

UAB Department of Health Services Administration
POLICY ON DEPARTMENT COMMITMENT TO SERVICE AND SERVICE LEADERSHIP

FINAL VERSION: March 20, 2018

BACKGROUND

The Health Services Administration Department values and supports service and service leadership activities of faculty members for several reasons, including but not limited to:

Benefits to the Department. The Department’s vision is to be recognized as a global leader in healthcare management and research and our mission is to develop leaders to shape tomorrow’s healthcare. Thus, faculty commitment to, involvement in and leadership of national and international service organizations are essential to the Department’s strategic success.

Benefits to Programs. Our educational programs are engaged in various national and international communities, each with important stakeholders. For some (like MSHA), we are ranked by our peers. For some (e.g., HCM, HI, MHSA, HQS), there are certification and accreditation bodies that rely on volunteers to develop standards, review programs and conduct other volunteer service activities for the field. For all, in order for our programs to be perceived as national leaders and to contribute to the future of education, Department faculty must be engaged in service activities in these types of accreditation and other program-level organizations.

Benefits to Individual Faculty Members. Faculty service and leadership in service is recognized and valued by SHP and UAB as important as codified in the current SHP tenure and promotion guidelines. As well, some faculty members enjoy the collegiality of service at all levels and recognize that service activities may help them develop in specific ways that contribute to their scholarship and teaching. Thus, some faculty accrue specific individual benefits from active engagement and leadership in service.

DEPARTMENT COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

“Service” is a formal expectation of all faculty at UAB. All faculty in the Department are formally allocated some time for participating in service. Each member of the Department reports on this service activity in the Annual Review process.

The Department needs and values service by its members (faculty and staff). Commitment to serve individually and as part of program, Department, School, and University Committees is critical to keeping the University (or an organization) functioning and thriving. Service is central to the concept of “shared governance” in which faculty and staff actively participate and contribute to University functions and planning for the future.

Service leadership, however, is optional. Faculty are not required to chair committees within the Department or School, or take on service leadership roles in the field. The Department has, however, established specific strategic goals related to service as we seek to achieve national and international visibility and recognition. We therefore encourage some members of the faculty to serve in service leadership roles, especially those who wish to do so and those at the appropriate academic career stage.

Service leadership has not been formally defined because it varies across disciplines, but is generally meant to include elected officer positions and elected board service for a national or international organization. It may also include other types of leadership for very large regional organizations, serving in some other type of large and visible positions of leadership, such as serving as Editor for a prominent, highly regarded journal, or chairing national committees. Rather than limit the definition of service leadership, we encourage and enthusiastically support faculty service in these roles. Faculty should, however, choose service activities wisely and realize that service is one part of their multi-pronged role at the University (that will include at least teaching, research, and service and may include administrative roles).

DEPARTMENT SUPPORT FOR SERVICE

Time. At UAB and specifically in HSA, every member of the faculty is allocated some portion of their work time for service which may be at the program, department, school, university, or field level. Faculty members are directed to discuss service activities with the Department Chair during the Annual Review process and establish goals related to service that are (1) appropriate to their career stage and (2) related to their tenure and promotion goals. For example, four hours (10%) of service per week is probably too much for a tenure-track assistant professor who has chosen to focus on research excellence and may therefore need to focus more on publications and grant proposals. On the other hand, a faculty member seeking to establish “leadership” in service may require a larger proportion of time for service. Note that some service activities are funded by other units in UAB or outside entities. There is no “one size fits all” for service.

Financial Support. In the current environment, HSA faculty members are provided with professional development accounts (PDAs) that can be used to support service activities, including memberships in professional associations, travel to conferences, and the like. Some faculty members were provided with “startup funds” when they were hired. The first source of financial support for service activities will be the individual faculty member’s PDA and “start up” funds.

There is no guarantee that the Department will financially support specific service leadership or provide course release time. When a faculty member considers a national or international service leadership position, it is recommended that he or she discuss this opportunity with the Department Chair in advance of the nomination or election process (before committing to the service activity), particularly if there is an expectation that departmental funds will be needed to support that service.

When possible and dependent upon the availability of funds, the Department may provide additional support for those serving in elected national or international leadership roles, including, but not limited to:

- financial support for meeting travel and registration fees;
- paying for student and/or administrative staff time to support functions related to the role (for example, supporting the paper or abstract review process for a national meeting);
- course-reduction for specific, time-limited service leadership;
- other needed activities or items to support the faculty member in the service leadership role.

Financial and other support is dependent upon the availability of Departmental resources.

The Department Chair will begin to quantify and report the ways in which faculty have been supported to provide leadership in service on an annual basis.

Note: in recent years, the Department has financially supported faculty in national and international leadership roles in all of the above ways (and more).

CONCLUSION

Service and service leadership are highly valued and important to the success of the Department. They are part of “who we are” play a critical role in our current and future success. UAB, SHP, and HSA value service and service leadership in tangible ways, including setting strategic objectives for this, asking about it during the annual review process, the way it is codified as important in the tenure and promotion guidelines, and through our history of putting time and money into supporting faculty who serve and lead.