

# What Our Sister Institutions Do

Below you will find an overview of the information we gathered about the expectations and compensation for faculty leadership roles at our NJ sister institutions. In studying these schools, we had hoped to find substantive data about alternative models to Stockton's which could form part of the subsequent university wide discussions. Our expectation was that by sifting through their memorandum of agreements and procedures we could identify useful material about how colleges and universities with similar backgrounds to our own have established their primary faculty leadership positions.

Unfortunately, while there are *some* consistencies in the documents we were able to collect there is not one clear model for either expectations or compensation (either within or across institutions). In other cases, we were simply unable to find relevant documents. We attempted to address this lacunae by directly interviewing individuals at the institutions who serve in these positions. Unhappily, our efforts often yielded unclear, incomplete, contradictory or ill-defined responses to some of our most basic questions.

Hence, the bad news here is that there is not enough clearly articulated data from the other institutions to provide a substantive comparison model(s) from which to begin our own local discussions. While this is certainly frustrating, we can pride ourselves on the fact that by comparison our own agreements are clearly articulated and well documented both in terms of expectations and compensation. Moreover, our own work may well generate structures which can provide a model for our colleagues across the state.

Admittedly, we may have not questioned the *right* individuals or unintentionally overlooked potentially useful materials and so we welcome anyone who is able to rectify this by pointing us to clear and unambiguous answers to our questions. We view this document, as we do all the Task Force findings, as open to further refinement, clarification, and correction.

## Overview

We reviewed MOA and local agreements (where available) and interviewed individuals at the following institutions: The College of New Jersey, Kean, Montclair, NJ City University, Ramapo, Rowan, William Patterson and Rutgers.

The statewide Master Agreement that covers Stockton also applies to the terms and conditions of employment for the faculty in all of the above institutions, with the exception of Rutgers University which negotiates with the state separately. Article XVIII of the Master Agreement, the document negotiated between the state and the Council of New Jersey State College Locals, AFT, AFL-CIO, and which governs working conditions for all faculty, outlines both the election process and term of service for department chairs.

The full document is available online at the SFT website, but, in brief, faculty committees of five (5) members elected by a department's membership oversee the election of a recommended department chair.<sup>1</sup> Recommendations are then forwarded to the university President, who, in turn, can consult with the relevant Dean and accept, or reject, an elected individual. If the recommendation is not accepted, the President must provide a written rationale for the decision within thirty (30) days, and the department can hold another election, if practical. If candidates outside the current department faculty are to be considered for the position, the Faculty Election Committee, and all voting members, must receive comprehensive, relevant information about their qualifications.<sup>1</sup>

The usual term of service for a department chair is three years, and begins on July 1. Elections are held the spring of the preceding year, and should be completed by April 30.<sup>2</sup>

Stockton is currently exempt from this definition, as are Ramapo and Thomas Edison University, because these schools have not previously utilized department chairs. Should Stockton move to this model, however, details provided in a master agreement would apply.

While basic parameters of chair positions are determined centrally, the specific responsibilities of these roles, and associated remuneration, are negotiated locally. Moreover, the Master Agreement specifies that colleges or universities provide the Department Chairperson, the faculty within the department, and the local Union with a copy of the job description, including the duties and responsibilities of the Chairperson position. Any proposed changes to an existing description—or creation of a new department chairperson job description if one did not previously exist, as would be the case at Stockton—must be furnished at least one semester in advance.

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<sup>1</sup> The Master Agreement also provides that a college or university President has the authority to appoint an acting chairperson “pending completion of the procedures set forth.” See Article XVIII.E.

<sup>2</sup> Some institutions (i.e. Montclair University) have required mid-term department chairperson evaluations. Halfway through the second year in office, department faculty are asked to assess whether they are confident in the performance of their chairperson. If so, the chair continues the term for their elected duration; if not, the Dean consults with the faculty, and makes a recommendation to the President and Provost, who are responsible for the final decision. Should all agree that the chairperson should be replaced, another election might be held following the process laid out in the Master Agreement, if feasible, or a replacement appointed by the President to serve the balance of the term.

## Key Findings

**A) TITLES:** *Most New Jersey colleges and universities use the term “department chair” to designate the leader of an academic unit.*

The exceptions to the statement above are Stockton and Ramapo, which use the titles “coordinator” and “convener” respectively, and Thomas Edison, which does not have a standing faculty as it functions as an entirely online institution. It is important to note that, with the exception of Rutgers University, where department chairs are administrators and members of their own union, Department Chairs at peer institutions are faculty leadership positions and chairpersons remain members of the AFT.<sup>3</sup>

Examples from local agreements confirming faculty status include:

**William Patterson University:** “During an individual’s tenure as chair, s/he retains all the rights and privileges of a faculty member as contained in the union (AFT/State) Agreement.”

**Rowan University:** “Chairpersons are not administrators or managers, but elected academic leaders of their departments. Chairpersons communicate with and represent their departments to the dean. They must not be asked to perform administrative duties or duties that violate their AFT contract.”

**Jersey City University:** “Department Chairpersons are members of the faculty and are not of the Administration. However, they do perform administrative functions, and participate in the governance of the University.”

**B) RESPONSIBILITIES:** *Department Chair responsibilities are similar across most New Jersey public institutions. There is also comparable in many respects with Stockton’s current coordinator position.*

A review of extant chairperson descriptions from different state institutions indicates several common responsibilities, particularly in terms of providing leadership for:

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<sup>3</sup> This is not always the case at private institutions. At Monmouth University, for example, “faculty must come out of the bargaining unit for the duration of their terms, but most Chairs will return to the faculty upon completion of their terms, except for those who seek and attain administrative positions.” Monmouth also differs in terms of length of service, as these are 12-month positions elected for five (5) years. Remuneration also varies. Graduate chairs teaching a 1-1 load, while undergraduate chairs teach a 2-2; no overloads are permitted, unless approved by their respective Dean. Chairs also receive an increase of \$5,000 in the faculty base salary after the inclusion of the annual increment (with a maximum of two such increases). At the conclusion of the five-year term, Chairs will be eligible for a sabbatical leave. These sabbaticals will be reserved for Chairs and funded independent of standard sabbatical funds but subject to the same conditions. A maximum of two sabbaticals (one semester or two-semester) will be awarded to Chairs per year. Finally, chairs are entitled to a 4-week vacation annually, and—every second year—to summer research leave; an acting chair is appointed in his or her absence.

- Recruiting and mentoring full-time faculty.
- Facilitating hiring of adjunct and part-time faculty
- Fostering and promoting the professional development of all faculty.
- Ensuring the ongoing evaluation of all faculty.
- Overseeing smooth operation of the tenure and promotion process.
- Managing course planning and scheduling.
- Coordinating periodic reports and assessment.
- Ensuring familiarity, and compliance, with University policies and procedures.
- Mediating and resolving disputes between faculty.
- Participating in student grievance procedures, in accordance with University policy.
- Organizing information and reporting for external accreditation, as appropriate.
- Working closely with relevant Deans and other managers.
- Serving as the principal point of contact for department information requests from students, prospective students, parents, and the general public.
- Representing the department at internal and external committees, as required.

Many of these activities also align with Stockton’s negotiated responsibilities for program coordinators and directors, with some notable exceptions. Coordinators and directors, for example, currently have limited fiscal oversight, meaning they do not manage substantive departmental budgets or allocate travel funding, and do not oversee assignment of faculty offices or other facilities, both of which appear as part of a department chair’s workload at other institutions.<sup>4</sup> And while coordinators, like all faculty, play a role in enrollment and recruitment events, outlined on pages 9 and 10 of the University’s Memorandum of Agreement governing “Coordinators and Other Designated Faculty in Leadership Roles,” they have not previously played an extensive role in the development of marketing plans or recruitment strategies.<sup>5</sup> Finally, coordinators do not currently, except in specific faculty leadership roles (such as

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<sup>4</sup> Rowan University’s MOA, for example, includes detailed sections on fiscal and facilities responsibilities. William Patterson University requires that Department Chairs provide their respective faculty with two budget analyses a year—in December and May, as well as make recommendations about faculty travel and leave requests; final determination about these latter two are the responsibility of the Dean. William Patterson also specifically assigns responsibility for the collections of information pertinent to external evaluations, such as Middle States accreditation, as well as appreciable student recruitment activities, to Department Chairs.

<sup>5</sup> The full text of Stockton’s coordinators’ agreement can be found online at: <https://www.sftunion.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MOA-Coordinators-and-Other-Designated-Faculty-in-Leadership-Roles-7.1.18-6.30.20-opt.pdf>.

Center/Institute Directors or Coordinators/Directors of accredited program), manage staff.

On the other hand, Stockton's current Coordinator's Agreement contains items not included at other institutions, such as coordination of General Studies courses (in addition to course scheduling within majors).<sup>6</sup>

### **C) ASSISTANT CHAIRS/CO-CHAIRS:**

Some peer institutions divide the responsibilities of faculty leadership among Department Chairs and Assistant Chairs and/or Program Coordinators.<sup>7</sup> Less information is available about the roles and responsibilities of the latter positions, but, like Department Chairpersons, compensation is often based on a calculation of various factors.

Rowan University has a Program Coordinator position, in addition to Department Chairs. As workload for this position varies, they are reviewed individually to determine whether an adjustment in teaching assignment or additional compensation is warranted (and include such considerations as number of applicants, number of advisees, recruiting responsibilities, recordkeeping requirements, accreditation activities, curriculum development, coordination with other programs, etc.).

William Patterson routinely uses two forms of faculty leadership, beyond Department Chairs. There are currently seven (7) active Assistant Chairs, all of whom receive 3 credits of compensation for specific responsibilities (i.e. work in department honors programs, lab coordination, or accreditation), which can be taken as a course release. The University has an additional eleven (11) Graduate Directors, most of whom receive 3 credits of compensation (two position receive only 2 credits, while one—Nursing—received 4 credits).<sup>8</sup>

**D) Compensation:** *Peer institutions in New Jersey use various systems to determine compensation for Department Chairs during the academic year; many are based on "tiers," or multi-factor formulas that balance various department characteristics (i.e. number of faculty, number of majors, faculty FTE + pro-rated adjuncts, accreditation requirements, etc.).*

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<sup>6</sup> Program assessments less frequent than annual do appear in some chair descriptions. At TCNJ, for example, chairs coordinate program reviews every 5 to 7 years; these are designed as 8- to 10-page self-study documents for external review.

<sup>7</sup> Montclair University uses the term "Deputy Department Chairperson," while The College of New Jersey uses both Assistant Chairs and Co-Chairs.

<sup>8</sup> The combined credit release for William Patterson's faculty administrative work was 385 credits across the institution in fall 2019. As they are based on a 3-credit course system, that is equivalent to 128 courses in terms of credit hours. Assuming a full-time faculty load of 12 credits per term, that is roughly 11 FTE.

The table below compares remuneration, including specific considerations, where applicable.

INSTITUTION	CONTRACT TERM	RELEASE CREDITS	SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS
Rowan University	12-month employee  3-year term	6 credits per semester (12 credits a year)	Credit release can be lower if the department is small and/or “some of the administrative tasks ordinarily performed by the department chair are performed by the office of the dean.”
William Patterson University	12-month employee  3-year term	Operates a 4-tier system (based on a 3-credit per course system):  Group A (5 programs): 21 credits  Group B (8 programs): 18 credits  Group C (7 programs): 15 credits  Group D (7 programs): 12 credits	Compensation is determined a formula that adds the number of full-time faculty plus one quarter (1/4) the number of adjunct faculty multiplied by the number of undergraduate and graduate students.  Regardless of tier, Department Chairpersons are required to teach at least one 3-credit course per term, and a maximum of 9 credits can be taken in any one semester. Any additional credits awarded must be paid as overload.
Montclair University	??	??	Department Chairpersons are responsible for creating a summer workload plan to be submitted to the Dean that outlines how responsibilities will be allocated in July and August. They are

Ramapo University	??	n/a	As of July 30, 2015, conveners, who provide leadership for “faculty teaching in the particular major, minor, or program... (some) disciplinary while others are multi- or inter-disciplinary,” do not receive release time; such work is defined as service.
The College of New Jersey	??	Chairs receive course releases as payment. The rates aren't the same for everyone. It depends on factors such as department size, and number of programs to be managed. For example, a department that is smaller and uncomplicated by multiple majors or programs, may receive one course release per semester. This seems to be pretty standard. Other chairs get additional help and more course release time -- English, for example, as one of the largest departments has two co-chairs, plus three program coordinators, as it has two majors, three minors, and a graduate program.	

**Summer compensation:** Sister institutions provide a minimum compensation of 4 credit hours unlike the Stockton MOA where graduate coordinators' summer compensation is 3.5 TCH (i.e, less than a course release), Tier 1&2 = 1TCH, Tier 3&4 = 2 TCH.

Montclair University: Graduate Program Coordinators or smaller programs receive \$1,200, larger programs receive \$2,000 (both paid out in two installments). Faculty in these roles must be 10- rather than 12-month employees, and Department Chairpersons are ineligible for consideration (summer work already assumed as part of their responsibilities).



## **Additional Material We Continue to Seek**

As we noted at the outset of this document the information we were able to garner struck us as not always consistent within the institutions themselves. It may well be that this simply reflects our lack of an adequate understanding of their system but our confusion was exacerbated by our inability to secure information regarding a number of key items.

We conclude by providing a list of some of these missing items and a statement of our commitment to continue to try to locate them where possible. Any assistance the readers of this paper can provide us would be greatly appreciated.

### *The College of New Jersey*

We were unable to find a clearly articulated local agreement that covered the compensation schedule for chairs, as well as any explanation for how such a schedule (if it exists) was designed and how it is implemented. The information we obtained for table above was from personal correspondence with a faculty member who wished to remain anonymous. We were unable to obtain information about the duties and compensations of coordinators.

### *Kean University*

We have been unable to find any recent local agreements covering the chairs. The last agreement we found was from 1974.

### *Montclair University*

While we were able to find some helpful information on the duties and compensations for chairs during the summer, we could not find such materials for the regular academic year.

### *New Jersey City University:*

Similar to Montclair, we were able to secure relatively thorough information on the compensation and responsibilities of chairs during the summer, we have had only limited success when it comes to the academic year.

### *Rowan University*

The Union and the University had been engaged in some litigation over the proposed chairs job description and as of the publication of this document we were uncertain as to the final result. Their *MOA on Additional Service* describes chairs compensation but we were unsure whether this was current practice.

*William Patterson University*

There are references in their documents to program coordinators in addition to chairs but we were unable to secure adequate information about the duties and compensations for the coordinator position.