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Is a Library Department Chair Essential?: The Development of the Library Department Chair at Central Washington University

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Abstract

The combined position of University Archivist and Library Department Chair in the James E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University (CWU) in Ellensburg, Washington is unique and draws curiosity as to what other academic libraries have department chairs and what is their specific area of librarianship. This article provides a review of literature on the responsibilities of department chairs and their vitality, as well as publications specifically referencing library department chairs. A comparison of the CWU library department chair to another library faculty chair in the Orbis Cascade Alliance is also provided. The history of the chair position at Brooks Library is examined as is the makeup of the library faculty. Resources for chairs at CWU and personal strategies that have proved effective in being a leader of library faculty are described.

Introduction

The position of library department chair has been in place in the James E. Brooks Library at Central Washington University (CWU) since September 2011. The challenges of this position combined with the position of University Archivist require organization and documentation to serve as an effective leader of the library faculty. The prevalence of other library faculty chairships at libraries that are part of the Orbis Cascade Alliance are researched in this article. Given the prevalence of similar positions and how the library faculty chair's role can be accomplished through department/unit heads or directors, or at the administrative level, is there a need for a library department chair? That question will be explored throughout this article.

Research Findings

What is a department chair? The literature published on this since the 1950s is abundant and provides strong evidence that a department chair is vital to the success of the department, as well as to mentoring faculty as they pursue research and scholarship endeavors on the way to being awarded tenure. The literature also describes the challenges and stresses associate with being a chair, sharing findings of several surveys and receiving feedback from hundreds of chairs nationwide on the challenges of being a chair. The literature also provides assurances to the current department chair wondering if other chairs experience the same challenges, heavy workloads, and stresses they have.

The 2010 Hyman and Jacobs article, "What a Department Chair Can - and Can't - Do" states, "Every department at a college has one: a chair who, typically, is a faculty member in that department, assigned by the dean to manage the department." In the 2016 article "Department Chair: A Retrospec-

tive Perspective" author Robert E. Cipriano states, "The department chair is a linchpin of a university… The chair is a classic hybrid-in-the-middle position; not really an administrator but 'more than' a faculty member."

The importance of a department chair is described in the book chapter "Who Becomes a Chair?" authored by James B. Carroll and Mimi Wolverton. The statistic that "80% percent of all administrative decisions made in colleges and universities are made by department chairs" goes back to a 1958 publication and it overall remains true currently. Chairs do play a central role in the governance and productivity of postsecondary institutions (Carroll & Wolverton, 2004). The authors go on to explain the difference between "faculty chairs" and "institutional chairs." Faculty chairs represent the technical core of the university and serve as part of its collegial system while institutional chairs represent the administrative and bureaucratic core. Faculty chairs return to faculty status when their term of chairs ends which is usually 4-6 years.

The 2005 Wolverton, Ackerman & Holt article, "Preparing for Leadership: What Academic Department Chairs Need to Know" concurs that the majority of the work done at the university is done at the department level and the department's success is strongly influenced by the effectiveness of the department chair. The authors share that "the real work of academic chairs demands a diverse set of leadership capabilities: well-honed communication skills, problem-solving skills, conflict-resolution skills, cultural management skills, coaching skills, and transition skills." The authors also emphasize the importance of preparing a faculty member to be chair given the complexities and stress of the position, educating them on what expectations will be, and the need to provide sufficient development for that role. They share that deans believed people skills, particularly communicating and handling conflict, were especially crucial for a chair to be successful in their role.

Authors Gmelch and Burns also shared in their 1993 publication the complexities and stress levels of department chairs. They described chairs as feeling "trapped between the stresses of performing not only as an administrator but faculty member as well." The "Department Chair Stress Index" used for this article was taken by over 800 chairs nationwide. As with other articles in this review, Gmelch and Burns use the term "complex" in describing the role of the chair as well as stating its importance in bridging the gap between university administration and the faculty. The dual pressures felt by department chairs with being a chair and a faculty member were also shared. A strong theme resulting from their survey was that chairs feel much stress in evaluating the performance of their faculty as well as resolving differences among faculty. The authors also emphasize that given the importance to have effective chairs, the administration needs to be responsive in developing productive leadership skills.

Iris Berdrow also wrote on understanding the roles of department chairs. Her 2010 article included conducting a survey of chairs to better understand the issues and challenges they face in their positions. This data collecting also included providing professional development workshops for department chairs to build upon their skillsets. What the department chair is, an effective leader and guide, should be taken into account as well as what they do, serving as an effective manager. A primary finding of Berdrow's project was the "overwhelming complexity of demands placed on the department chair." Complexities resulted from the number of stakeholders, pressure from the university, time constraints,

and as chair, being first among equals and then returning to faculty status after the chairship ends.

In addition to being the middle man between the faculty and dean, chairs oversee and maintain the department's budget, evaluate faculty at varying levels of promotion including tenure, oversee teaching assignments and workload plans of their faculty, establish department goals, oversee faculty performance standards, and are usually the first person to handle conflicts or issues among their department's faculty. Academic departments are generally chaired by a tenured faculty member of their department that is elected by the faculty and/or appointed by the dean. The chair is the leader and guide for the department and represents their faculty to the rest of the university. Chairs who retain faculty status are still responsible for meeting their own evaluations and continuing to actively conduct research and produce scholarship.

While the literature on being a department chair is abundant, there is little to review regarding library department chairs. Dana W. R. Boden has written on this topic over the past twenty years. In her 1994 article, "A University Libraries Faculty Perspective on the Role of the Department Head in Faculty Performance: A Grounded Theory Approach Revised," Boden provides a study of how library faculty at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln perceive their department chair's role in advocating and promoting faculty development. She notes that faculty expect the chair to be accessible when they are needed. Faculty also expect the chair to let them know of opportunities, both at the library and professionally, that will advance them towards receiving tenure. She notes that the literature written on chairs is almost always on chairs of teaching departments only.

Boden's 2002 dissertation *Department Chair Faculty Development Activities and Leadership Practices: University Libraries Faculty Perceptions* further examines the library faculty's perceptions of their department chair's role in professional development. Boden's 2007 article on the views of librarians regarding their chair's professional development roles restates from her 1994 article that there is still a shortage of literature on library faculty chairs to prepare or guide them through the experience.

Sherrie Bergman wrote in her 2011 article on the importance of the academic library developing cooperative partnerships with both administrative units and academic departments. These partnerships lead to increasing the visibility of the library across campus and the resources it provides. Strategies for achieving this included understanding the cultures of other campus departments and reaching out to new administrators/chairs/department heads and learning about their positions and challenges. Another strategy is for library faculty to serve on non-library committees. An example of this is the library department chair serving on a committee to represent the library and learn more about what was taking place at the university and how the library could play a part in it and vice versa. The chair was ultimately chosen to lead the committee and the committee's tasks were successfully completed with the help of the library partnership.

Green and Swanson described the library department chair's role in their 2011 article on the library reference services at Moraine Valley Community College. The department chair assigns reference desk shifts and maintains that the information at the reference desk is current. In addition to reference, all librarians also teach information literacy sessions. As with other academic libraries, the librarians at
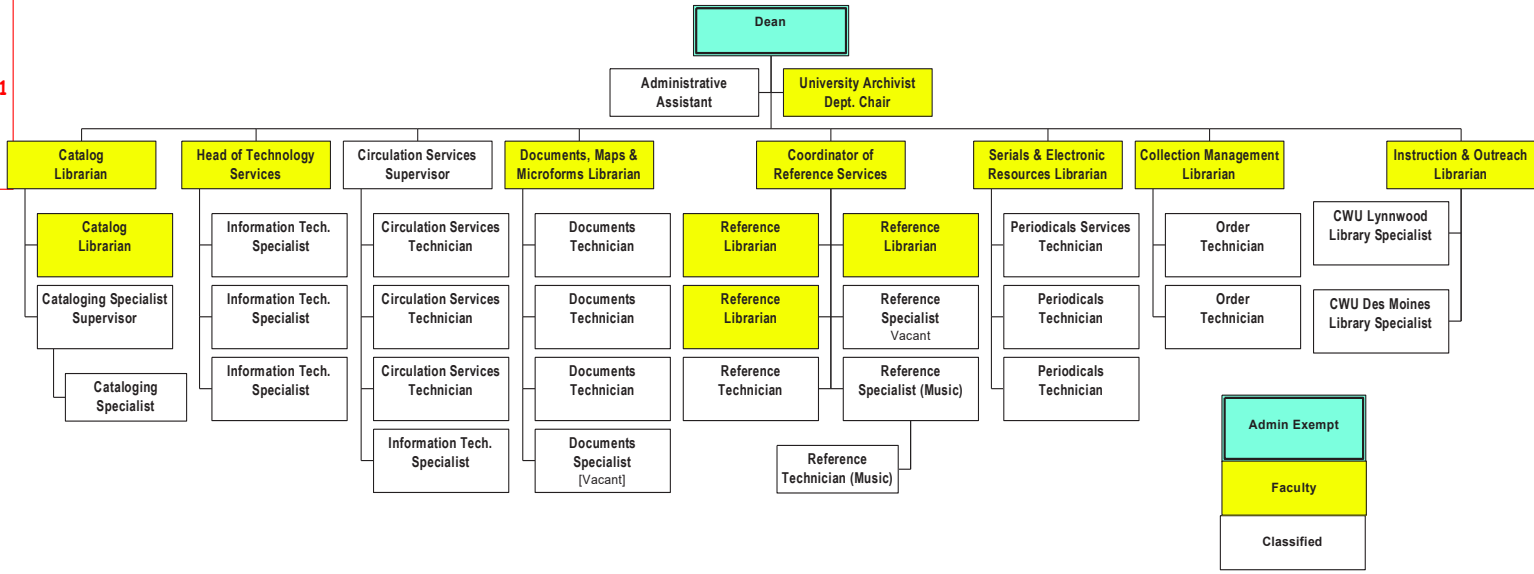
Moraine Valley Community College have many responsibilities and limited time to accomplish all of them. The library's department structure provides a way of sharing knowledge among the librarians, including monthly department meetings and a yearly planning process.

The Orbis Cascade Alliance, founded in 1993 in Oregon (Chmelir, 2015), serves as a consortium of 39 public and private academic libraries in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. The group strives to improve resource sharing among its members through a single shared library system that enables members to share costs and centralize work processes as well as provide lending services to members. Central Washington University joined the consortium in 2002 along with five other Washington public bacca-laureate-granting institutions that were formerly part of the Washington State Cooperative Library Pro-ject (WSCLP) before the merger with Orbis (Chmelir, 2015). In looking at the other members in terms of how their library faculty are organized and if a department chair position exists, the findings includ-ed two community colleges. The Clackamas Community College library's faculty includes a Depart-ment Chair and Instruction Librarian, http://libguides.clackamas.edu/ask/alibrarian#s-lg-box-wrapper-14521594. The Portland Community College library's faculty includes a Faculty Librarian and Faculty Department Chair, https://www.pcc.edu/library/about/people/staff/. Besides CWU the only other state universities that have a library faculty chair are Eastern Washington University (EWU) and Western Washington University (WWU). The EWU libraries have a faculty chair with the job title "Faculty Chair, Reference & Instruction" https://www.ewu.edu/library/about-us/contact-us. The WWU libraries have a "Faculty Department Chair" who is Librarian for Colleges/Departments/Programs and is in the Teaching and Learning Division, https://library.wwu.edu/staffdirectory/subject-librarians.

Brief History of the Library Department Chair at CWU

The creation of a library faculty chair position as a full faculty member and not an administrator was created at CWU Brooks Library in 2011 following the hire of a new library dean in 2010. The position was combined with that of University Archivist, a position that had been vacant for three years, and hired with the rank of a tenured professor. The breakdown of job responsibilities for this faculty posi-tion involved 50% as university archivist, 45% as chair, and 5% other duties as assigned. Hiring a chair for a faculty department is not a common practice as the typical chair has already served as a faculty member in the department and is voted on by the faculty to serve as chair for a term that usually lasts four to five years. The position was successfully filled and the professor started in September 2011 (Owens, 2011). The chair position was filled before the position of Associate Dean, as exhibited in the 2011 library organization chart:

CWU Library Organization
September 1, 2011

Dean

Administrative Assistant

University Archivist Dept. Chair

Catalog Librarian

Head of Technology Services

Circulation Services Supervisor

Documents, Maps & Microforms Librarian

Coordinator of Reference Services

Serials & Electronic Resources Librarian

Collection Management Librarian

Instruction & Outreach Librarian

Catalog Librarian

Information Tech. Specialist

Circulation Services Technician

Documents Technician

Reference Librarian

Reference Librarian

Periodicals Services Technician

Order Technician

CWU Lynnwood Library Specialist

Cataloging Specialist Supervisor

Information Tech. Specialist

Circulation Services Technician

Documents Technician

Reference Librarian

Reference Specialist
Vacant

Periodicals Technician

Order Technician

CWU Des Moines Library Specialist

Cataloging Specialist

Information Tech. Specialist

Circulation Services Technician

Documents Technician

Reference Technician

Reference Specialist (Music)

Periodicals Technician

Information Tech. Specialist

Documents Specialist
[Vacant]

Reference Technician (Music)

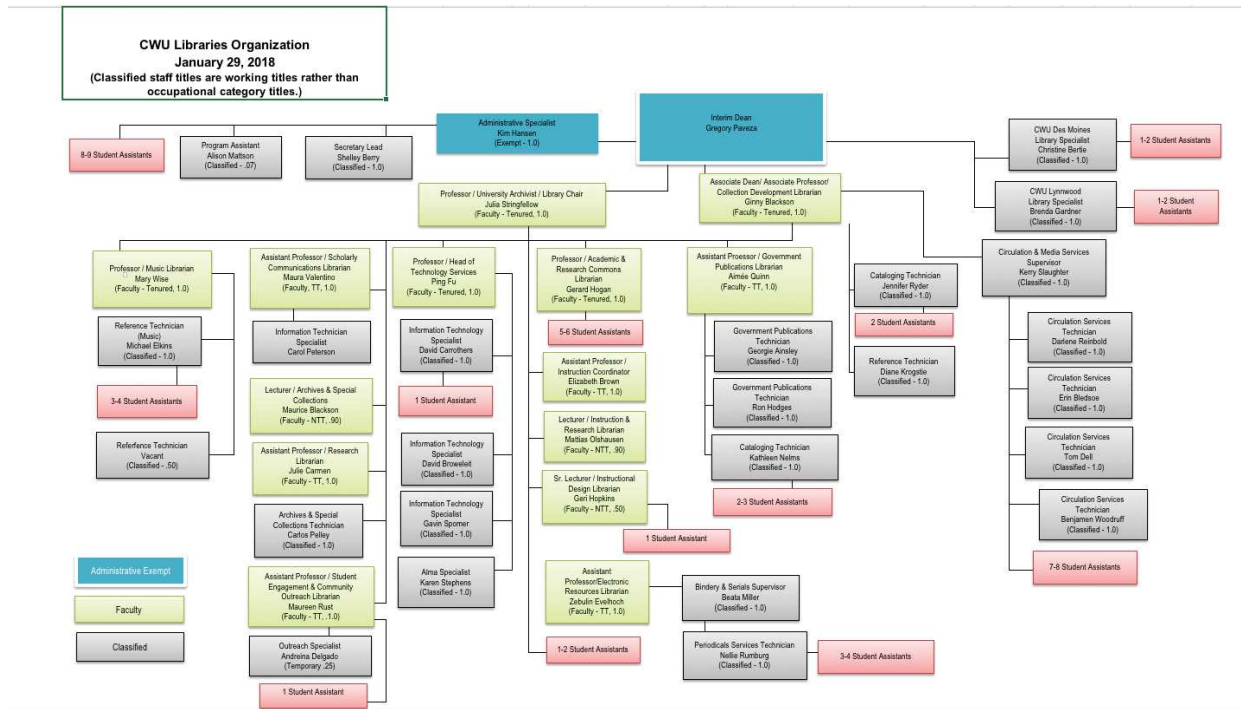**Admin Exempt**

Faculty

Classified

There were six tenured faculty, two tenure-track, and three non-tenure-track at the start of the chair's time at CWU in 2011. The role of the faculty chair was to lead and guide the faculty rather than serve as direct supervisor. All library faculty reported directly to the dean of libraries. The creation of an Associate Dean position and filling that position in 2013 provided an administrator in charge of the physical library building and who oversaw the staff. The chair left in 2015 and the search began for a new faculty chair, once again paired with the role of University Archivist and once again hired as a tenured professor. The job ad for the position (Central Washington University, James E. Brooks Library, 2015) included the statement "Responsible for management of university archives and leadership of faculty within the library." Archivists in the region with significant experience in the profession as well as leadership experience were contacted regarding the opening and following a search and interview process, the position was filled.

At the time that I started as Faculty Chair and University Archivist in July 2015, there were two tenured faculty, nine tenure-track, and three non-tenure track. The faculty included three others who started in the spring and summer of 2015. I came into the role not having previously served at an academic library where there was a chair. The learning curve was steep and with no other library faculty chairs in the geographic area and minimal literature specific to library chairs on best practices and issues involved with the role, other resources were pursued to gain knowledge and experience as a chair.

Description of Library Faculty at CWU

The librarians in the Brooks Library at CWU have faculty status with the same method of evaluation and promotion that the other campus faculty have. As is stated in Article 15.4.4 of the faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), http://www.cwu.edu/hr/sites/cts.cwu.edu.hr/files/2017-9-27CWU-UFCAgreement2017-2020FinalwithSignatures.pdf, "All library faculty will enjoy full faculty status with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities." Library faculty are expected to perform service and scholarship work in addition to their librarianship and teaching duties. In addition to providing library instruction sessions, the library faculty also teach credit-bearing courses that are part of the Minor in Library and Information Science and the Type B Certificate in Library and Information Science, http://www.lib.cwu.edu/Library-Information-Science-Programs. The courses are mostly online and range from one to three credits. The library has ten committees from which the library faculty can choose to serve on. Several members of the library faculty serve as chairs for these committees.

The Brooks Library is currently experiencing a time of transition with a search going for a new dean, the hopes that a full-time associate dean will then be hired, and two open faculty positions. The 2018 organization chart displays the number of faculty and staff:

CWU Libraries Organization
January 29, 2018
(Classified staff titles are working titles rather than occupational category titles.)

Interim Dean
Gregory Paveza

Administrative Specialist
Kim Hansen
(Exempt - 1.0)

8-9 Student Assistants

Program Assistant
Alison Mattson
(Classified - .07)

Secretary Lead
Shelley Berry
(Classified - 1.0)

Professor / University Archivist / Library Chair
Julia Stringfellow
(Faculty - Tenured, 1.0)

Associate Dean/ Associate Professor/
Collection Development Librarian
Ginny Blackson
(Faculty - Tenured, 1.0)

CWU Des Moines
Library Specialist
Christine Bartle
(Classified - 1.0)

1-2 Student Assistants

CWU Lynnwood
Library Specialist
Brenda Gardner
(Classified - 1.0)

1-2 Student
Assistants

Circulation & Media Services
Supervisor
Kerry Slaughter
(Classified - 1.0)

Professor / Music Librarian
Mary Wise
(Faculty - Tenured, 1.0)

Assistant Professor / Scholarly
Communications Librarian
Maura Valentino
(Faculty, TT, 1.0)

Professor / Head of
Technology Services
Ping Fu
(Faculty - Tenured, 1.0)

Assistant Professor /
Research & Commons
Librarian
Gerard Hogan
(Faculty - Tenured, 1.0)

Assistant Professor / Government
Publications Librarian
Aimée Quinn
(Faculty - TT, 1.0)

Cataloging Technician
Jennifer Ryder
(Classified - 1.0)

Reference Technician
(Music)
Michael Elkins
(Classified - 1.0)

Information Technician
Specialist
Carol Peterson
(Classified - 1.0)

Information Technology
Specialist
David Carrothers
(Classified - 1.0)

5-6 Student Assistants

Government Publications
Technician
Georgie Ainsley
(Classified - 1.0)

2 Student Assistants

Circulation Services
Technician
Darlene Reinbold
(Classified - 1.0)

3-4 Student Assistants

Lecturer / Archives & Special
Collections
Maurice Blackson
(Faculty - NTT, .90)

Assistant Professor /
Instruction Coordinator
Elizabeth Brown
(Faculty - TT, 1.0)

1 Student Assistant

Government Publications
Technician
Ron Hodges
(Classified - 1.0)

Reference Technician
Diane Krogsbie
(Classified - 1.0)

Circulation Services
Technician
Erin Bledsoe
(Classified - 1.0)

Reference Technician
Vacant
(Classified - .50)

Assistant Professor / Research
Librarian
Julie Carmen
(Faculty - TT, 1.0)

Information Technology
Specialist
David Broweleit
(Classified - 1.0)

Lecturer / Instruction &
Research Librarian
Mattias Olshausen
(Faculty - NTT, .90)

Cataloging Technician
Kathleen Nelms
(Classified - 1.0)

Circulation Services
Technician
Tom Dell
(Classified - 1.0)

Archives & Special
Collections Technician
Carlos Pelley
(Classified - 1.0)

Information Technology
Specialist
Gavin Spomer
(Classified - 1.0)

Sr. Lecturer / Instructional
Design Librarian
Geri Hopkins
(Faculty - NTT, .50)

2-3 Student Assistants

Circulation Services
Technician
Benjamen Woodruff
(Classified - 1.0)

1 Student Assistant

Administrative Exempt

Faculty

Classified

Assistant Professor / Student
Engagement & Community
Outreach Librarian
Maureen Rust
(Faculty - TT, 1.0)

Alma Specialist
Karen Stephens
(Classified - 1.0)

Assistant
Professor/Electronic
Resources Librarian
Zebulin Evelhoch
(Faculty - TT, 1.0)

Bindery & Serials Supervisor
Beata Miller
(Classified - 1.0)

7-8 Student Assistants

Outreach Specialist
Andreina Delgado
(Temporary .25)

1 Student Assistant

1-2 Student Assistants

Periodicals Services Technician
Nellie Rumburg
(Classified - 1.0)

3-4 Student Assistants

CWU Resources for Department Chairs

The university does offer guidelines of expectations for chairs. While these are focused on chairs of colleges and academic units (the library is considered a non-academic unit), they have proven helpful as a baseline to refer to when handling faculty issues and concerns. The faculty at CWU are unionized and the current Collective Bargaining Agreement of the United Faculty of Central (updated 2017) has an entire section devoted to department chairs. "ARTICLE 12 -DEPARTMENT CHAIRS," describes the leadership roles and responsibilities, terms of appointment, elections, removals, and replacements; evaluations of chairs, and compensation. As Article 12.1 states, "Department chairs are leaders among the faculty in developing strong student advising, teaching, research, public service, and academic programs within their departments." The expectations of the chair include overseeing the teaching, scholarship, and service of faculty in their department; planning, scheduling, and assessing curriculum; conducting evaluations and managing workloads of their faculty; overseeing faculty recruitment and hiring; and managing budgets in addition to other job responsibilities.

Another document that describes department chairs is the Faculty Senate Code updated in 2017. Section II, "OTHER FACULTY APPOINTMENTS" discusses the steps needed for the election, removal, and replacement of department chairs. It also establishes the voting process needed to elect or remove a chair, and what faculty are considered eligible to vote. The emphasis on the procedures for chairships in a department indicates department chairs are an important aspect of faculty leadership and governance as recognized by the Faculty Senate.

The university provides the Academic Department Chairs Organization (ADCO) that brings all department chairs together twice a month to discuss campus and faculty issues and work on ways to improve. The group was created to maintain and strengthen the roles of department chairs across campus. For the

past two years the Provost has provided funding for four chairs to attend the annual Academic Chairpersons Conference that I attended in 2017 and found to be very helpful in providing networking opportunities and valuable resources. During my first year as chair there was a monthly "New Chairs Seminar" over the lunch hour organized by an emeritus professor serving as an interim chair with years of experience chairing. Different speakers attended to go over and answer questions about faculty evaluations, learning the system Faculty 180 used for building professional records and uploading evaluations, managing budgets, and best practices for dealing with difficult faculty. These seminars were a tremendous help and assisted with the steep learning curve of being a first-time chair. The first year chairs went on to informally meet monthly as a group during their second year to share issues they were dealing with and provide advice on how to handle them. I am still in contact with these chairs if I need advice or guidance on a faculty issue. Having that type of support system reminds you that you aren't the only chair going through a particular issue or frustration.

The *Dr. James E. Brooks Library Faculty Performance Standards and Review Procedures for Reappointment, Tenure, Promotion and Post-Tenure Review* (updated 2014) follows the CBA guidelines in the role of chairs regarding evaluations, reappointment, and tenure, as well as the chair's role in approving and overseeing workload plans. The expectations of teaching/librarianship, scholarship, and service are stated. Having faculty performance standards for a department is a must: it provides documentation for what expectations are for faculty and serves as a reference point when questions arise. Along with the CBA, they are the standards the dean, chair, and personnel committees follow when evaluating a faculty member's work.

Learning from another Chair in the Orbis Cascade Alliance

My research for this article included an interview with library faculty chair Professor Justin Otto at Eastern Washington University (J. Otto, personal communication, May 18, 2018). Like CWU, their faculty are unionized and have a Collective Bargaining Agreement, https://sites.ewu.edu/hr/files/2017/06/EWU-UFE-Collective-Bargaining-Agreement-2016-2019-1.pdf. A section is devoted to describing the responsibilities and expectations of the department chair and the responsibilities of the library faculty chair are described in Article 10.2 as "The library faculty chair is the chief administrator of faculty personnel processes pertaining to faculty of the EWU Libraries, a member of the faculty, and a member of the bargaining unit. The responsibilities of the chair are to provide effective leadership within library and University policies and goals. The chair is also expected to provide personnel management of library faculty. Specific roles and responsibilities of the chair are described in the EWU Libraries P&P. The Library Faculty Chair may not initiate a grievance regarding matters arising from his/her duties and responsibilities as chair."

The term of a chairship at EWU is four years and Professor Otto is in his second term as library faculty chair, serving a total of five years so far in that position. He was tenured at the time he was voted into the chairship by the library faculty and since then has been promoted to full professor. He notes that challenges in being a chair include finding the time to continue research and scholarship in order to meet levels of promotion and the heavy workload. Another challenge is that the library faculty have the same faculty status as those across campus and are held to the same performance standards. Meeting these standards can be difficult given the differences between library faculty job responsibilities and

those of full-time teaching faculty. He credits having success in his role as chair to communicating regularly with his faculty and asking a lot of questions, even if it is informally by walking around the library and stopping by faculty offices to see how they're doing and what they're working on. He has an open door with his faculty and encourages them to meet with him as needed. Having a good relationship with Human Resources and the Vice-Provost and having those faculty resources to contact when needed are also vital.

As with my chairship at CWU, Professor Otto reports directly to the library dean as does the other library faculty. While he leads the faculty, he is not the manager or supervisor. He can ask the faculty to do something, but only the dean can make them do a task. When asked if he felt a department chair was essential for a library, he replied yes, with a faculty model and librarians having faculty status, a chair is needed to assist faculty in meeting tenure requirements as well as research and scholarship.

How to Make It Work

Now that I have shared background on how the department chair came to be in the Brooks Library, the makeup of the library faculty, and resources offered at CWU for chairs, it is clear that the job of department chair is a full-time job by itself. Juggling this in addition to serving as University Archivist and running an Archives department has proven quite challenging. I am also expected to meet the librarianship/teaching, scholarship, and service standards of tenured faculty. My position description divides my time as 50% for University Archivist, 45% for Chair, and 5% other duties as assigned. After nearly three years of serving in this role I can share that this breakdown is unrealistic. About 70% of my time is spent doing chair duties, 25% is spent as an archivist, and 5% is spent on the random tasks and actions that come up and need to be addressed right away. How do I try and accomplish all this and be an effective leader of the library faculty? There are some lessons learned and strategies that have proven to work.

First, stay organized and document, document, document. Keeping my work calendar up-to-date is crucial given the plethora of meetings I attend. When the academic calendar and faculty personnel actions calendars are released I go through and put key dates and deadlines on my calendar. At the beginning of each week I review my calendar to see what is coming up and what I need to prepare. Keeping an ongoing list of things I need to do is very helpful, as I rely less on my memory and more on the list to remember all the tasks that come up during the day.

I conduct monthly meetings with each of my 13 faculty, usually for 30-45 minutes per meeting. We talk about what they are doing in their areas of librarianship/teaching, scholarship, and service. We discuss concerns and questions they have. If an evaluation is coming up, we review the steps they need to take to submit evaluation materials. At the beginning of the fiscal year we discuss conferences and other professional development opportunities they want to pursue that year and use their professional development funds on. Encouraging faculty to attend webinars, trainings, and conferences to build their skillset and pursue interests is important. The meetings also help me determine if the faculty member is taking on too much and their workload needs to be adjusted. Being aware of the faculty member's behaviors and noting if they are overly stressed are important to monitor continuously. I take notes during the meeting and then add them to the document I keep for each faculty member to record what they are

working on. This has proven very beneficial as I can easily look up what the faculty member is doing if I have questions. Being in the know on what your faculty are up to is essential.

Second, be transparent, even if you're sharing something the faculty will not like. I hold faculty meetings every other Thursday afternoon. There is a call for agenda items the Monday before the meeting, the agenda and meeting minutes from the previous meeting are shared on Thursday morning, and the faculty come to the afternoon meeting knowing what will be covered. There is a time for announcements when faculty share events coming up and major projects they are working on. News is shared from other university meetings they have attended. For the chair's announcements, I remind the faculty of deadlines coming up in regards to evaluations and workload plans, events they should attend, and notes from key items shared at ADCO and Faculty Senate meetings. If there is an item the dean wants me to share and discuss with the faculty, that occurs.

There is also time during the meeting allotted for "faculty accomplishments" when I share news of recent scholarship, conference presentations, and other university/professional achievements of library faculty. This has helped build faculty morale and lets the faculty know what their colleagues are working on. If a faculty member recently attended a conference they will give a short presentation on what they learned and took away from the conference. Meeting twice a month can be tedious and the meetings aren't usually exciting, but it is an opportunity for the faculty to come together and learn what their colleagues are doing and be in the loop.

Finally, be available when your faculty need you and listen, really listen. My office is in the Archives on the fourth floor of the library building with the majority of the faculty being on the first and second floors. With the two floor difference I remind my faculty regularly that if they don't want to come up to the Archives and talk I'm happy to come to them. If I receive a phone call or email from a faculty member saying they need to talk, I meet with them right away. With emails I try to answer faculty emails within the day. Being a strong believer in the effectiveness of in-person communication rather than emails that can be easily misunderstood, if what I need to say to a faculty member takes more than a couple of sentences in an email, I will schedule a time to talk to them. Succinctness in emails and talking in person provides more effective conversations and conveys to the faculty member that you want to take the time to talk with them in person and understand the situation. If you are delivering bad news, do it in person. The faculty member will respect you more for doing that than sending an email message.

Finally, *finally*, really actively listen to your faculty. Sit still and listen, don't look at your phone or device, really engage and show them what they are concerned about is important to you. Follow the conversation up with an email noting what actions will be taken, and check in with the faculty member on what the status is. As is true with library patron interactions, if they feel the communication process was a success they will return when they need to speak with you again and know their question is important to you.

Conclusion

So is a department chair needed for the faculty of an academic library? Given that only four academic

libraries have them in the regional northwest library consortium of six states, the lack of literature and resources available to library department chairs, and finding a library faculty member willing to be chair in addition to everything else they do, it doesn't appear to be a necessity to run a successful academic library. However, the ever increasing tasks and expectations of the library dean include fundraising, pursuing other funding options, traveling nationally to meet donors and cultivate those relationships, and serving non-stop as an active advocate for the library on campus, in the community, and at the state level. Meanwhile the tasks of the Associate Dean include running the building, attending meetings and events the dean is unable to attend, and being second in charge and the point of contact in the dean's absence. A third leader is needed to guide the faculty, a faculty member serving as the go-to for faculty questions. With the rapidly changing profession and the need to grow throughout a career and continue to make headway in professional opportunities as well as scholarship and research, it is very helpful to have a direct point of contact for questions and guidance. Playing a role as chair in your faculty's successes and career accomplishments, whether they are receiving promotion and tenure, successfully publishing an article, or being accepted to present at their first international conference, makes the job of chair worthwhile.

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