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Basic Principles of the Role of Academic Lead

For each CSUN self-support degree and credit certificate program, there is an appointed academic lead. Each CSUN degree and credit certificate program the University chooses to offer using self-support funding is subject to all of the standard CSUN academic policies and practices. Each CSUN 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 which applies to the self-support programs the same academic standards it would for any other program in the department/college. To further ensure that each self-support program receives focused academic attention, an academic lead is appointed. What follows are the basic principles guiding the administration of this role:

1. The dean of the college in which the program resides selects the academic lead for any program. The selection is discussed with the dean of The Tseng College. The agreed upon candidate is then appointed.
2. The appointed academic lead is accountable to the dean of the college in which the program resides for meeting the performance expectations and academic and ethical standards of the role. For day-to-day reporting the dean may designate the department chair for single discipline programs or the associated dean for multidisciplinary programs.
3. The dean of the college in which the program resides would confer as appropriate with the relevant department chair(s) before selecting an academic lead.
4. The academic lead should be a member of the college's faculty. 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.
5. Given the primary duties of the academic lead, the faculty member selected should have recognized achievements in instructional excellence. The academic lead should be a faculty member able to guide and mentor others as needed and engage faculty in the ongoing improvement of the instructional excellence of the program in question.
6. The academic lead serves for two years from the time of appointment. At that point, the term can be renewed or a new academic lead can be appointed. For renewal or reappointment, the process outlined in 1 above is followed.

7. If the academic lead fails to perform effectively in the role or violates any standards of academic integrity in the decisions made, the term of the academic lead may be ended at once by the dean of the college in which the program resides.
8. The academic lead cannot assign themselves to teach 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 in question (the one the academic lead is to be assigned to teach) resides and dean of the college in which the program resides.
9. The primary responsibilities of the academic lead are to provide leadership for and facilitate academic oversight, instructional excellence, and continuous program excellence. One aspect of the academic lead's responsibilities is to ensure that those assigned to teach in the program in question are prepared to teach successfully in the program. This includes introducing new instructors to the program and effective instructional strategies for midcareer students that are the focus of the program in question. This process is facilitated by the collaboratively designed Program Narrative, which documents and outlines program differentiators and distinctions that have an impact on teaching and learning for the program in question. The academic lead also uses the Program Narrative as an onboarding tool to introduce new instructors to the learning goals of the program overall, how one course builds on others in the program, and how the course in question fits in to the full program. 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 monitors the instructional excellence of the program and if assigned instructors are not meeting expected obligations (showing up on time to class and teaching for the full scheduled time, providing timely feedback to students on assignments, being active and engaged at the expected levels for any online courses, getting grades in on time, and the like), addresses problems as they arise. If necessary, the academic lead engages the chair for 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.
11. Once the program launches, The Tseng College works with the academic lead appointed for the program in question to reconvene the full program development group one year after a new program is launched. This will be a long (1/2 day or longer) meeting at which the faculty teaching in the program can discuss how the program is going in light of their original plan and vision for the program (as captured in the final program narrative). The program development group will consider how students are responding to the educational experience the program offers and whether or not students are succeeding in achieving the specified measureable student learning outcomes (based on how successfully students

are completing key program assignments as well as other measures of student engagement and success). The group will also discuss what changes, if any, should be made in the first part of the program prior to the start of the next scheduled cohort to enhance student achievement and/or enrich the educational experience the program offers. The program development group will discuss how those teaching in the remaining part of the program for the first cohort might anticipate the learning dynamic of the group and/or enhance or refine program components in light of the experience of those teaching in the first half of the program in question. The program development group for new programs will also meet at the end of the first cohort for a similar meeting to consider the experiences of those teaching in the program and make decisions about how the program and/or the instructional strategies should be refined or enhanced to make the program increasingly excellent. The dean of the partner academic college(s) and/or the relevant department chairs can join these reflective conversations as listeners (and information resources as needed) to enhance their understanding of the program and its strengths and distinctions. Thereafter the program development group for the program in question would be convened by The Tseng College in collaboration with the academic lead for the program in question once every 12 to 24 months (18 months being the standard with 12 to 18 months being recommended for programs still being refined as the first few cohorts of the program are offered – but, never to exceed 24 months between such review meetings). The academic lead would facilitate discussion and guide academic decision-making at these meetings focusing on continuous improvement of the excellence, distinction, and educational impact of the program in question. The faculty team that develops and teaches in each of CSUN's degree and credit certificate programs offered by CSUN through self-support funding are the academic community that works collaboratively and regularly to ensure the continuous improvement of the program and its ongoing enrichment through the regular exchange of ideas, experience, and possibilities among program faculty. It should be noted that faculty are paid a modest honorarium for participating in such program enhancement meetings and doing so is part of the obligations of those who accept an assignment to teach in the program in question.

12. The academic lead is expected to align decisions that fall within the scope of the role with a focus on the academic quality of the program and the academic achievement of the students. Making decisions to advantage colleagues or the like may be grounds for the dean of the college in which the program resides to end the term of service in the role.
13. 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 in question resides.

14. Each program's curriculum is determined through standard CSUN approvals processes and in keeping with WASC and any special accreditation requirements. Any changes to the curriculum must be done through those same processes. The college's associate dean in which the program resides is responsible for leading any curriculum change process as with any other program modification process. The academic lead manages the offering of the program's curriculum as it is approved. For multidisciplinary programs that reside at the college-level, the dean of the college in which the program resides can choose to have program modifications start with the college-level curriculum committee if that is the college's standard practice or the dean can choose to appoint a committee of the chairs of the participating departments to act as a department level curriculum review committee when there is a program modification being proposed.
15. Each program is approved through CSUN standard academic approvals processes with admission requirements specified in keeping with CSUN and CSU policies and practices. The academic lead manages the program admission process in keeping with the approved admission standards for the program. No new standards can be added without going through the CSUN formal approval process. No exceptions can be made to the admission standards without the written approval of the dean (or the associate dean of the college if designated by the dean) in which the program resides and that permission would only be given in keeping with the academic standards and practices of CSUN and the college in question for all programs regardless of funding source.
16. The self-support program in question is determined to be appropriate for offering via CSUN self-support funding after market research and/or consultation with leaders in the relevant field(s) of practice; ongoing review of other programs serving the same target market; and ongoing review of national and international best practice models in advanced education for midcareer professionals. Not all CSUN programs are appropriate for self-support funding. The dean of CSUN's Tseng College is responsible for determining whether or not a given program is appropriate for CSUN to offer via self-support funding. Changes in a program's structure and delivery mode may change its viability for self-support funding. In that light, once a program with a particular curriculum and a particular structure and delivery mode (online, hybrid, with a stackable curriculum, in an intensive format, off site, etc.) has been approved for offering using self-support funding that curriculum and its approved structure and delivery mode cannot be altered except with the approval of the dean of The Tseng College and the dean of the college in which the program resides. The academic lead manages the program as it has been approved in the planning and development stage, including – both the curriculum content and its self-support structure and delivery mode.
17. Each CSUN program offered via self-support funding has an established minimum enrollment required to go forward with a particular offering of a cohort/program/course and a maximum enrollment for each cohort/program/course. The minimum and maximum for a given program are

determined by financial viability for the minimum and academic viability for the maximum with attention to attrition rates for the program in question. The minimum and maximum are determined in advance of offering the program in question and agreed upon by the dean of the college in which the program resides (in consultation with the relevant department/s) and the dean of The Tseng College. Any changes in the minimum and maximum for a program must be approved in advance by the dean of the college in which the program resides and the dean of The Tseng College.

18. The academic lead working with the department chair for single discipline programs and the college dean for multidisciplinary programs determines whether or not an admission committee should be formed to review applications for the program in question. The dean of the college (or the associate dean if the dean designates) and/or the department chair in which the program resides may choose to review some or all admission decisions for the program in question at any time to ensure compliance with the programs admission standards.
19. The academic lead works in close collaboration throughout the planning and offering of the cohort/program in question with the assigned administrative lead for the cohort/program in question.