

Position Description

Date: February 2024

Title: Department Assistant to the Chair

Department: Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering

School: Engineering

Location: Glennan Building

Supervisor Name and Title: Dr. Robert Gao, Professor and Department Chair

POSITION OBJECTIVE

Working under general direction, the department chair's assistant is responsible for developing, implementing, and managing procedures for the effective administration and operation of the office of the department chair, enabling the chair to devote full attention to providing leadership for the department. Responsibilities include providing support and effectively managing the multiple internal and external associations and relationship between the chair and other entities, including the office of the Dean of Engineering, the academic and administrative units of the university, the students, the faculty, and external national and international organizations, including other academic institutions, funding agencies, professional societies, industry, and community organizations (including the press).

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

1. Facilitate communications between the department and the university, e.g., department faculty, Case School of Engineering, other academic units (including Undergraduate Admissions, Undergraduate and Graduate Studies, and the office of the university registrar), and central administration at Case Western Reserve University, students, external national and international organizations, including other universities, funding agencies, professional societies, and industry, and prospective students and parents and other community contacts, including the press. (10%)
2. Manage the department chair's schedule and calendar, including arranging meetings, teleconferences, and other engagements. (10%)
3. Maintain department files, including list of faculty and student office and contacts, contact list of graduate students and undergraduate students, visiting scholars, list of graduating students, etc. confidential documents (e.g., budget reports); prepare correspondence and reports for the chair. (10%)
4. Provide support for faculty and staff recruiting. This may involve arranging meetings, maintaining files and a database on the applicants, assisting with correspondence with the applicants, arranging for campus visits and interviews, arranging itineraries, completing affirmative action paperwork, and new appointment paperwork for the dean's office. (10%)
5. Responsible for preparing promotion, tenure, and faculty review documentation for the department, as well as faculty annual reviews. These highly confidential documents require discretion and attention to detail in their preparation. Prepare new appointment and reappointment paperwork. (10%)
6. May authorize routine department expenditures (unfunded); place order on supplies for Departmental operation needs; prepare, or assist in preparing budgets, reconcile monthly expense statements, provide budget reports. (10%)

7. Process travel reimbursement requests of faculty, graduate students and approved undergraduate student travel. Provide support for seminars, including arranging itineraries, and assisting with hotel reservations and reimbursement for department seminar speaker. (10%)
8. Process or assist processing student payroll for EMAE graduate students and hourly paid undergraduate students, make payment of student scholarship, etc. (10%)

NONESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

1. Organize and plan department faculty meetings (bi-weekly meetings, special meetings), maintain and distribute minutes of department monthly meetings (noting action items and the faculty or staff member responsible for the action item), follow-up on action items, arrange for catering as-needed. (3%)
2. Serve as point-person for visitors and external inquiries. Cover department telephone calls and take appropriate action by contacting appropriate faculty or staff to fulfill the request. (3%)
3. Open and triage incoming mail and screen telephone calls for the chair. (3%)
4. Provide coverage when other support staff members are on leave or vacation. (3%)
5. Carry out other assignments and special projects, as determined by the chair, as needed. (8%)

CONTACTS

Department: Daily contact with department chair, department academic administrator, and department faculty to organize and review work assignments.

University: Regular contact with dean's office for activities that involve the school of Engineering (e.g., faculty recruiting, promotion and tenure, third-year reviews, and faculty evaluations). Regular contact with staff in other university administrative units.

External: Regular contact with other academic institutions, professional organizations, funding agencies, industry, prospective students and parents, and other community contacts (including the press).

Students: Regular contact with undergraduate and graduate students with questions and requests of the chair.

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

Supervise any work-study students that assist with clerical department tasks.

REQUIREMENTS

Experience: 5 years of related experience, preferably with successful experience in an academic (or similar) office.

Education: High school education is required; Bachelor's degree preferred.

REQUIRED SKILLS

1. Outstanding interpersonal and communication (oral and written) skills.
2. Demonstrated maturity, including good judgment and ability to be discrete.
3. Demonstrated ability to be courteous and responsive to all interface constituencies (students, faculty, staff, administrators, external contacts).
4. Knowledge of university policies and procedures, as well as tact and discretion when working with students.
5. Experience with standard computer software packages, including but not limited to Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and PeopleSoft.
6. Demonstrated ability to learn new position appropriate software as needed.
7. Ability to meet consistent attendance.
8. Ability to interact with colleagues, supervisors, and customers face to face.

WORKING CONDITIONS

General office environment. Position involves high demands with the need to successfully complete large assignments with firm deadlines on-time and the ability to complete some assignments with short lead times. The employee will perform repetitive motion using computer mouse and keyboard to type.