to the Dean for appointments, promotions, and salaries of members of the department, and transacts official department business with Deans, other administrators, and students. In the case of faculty at remote units, the department Chair shares information and coordinates recommendations with the Campus Dean or Director.*

- *A department Chair is expected to provide leadership in the formation of departmental policies and to hold meetings with all available members of the faculty on matters of policy. Except as limited by applicable general regulations and policies or as otherwise directed by the Dean or by the Provost and Academic Vice President, it is the department Chair's responsibility to execute the policies determined by this procedure. When this is not done, he or she should notify the administrative superior and the members of the faculty of the action being taken and the reasons therefore. However, department Chairs must have sufficient latitude to permit the making and the execution of day-to-day operating decisions and the exercise of leadership responsibilities.*

The faculty manual thus provides some general guidance regarding the duties and authority of department chairs, and school or center directors (henceforth referred to as Unit Leaders) at WSU. As an overarching one sentence general summary, in effect, the Unit Leader has complete authority and responsibility regarding all aspects of the operation and resources of Units, and while it is always important to seek faculty advice and perspective regarding major decisions

that affect the Unit, it is ultimately the Unit Leader who makes final decisions that are believed (by the Unit Leader) to be in the best collective interest of the Unit, the College, and WSU. The one important exception to a Unit Leader's authority relates to the academic curriculum of the Unit, for which the faculty of the Unit maintains complete and unequivocal authority as to its content, as well as any changes made to it over time. In this endeavor, the Unit Leader is obliged to ensure that the faculty makes all decisions regarding the curriculum, with majority rule.

While providing general guidance, these statements provide little explicit detail regarding the myriad of roles and expectations of Unit Leaders responsible for administering complex academic units within the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resource Sciences (CAHNRS). Below is an enumeration of the principal authorities and responsibilities of Unit Leaders within CAHNRS. Of course, responsibilities can differ across Unit Leaders depending upon the programs, facilities, and personnel located in the academic unit, and thus not all of the authorities and responsibilities listed apply in every case.

4.2   Principal Authorities and Responsibilities of Unit Leaders

The primary responsibility of a Unit Leader is to serve as the administrative leader of the unit. Although Unit Leaders are encouraged to contribute to teaching, research, graduate training and/or extension, where appropriate and feasible, these duties do not take priority over the duties and responsibilities of the Unit Leader position. Unit Leaders will be evaluated, first and foremost, on the basis of their success in leading the Unit. Assuming leadership of the Unit is successful, a Unit Leader will also be recognized and rewarded for additional contributions beyond Unit administration.

The principal responsibilities and authorities of a Unit leader are as follows.

4.2.1   Academic Programs

- Assure the highest quality educational experience for departmental majors, minors, and students enrolled in departmental courses by coordinating annual curriculum mapping and curriculum assessment activities, assuring student evaluations of teaching are conducted for every instructor in the unit, and implementing peer evaluations of teaching at the Unit Leader's discretion.

- Assign teaching and advising loads across departmental faculty and staff based on the guidelines provided in the "CAHNRS Course Delivery Expectations" document and the chair's perception of the most productive assignment of duties for each faculty member.

- Foster the delivery of high-quality graduate and undergraduate programs that exhibit consistent and sustainable levels of enrollment, achieve learning goals, and exhibit a high percentage of quality job placements.

- Encourage and acknowledge faculty in creating experiential learning opportunities in their classrooms and research programs.

- Encourage and acknowledge faculty contributions to the scholarship of teaching.

4.2.2   Research and Scholarship

- Promote and establish a culture of research and scholarship excellence among the Unit faculty and staff that emphasizes extramural funding, graduate student training, and peer-reviewed scholarship.

- Facilitate the development of integrated program planning that leads to strong competitiveness for local, regional, and national extramural funding.

- Foster excellence and ensure faculty accountability in mission-related programs funded by the ARC (when applicable).

4.2.3   Extension and Engagement

- Promote and ensure Unit faculty deliver high quality extension programs, where applicable, as well as participate in other engagement efforts that focus on measurable and reportable positive societal and stakeholder outcomes, including improvement in economic condition, environmental quality and/or quality of life.

- Encourage and ensure integration of departmental research and extension functions with appropriate county (program unit)-based extension programming.

- Foster content development and knowledge delivery through production of extension publications, online content, and other technology-based resources.

- Foster collaborative, interdisciplinary research and education programs on high priority issues.

4.2.4   Faculty/Staff Development

- Provide effective leadership and management of departmental personnel, including faculty, administrative/professional staff, and classified employees.

- Encourage and support professional development of faculty and staff.

- Make recommendations to the dean for appointments, promotions, and salaries of members of the department.

- Develop faculty and staff hiring plans that advance the strategic priorities of the department, college, and WSU.

- Conduct and be the ultimate authority responsible for annual reviews of Unit faculty and staff who are affiliated with a home department, and directly report to the Chair/Director, and ensure that all remaining faculty and staff receive appropriate annual evaluations, irrespective of the reporting supervisor.

- Ensure that faculty performance standards are applied appropriately, fairly, and fully in annual reviews, and in ways that provide clear recognition and rewards for performance excellence, provide clearly distinguishable rating differences among varying degrees of faculty performance, and explicitly identify faculty performance that is not sufficient to be categorized as "meeting expectations".

- For Unit Leaders with primary responsibility for conducting annual reviews, tenure and promotion evaluations, and salary recommendations, obtain explicit input from extension program unit directors, research and extension center directors, and regional campus academic administrators (where appropriate) to inform reviews, evaluations, and recommendations.

4.2.5   Administration

- Provide long-term strategic leadership to the department, including the development and implementation of its strategic plan.

- Provide leadership in the formation of departmental policies and hold meetings with all available members of the faculty to solicit advice on matters of policy and procedures.

- Transact official department business with deans, administrators, students, and other members of the university community.

- Work cooperatively and collegially with the Administration to ensure the Unit contributes demonstrably to the advancement of the strategic priorities and initiatives of CAHNRS, WSU Extension, and the ARC.

- Enhance and improve the Unit's infrastructure and program support using a portfolio of internal and external funding sources.

- Establish Unit committees, and appoint faculty members to those committees, for the purpose of advancing the operation and strategic objectives of the Unit.

- Allocate operating funds and technical support across faculty members and programs in ways that assures, from the Unit Leader's perspective, maximum positive impact on teaching, research, and extension activities.

- Exercise overall fiscal authority for financial management and budgeting within the department.

- Ensure that all departmental processes (personnel, program delivery, publications and media) are conducted in adherence with state and federal rules governing civil rights, affirmative action and equal employment opportunities.

4.2.6 Facilities and Operations

- Work in conjunction with CAHNRS Administration and the WSU Capital Planning and Facility Operations offices to improve Unit facilities and equipment through maintenance and replacement.

- Allocate space assigned to the Unit across faculty and departmental programs in a manner that supports excellence and productivity.

4.2.7 Public Relations and Stakeholder Engagement

- Work with the CAHNRS Communications and Alumni and Friends Offices to proactively showcase the department's activities and contributions to students, stakeholders, and the community.

- Engage key Unit stakeholders to assure the relevance of teaching, research, and extension programs and priorities. Work collaboratively with CAHNRS development staff to advance fund raising programs aimed at improving the department's programs and facilities.

- Provide leadership in assuring the existence and operation of a well-functioning advisory board and/or alumni groups.

- Appropriately acknowledge contributions of donors to unit programs and facilities and steward funds as intended by the donor.

4.2.8   Workplace Environment

- Create a positive atmosphere for interaction and communication among students, faculty, staff, the general public, and the administration.

- Foster an environment of trust and respect that encourages and values diversity and professionalism.

- Ensure civility, cooperation, and collegiality among faculty and staff, and actively address personnel issues that hinder such civility, cooperation, and collegiality.

5.0 CAHNRS Administrative Stipends for Unit Leaders

Beginning January 1, 2014, all new appointment contracts for Unit Leaders in CAHNRS will stipulate a stipend, over and above base salary, for assuming the added responsibilities and associated duties of leadership of a Unit, unless otherwise negotiated at the time of appointment. The amount of that stipend will depend on a number of factors relating to the size and complexity of the unit, as noted below:

1. The Unit Leader salary supplement recognizes that administrative responsibilities are substantial, and are in addition to the level of academic responsibilities that are retained. Moreover, existing levels of teaching/research/Extension activities need to be reviewed and appropriately adjusted to ensure the commitment necessary to lead the Unit. The amount of pre-appointment teaching, research, and/or Extension activities retained will depend on the size and complexity of the unit. The proper mix of activities and expectations will be discussed with the Dean and appropriate Associate Dean(s) and agreed to at the time of appointment, and reviewed as necessary.

2. The Unit Leader administrative stipend, for a moderate size department (for example, 20 faculty or less, no more than four staff, and a graduate program of 40 students or less) will typically consist of 10% of the person's base salary. Considerations that may result in a higher level of stipend include, but are not limited to:

   a. The scope, heterogeneity, and complexity of the operation of the Unit.

   b. The size of the faculty, staff, and graduate student program.

   c. Comparative Unit Leader salary data from peer-institutions

3. Additional support, such as technical support, post-docs, and/or graduate student assistantships, may be provided for a defined period of time by the college and/or the Unit to

support completing established projects or commitments and/or maintaining an appropriate agreed upon level of research, training or teaching activity in the Unit Leader's program (see #1 above). Any such agreement shall be in writing, as a component of the appointment document.

6.0 Support for Unit Directors Returning Back to Faculty

Beginning January 1, 2014, all new appointment contracts for Unit Leaders in CAHNRS will stipulate that, upon completion of Unit leader service, the following support program elements will be implemented for a return to regular faculty status:

1. If a Unit Leader successfully completes one full four-year term and then steps down from the unit leader position, they will retain half of the administrative stipend stipulated in their appointment contract, which will be added to their base salary upon vacating the unit leader position. If the Unit Leader does not complete the term successfully (e.g., not renewed, steps down prior to completing a term, asked to step down by the Dean) none of the stipend will be retained.

2. If a Unit Leader is reappointed to a second four-year term and then successfully completes the second four-year term prior to stepping down from unit leadership, they will retain the full amount of the administrative stipend stipulated in their appointment contract, which will be added to their base salary upon vacating the unit leader position.

3. A mutually agreeable level of support (e.g., technicians, post-docs, graduate students, release from courses, sabbatical or professional retraining leave) will be provided for the Unit Leader to transition back to the faculty ranks. Transition packages will not be equivalent to start up packages normally received by new hires, and the funding will be limited to a finite period. Individuals returning to the faculty rank will be expected to generate adequate resources to support research and extension efforts by year 3 of their return to the Unit.

4. CAHNRS Administration will insist that Unit Leaders returning to the faculty are treated with respect, dignity, fairness, and equity, and will use all means at its disposal to vigorously address any concerns.