



**Faculty Senate Position Statement  
Re: Proposed Department Leadership Model**

11/5/2019

The faculty senate recognizes and appreciates the efforts by the administration and the Department Leadership Task Force to evaluate the current department leadership model utilized at Red Rocks Community College, and determine if modification or replacement of this model is required.

There appears to be four major motivators behind this initiative:

- The faculty senate report on administrative work done by faculty chairs and leads submitted during the spring 2017 semester
- The faculty senate report on the impact of full time and part time faculty submitted in the fall 2017 semester
- The inequity of the current system in the department and programmatic distribution of release credits
- Ensuring the limited finances associated with departmental leadership are spent in the most efficient way possible.

On the subsequent pages of this document each of these items will be addressed individually along with the senate response, followed by the official senate position on the proposed model, and recommendations for moving forward.

We look forward to a continued dialogue with the administration and department leadership task force to determine the best solution and leadership model for the entire Red Rocks.

RRCC Faculty Senate  
Fall 2020

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## Chair and Lead Administrative Tasks

The 2017 senate report identified several items that do not require faculty expertise in order to be effectively accomplished, and in reality could be handled by departmental program assistants or administrative assistants. These include:

- Completing graduation applications
- Adjunct credentialing
- VE 135 follow up
- Producing marketing materials
- Completing workload forms
- Tracking down and archiving syllabi
- Filling out book order paperwork
- Event logistics
- Managing department websites
- Making room reservations
- Checking adjunct references
- Ordering food
- Approving FLAC
- Purchasing functions (requisitions, P-cards, etc.)
- Orienting and training new instructors in non-departmental matters
- Tracking and storing textbooks for instructional support areas
- Assisting instructors in the acquisition of teaching materials
- Managing equipment
- Maintaining personnel files for instructors
- Managing work study students
- Making copies
- Managing permits

The items on the list that were not consistently agreed upon, and do in fact require faculty / subject matter expertise, are those administrative functions chairs and leads currently feel cannot be transferred to someone else.

- Evaluating adjunct D2L shells
- Proofing the schedule and catalog
- Advising students
- Observing classes
- Handling student complaints
- Transcript and CPL/PLA evaluations
- Approve tiered pay applications (not in the original report as it did not exist at that time, but this could not effectively be relegated to an administrative assistant)

Under the proposed community leader model, once those items that require chair/lead involvement and oversight are removed the position becomes more consistent with that of a program assistant or administrative assistant. There is also concern with the number of items assigned to the community leader that require program lead assistance. In effect this will not reduce the workload of the program lead as they will still be heavily involved in these functions and training the community leader.

Moreover, due to the fact the community leader can rotate among individuals it is highly likely that the community leader will never reach the level of competence needed to work independently and reduce the program lead's workload. It could become nothing more than a perpetual cycle of training the current community leader.

Finally, the Community Leader position is effectively comprised of all the administrative duties identified by faculty as not requiring faculty expertise to perform. However, the proposed leadership model is asking faculty members to leave the classroom and perform fill that position. This is likely a major factor in why the senators have found no one from their respective constituency is interested in such a position.

The senate does not feel the community leader position will meet its intended goal of reducing the administrative workload of program leads.

### **Faculty Senate Report on the Impact of Full Time and Part Time Faculty**

The 2017 senate report found that a high ratio of full-time faculty to part time instructors is correlated with higher graduation rates, more instructor advising, and higher retention rates. One of the noble intentions of the leadership model project was to increase the amount of full-time faculty members in the classroom, as it was assumed that administrative duties were taking them out of the classroom. The senate appreciates this effort and the recognition of the work done in the past.

However, during the project it was found that the mass majority of program leads and chairs do their administrative duties as overload, while maintaining a class load of 15 hours or more. Therefore, the community leader model would have minimal impact on increasing faculty in the classroom.

Conversely this initiative will likely reduce the number of full-time faculty in the classroom as it will result in removing five faculty from the classroom and limit them to teaching one class each. Their courses would then presumably be filled with part time instructors, which is the exact opposite of the senate recommendation in this matter.

The senate cannot support any initiative that has the potential to reduce student access to full time faculty members.

## **The Inequity in Distribution of Release Credits**

Under the current system the inequity in the distribution of release hours is well known, and any attempts to create an equitable system is greatly appreciated. However, given the [most likely] fact that the administrative load of program leads in the community leader model will not be reduced, it is not believed that the proposed model will achieve this goal. It will instead only decrease release hours causing further inequity.

Other factors that must be taken into account are that the community leader model assumes one program lead per prefix. While this may work for some programs, other programs distribute their release hours among the faculty in order to best utilize the expertise of those individuals. Although the intention may not have been to create a “one size fits all” singular model for those programs in the community leader model, this is what the outcome appears to be.

It is felt a better solution would be to blend the current system (adjusting for current FTE per prefix), and the formulas from the proposed models, into an equitable leadership model in which release credits are distributed by prefix, rather than by department. This would allow the model to account for FTE as well as other impacts on administrative time such as the number of individuals supervised, the number of concurrent enrollment sites, lab and equipment maintenance, etc.

## **Ensuring Financial Efficiency in Department Leadership Expenditures**

The faculty senate appreciates the recent changes in FTE at RRCC and the budgetary impact this has caused. We also support efforts to ensure the dollars allotted to departmental leadership are spent appropriately, efficiently, and in an equitable manner among all prefixes.

However, the senate is not convinced that moving five faculty members out of the classroom, to extended contracts, and then replacing them with adjunct instructors meets this goal. As most of the job duties found in the community leader model are those that have been identified as not needing faculty expertise, we would recommend exploring the possibility of “community assistants” for these roles.

The task force may find that the salary of these individuals, as opposed to faculty on extended contracts, is less expensive. Moreover, it would take the concerns of the “rotating community leader” and risk of perpetual training out of the equation. Program leads could likely be awarded the release necessary to perform those administrative tasks that cannot be delegated, and would be able to train a long-term assistant for those that can be delegated.

## **Resolution, Position, and Recommendations**

### *Community Liaison*

As a whole the senate does not have as many reservations about this model as it will not change much of how program leads in the affected areas function now. The biggest reservation and concern is the extended contracts.

As of yet there has not been an official answer to the question of whether or not a faculty member who is currently on a 164 day contract can be required to accept an extended contract if they do not want to.

This question has been asked of administration and the executive director of human resources. The answers have been "That is a HR question", and "I do not know" respectively (HR was given this question, among others three weeks before the senate meeting so it could be researched).

The senate would also like to know if the need for an extended contract can be an individual decision between the faculty member and the dean based on the evidence to support (or not) its need.

Until this question is answered senate cannot fully endorse the community liaison model.

### *Community Leader Model*

The senate cannot support this model as proposed.

There are a multitude of questions to be answered surrounding this model. Can program leads be required to accept an extended contract? Is anyone interested in taking on this role? Will this effectively reduce faculty in the classroom? Can the model accommodate the wide variety of differences in each prefix? Will it actually reduce the administrative load of program leads? Is the current system actually the most effective if it is modified for our current situation? Can the proposed formulas and current system be blended to create a better system? Is taking faculty out of the classroom to have a primary focus on duties that can be done by an administrative assistant the best option for our students? Has this model effectively created an Associate Dean by another name, but without the authority to assure all the responsibilities of the position are met? While faculty expressed an interest/want in giving up certain administrative duties, do they feel they can actually do so and still effectively run their programs?

The recommendation of the faculty senate is that the leadership task force re-evaluate the current leadership model, and work with administration and HR to answer the questions above and determine the following:

- Is there a model that will remain within the financial constraints that would allow community assistants rather than community leaders?
- Can some variation of our current model be adjusted for current FTE, equity, and then combined with the formulas from the proposed model to create a hybrid model that represents the best of both?
- Is there anything wrong with the current model once it has been adjusted for FTE and equity?
- Has the committee taken into consideration that all programs require a certain amount of leadership, regardless of the amount of FTE in that program?

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