



October 2019 Newsletter to Department Heads and Chairs

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Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs

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Dear Colleagues:

In my first newsletter of the academic year, let me begin with gratitude. Being a chair/head is perhaps the most challenging and rewarding role in a university. You shape your fields, your colleagues, the University, and our broader society with your leadership. Thank you for all that you do!

Opportunities for You

Provost's Academic Leadership Seminar (PALS)

[PALS](#) is a year-long program for new chairs, heads, and associate deans with responsibility for faculty affairs. Session topics include academic leadership, effective communication, faculty and staff development, and effective use of resources.

Talking Heads

We invite all chairs and heads to attend Talking Heads luncheons scheduled on the Twin Cities campus throughout the year. These sessions are facilitated by chairs/heads on topics such as strategic planning, creating a positive department culture, improving teaching, budgeting, and faculty review. The [next session](#) on Tuesday, November 19, 2019 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in Room 326 of Coffman Union will focus on how to set up a system for peer review of teaching in your department and will be led by Tom Molitor (Veterinary Population Medicine). Please let us know about topics you would like to include at future lunch meetings.

Opportunities for Your Faculty

New Faculty Program (NFP)

NFP provides a host of professional development opportunities for tenure track and contract faculty at the University of Minnesota. Faculty choose among sessions focused on teaching, research, public engagement, career advancement/leadership, and holistic faculty development. Registration and more information about the program is available on the [NFP website](#).

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD)

Our institutional membership to NCFDD provides professional development resources to all faculty, post-docs, and graduate students from any of our system campuses at no

cost. Topics addressed include strategies for increasing research productivity, developing a daily writing plan, and managing time more effectively. Details and registration: z.umn.edu/NCFDD

McKnight Awards and Distinguished Teaching Awards

[Nomination instructions and materials are available](#) for the system-wide research and teaching awards. These include the McKnight Land-Grant Professorship (deadline November 13), the Distinguished McKnight University Professorship (deadline January 29), and both the undergraduate Morse-Alumni and the Graduate & Professional Distinguished Teaching Awards (deadline January 8). For the teaching awards, colleges have earlier internal deadlines.

A Few Policy Reminders

Peer Review of Teaching

University [policy](#) on evaluating teaching requires that “[e]very academic unit should have a documented process for peer review of every instructor’s teaching efforts and contributions to teaching, both for purposes of promotion decisions and for teaching-based salary increases.”

A listing of ideas and best practices for documenting peer review of teaching is available [here](#). [Contact David Langley](#) in our office for guidance on improving and implementing a peer review of teaching system in your department. We also encourage you to [attend the Talking Heads session](#) on this topic.

4-Year Promotional Reviews

The [tenure and promotion procedures](#) state: “No less frequently than every four years, the unit’s tenured faculty at the rank of professor shall review the progress toward promotion of each associate professor with tenure. This review will provide associate professors with feedback about their progress towards meeting the criteria in subsection 9.2 of *Faculty Tenure* and in the unit 7.12 statement.” We expect that every unit completes these reviews and communicates their completion to their dean’s office.

Hiring Faculty Members with Prior Service

According to our [faculty tenure policy](#): “If a faculty member has previously served in regular faculty positions, as defined in these regulations, in one or more accredited universities or colleges, every academic year of such service (not exceeding three) reduces the maximum period of probationary service by one year.” For further information about this policy and potential exceptions, please see section 5.4.

If a unit wishes to hire someone as a tenured faculty member, please make sure to follow our [established process](#).

We are ready to assist you in your leadership this year. Please be in touch if we can be helpful!

With appreciation,

Rebecca

Rebecca Ropers
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