

Faculty Handbook Committee Recommendation
Resident Masters
January 25, 2011

On September 14, 2010, the Faculty Senate charged the Faculty Handbook Committee to “review faculty status vis-à-vis Resident Masters.”

In fulfilling its charge, the committee:

1. reviewed the Faculty Senate Constitution and the Faculty Handbook (FHB),
2. reviewed documents related to the history, genesis, and evolution of the Residential Colleges (RC), and,
3. met with all of the Resident Masters and their administrative leadership.

The committee concludes that the Resident College Masters (RCM) have faculty status because teaching is part of their required duties. The Faculty Senate Constitution states that “the Faculty Association shall include those full-time employees of the university who hold the rank of instructor, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, or professor and those full-time employees of the university with teaching included as a responsibility of their appointment” (FHB, p. 5). Since resident masters typically teach two courses per semester, they are members of the Faculty Association and have faculty status.

Faculty status, however, is not the same as faculty appointment, which occurs in an academic department and confers faculty rank. Faculty appointment is the result of a departmental search process and seeks to fill a vacant faculty line/position typically on a continuing basis. Faculty appointment, whether tenured or term, includes faculty status, and provides the protections of academic freedom.

As a result of discussions with Resident Masters and their administrative leadership, we determine that both the student experience in the learning communities and the university’s ability to attract, retain, and reward resident Masters will be improved by assuring that these individuals have both faculty status and appointment (whether tenured or term). We further recommend that:

1. Priority in hiring future RCMs be given to faculty who currently hold a continuing term or tenured appointment in a department.
 - Because a department would be affected by the two-course download to the RC program, the appointment would require review and approval by the Department Personnel Advisory Committee as well appropriate administrators.
 - The RCM would fulfill his/her department duties and responsibilities as well as those associated with the RC program
 - The RCM would be evaluated by both the Director of the Residential College program and the chair of the department in which the RCM retains an appointment.
 - The position as RCM could be renewed for up to two years, given need, satisfactory performance, and the agreement of both the Director of the Residential College program and the chair of the department in which the RCM retains an appointment. The faculty member then returns to full-time assignment in their academic department.
 - The initial search for this vacancy would be an internal search

2. Faculty may be hired as a Visiting Lecturer and/or Visiting Assistant Professor (based on credentials) if and when an internal search fails.
 - The position would be advertised by the College partnering with the Residential College, and applicants for the position would be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Department Personnel Advisory Committee as well appropriate administrators.
 - The position comes with a two-course download to the Residential College program.
 - The RCM would attend department meetings and participate in department activities in whatever way the VAL/VAP position has been outlined by an individual department.
 - An RCM hired as a VAL/VAP would be evaluated by both the Director of the Residential College program and the chair of the department in which the RCM is teaching.
 - The position as RCM could be renewed for up to two years, given need, satisfactory performance, recommendation of the Department Personnel Advisory Committee, and the agreement of both the Director of the Residential College program and the chair of the department in which the RCM retains an appointment.
 - Barring the offer of another position at UCA, university employment is tied to their appointment as RCM.
3. Resident College Masters should not be staff members with teaching responsibilities. The university should, however, honor existing contracts with RCMs that may fit in this category.
4. The salary lines for the RCMs should be moved back to the corresponding academic college so as to encourage college-level ownership and investment in the Learning Communities. Administrative budget lines and oversight of the program should remain centralized through the office of Learning Communities.
5. Additional study and conversations should occur regarding the Sophomore Experience and the Commuter College that fall outside of the committee's charge as there are both programmatic and faculty issues to address.

The Faculty Handbook Committee approved his recommendation by unanimous vote on January 25, 2011.