



Office Memo

One Lomb Memorial Drive  
Post Office Box 9887  
Rochester, New York 14623-0887

To OFD Liaisons OFD  
From Jim DeCaro  
Date 5 October, 1988  
Subject Liaison Roles and Responsibilities

Attached is the approved description of our faculty development liaison "Roles and Responsibilities". I look forward to the successful implementation of the principles and processes contained in the attached document.

3 April, 1985

- Jeff
- Chris
- Tom
- Ron
- Maule
- SL
- Harry

Please remember that we are using the attached process for assessment of liaisons re annual appraisal. Please remember that page 7 contains the agreed upon process.

Jim

*Adopted JFD 25 Sept, 1988*

## THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LIAISON AT NTID

### INTRODUCTION

The complexity of the roles and responsibilities of a faculty development liaison has become more clearly defined since the establishment of the School-based Faculty Development Program (SBFDP) at NTID in 1985. The purpose of this document is to: accurately delineate the role of a faculty development liaison as it relates to institute structures and functions; describe the complexity of liaison interactions and responsibilities to various constituencies; define reporting relationships for purposes of feedback and appraisal; and suggest a timeline of activities to facilitate these processes.

### PHILOSOPHY AND HISTORY OF SCHOOL-BASED FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

The faculty development program at NTID is based on the assumption that the individual faculty member is ultimately responsible for continuing to seek ways of gaining new knowledge and skills related to one's professional responsibilities. That is, each faculty member is responsible for his/her own professional development.

Faculty development committees were established in each of the three schools and three divisions of NTID for the purpose of facilitating the process of providing faculty development opportunities to faculty who choose to participate. A network of liaisons was established by splitting former full time faculty head counts in the Office of Faculty Development (OFD) with the intention of providing time to a faculty member in each school and division to function as a liaison to OFD. (As liaison roles have evolved, the amounts of time provided for liaison involvement have varied between schools and divisions and have ranged from approximately 15% to 50%.) The position of liaison was intended to be perceived as one of importance, a prestigious opportunity to serve one's colleagues, to be creative in a challenging new area while learning new knowledge and skills related to the role of liaison, and to have access to opportunities that address personal professional goals.

Much has been learned in the developmental years. The following sections will describe how current liaisons view their roles and the roles of their colleagues with respect to faculty development issues and programming.

## ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

### **Faculty Members**

Faculty members at NTID accept responsibility for continuing to evolve in their primary roles and to develop professionally. They have responsibilities to respond to needs assessments and evaluations of their respective SBFDP efforts. They provide feedback to the school/division liaison or the department advisory group representative when requested.

### **School/Division Faculty Development Committee Members**

The process of constituting Faculty Development Committees has differed between schools and divisions. Committee members have been appointed, elected, or have volunteered.

Faculty Development Committee members assist the liaison in decision-making related to establishing an annual Faculty Development Committee plan-of-work for their respective school or division. It is the Faculty Development Committee which is responsible for conducting periodic needs assessments of colleagues in its section of the NTID community (some committees utilize the respective department representative to do this in each department.) Committee members assist in searching for resources and in identifying and contacting presenters. They assist in programming, scheduling, and evaluating faculty development activities.

In addition, faculty development committee members often act as liaisons to their departments, insure accurate dissemination of information, and solicit feedback from their areas when needed.

## **Faculty Development Liaison**

The faculty development liaison has the most complex set of responsibilities with respect to the entire school-based effort. Liaisons have interactions with school/division faculty, OFD, their respective school or division faculty development committee members, with internal and external presenters, A/A Deans, and the Dean of NTID. In addition, the liaison has a role as a faculty member, separate from the SBFDP role as liaison.

As coordinator of SBFDP through the school or division faculty development committee, the liaison brings issues of importance from his or her committee to the OFD table during weekly meetings. Liaisons work together at these meetings to share ideas and to develop solutions which they then take back to their respective committees for discussion and implementation. Up to 50 percent of a professional's time may be assigned to liaison activities.

Liaison responsibilities to OFD include issues related to needs assessment processes; institute faculty development budget allocation management in collaboration with other liaisons; collaboration on programming at the school/division level, between schools and divisions, and at the institute level; and issues related to feedback evaluations from school and division faculty. In addition, liaisons are instrumental in participating in the continuing evolution of OFD sponsored faculty development activities, in the development of policies, procedures and practices for operation of the SBFDP, and in designing and implementing institute-wide faculty development programs (e.g., 20th Year Celebration). This function with OFD has been estimated to be about 20 percent of the liaison's role.

Liaisons are responsible for managing, in consultation with the Assistant/Associate Dean, the faculty development budget which is determined annually by the Dean (see p. 7). The process for accounting for budget expenditures is determined in conjunction with each A/A Dean and is outlined in the next section.

Liaisons coordinate the Faculty Development Committees in each of the schools and divisions. The liaison develops and utilizes facilitation skills in determining regular meeting agendas, delegating responsibilities between committee members, and guiding the committee through needs assessments, programming and the collection of faculty feedback. The liaison also takes issues of relevance to the committee from the OFD table and brings back faculty feedback for consideration.

As a faculty member, a liaison has responsibility to take control of his or her own growth. In conjunction with the department chairperson, the liaison drafts an annual professional development plan. The liaison also responds to the needs assessment in the school or division and attends sessions when appropriate to personal goals.

### **Assistant/Associate Dean**

Assistant/Associate (A/A) Deans have both an administrative function and a faculty function with respect to faculty development efforts.

As outlined in the next section, they have an institute mandate to oversee that liaisons are appraised by school or division chairpersons according to pre-established expectations, and a role responsibility to account for faculty development funds on an annual basis.

As a faculty member, the A/A Dean has an opportunity to respond to the school/division faculty development committee needs assessment, to attend programs related to their own faculty/professional development goals, and to respond to the annual evaluation of programming.

### **The Office of Faculty Development**

Central to the coordination of the SBFDP is the Office of Faculty Development (OFD). OFD functions as the institute support mechanism and facilitator of all faculty development programming that occurs. At regularly scheduled meetings with the OFD team (OFD faculty, staff and liaisons) assistance is provided in designing and facilitating the collection of annual needs assessment data, planning and implementing programs to meet expressed faculty needs, serving as a resource of people and materials related to programming, providing access to OFD core programs (e.g., the Faculty Consultations Program, Deafness Up-close, Computer Expertise Network, etc.), and providing feedback to liaisons upon request. In addition, OFD provides the liaison with logistical support for programming, organizes OFD team attendance at an annual professional development conference (POD), and facilitates professional development activities related to the personal faculty/professional development goals of each liaison. In addition, with the assistance of liaisons, OFD facilitates the meeting of institute-wide faculty development goals (e.g., the 20th Year Celebration of Teaching and Learning).

## **Relationship of Liaison Position to Promotion/Tenure/Merit**

As stated above, the role of liaison is intended to be prestigious, a position of honor, a "special" assignment. It is also a significant part of a liaison's responsibilities as outlined on the annual plan of work or set of expectations. It is appropriate that formal appraisals of liaison performance be included in the processes of consideration for promotion, tenure, and/or merit awards.

## **Limits to Liaison Control of Outcomes**

It is important to state that there are limits to liaison control of some faculty development programming outcomes. To be consistent with the philosophy of individual faculty responsibility for continued growth, at best, the liaison can facilitate programming and make faculty aware of the intention of meeting faculty expressed needs. The decision to attend such activities lies exclusively with the faculty member. Likewise, eventual impact on students can only be intended but not guaranteed, due to the difficulty of measuring a direct relationship between faculty learnings and student benefits.

It is also important to note that the SBFDP is not designed to meet every faculty professional development need. Many of the needs expressed on annual needs assessments are clearly not related to skills and knowledge needed to improve one's effectiveness in a primary role. Categories of appropriate programming include teaching/learning, communication, deafness, discipline knowledge, and organization knowledge. Although these categories are not all inclusive, they have proven to provide a useful way of organizing over 90% of faculty development needs. The institute provides other support for professional growth through travel monies, professional leave programs, and productivity grants. It is recognized that not all personal/professional growth areas can be the responsibility of the institute, and these need to be pursued through individual faculty initiative.

## COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIPS

### **Feedback vs. Appraisal**

For purposes of determining appropriate appraisal relationships for a liaison, it is important to discuss the two primary modes of sharing information with respect to faculty development programming and the roles and responsibilities of a liaison.

In terms of quantity of information exchanged, feedback data is the more common form of information handled by a liaison and others associated with the SBFDP. Feedback can be one-way or two-way, i.e., provided by one party to another or shared by two parties. Feedback is informal, may be written or not written critique of programming or processes. The primary purpose of feedback is to provide information which is intended to be growth-producing, to result in an improved state of efficiency and effectiveness relative to the goals of the SBFDP.

In contrast, appraisal data is formal, written and necessary according to institute policy. It is utilized to evaluate a liaison's performance relative to his or her stated plan of work/expectations.

Various individuals are involved in providing feedback and appraisal information. These relationships are outlined in this section.

### **Liaison Interactions and Description of Responsibilities**

A liaison is responsible for three basic types of faculty development programming and is involved in three basic mechanical functions related to the job. The relationships between the liaison and others with respect to these programming efforts and job functions are described in this section.

#### **Programming Interactions**

Some programming is entirely within a school or division. This is the school-based programming that forms the backbone of faculty development efforts.

Frequently, liaisons will share resources and collaborate on programming. In this situation liaisons divide preparation duties and financial

responsibilities to meet the expressed needs of faculty members between two or more schools and/or divisions.

### **Budget Interactions**

At the time of annual budget deliberations, the Dean determines an operating figure for each of the liaisons based on faculty head count in respective schools and divisions. The A/A Deans and OFD are made aware of these amounts and the liaisons are informed through OFD for budget interactions). Liaisons and respective A/A Deans determine procedures for dispersal and reporting of funds at the beginning of the budget cycle. Liaisons manage school/division funds through programming interactions with the faculty development committees and OFD.

The following suggested model describes the interactions of a liaison and A/A Dean with respect to budget procedures and interactions. This model has been tested and found to provide the liaison with necessary programming flexibility while simultaneously establishing a comfortable working relationship between the A/A Dean around the issue of accountability:

1. Liaison meets with A/A Dean and budget secretary to identify available funds and their respective account numbers in light of the anticipated school or division expenditures for faculty development.
2. Liaison submits disbursement requests to A/A Dean and budget secretary.
3. Budget secretary keeps an up-to-date itemized list of expenditures by account number.

### **Appraisal Interactions**

As stated above, a liaison has dual responsibilities which are reflected in the annual statement of expectations. These expectations and performance criteria are determined in the following manner:

1. Each liaison will assume the responsibility of developing a series of expectations regarding the liaison role. The liaison will consult with appropriate others, including the faculty advisory committee, in the development of these expectations.

2. The liaison will present these expectations to the A/A Dean, chairperson, and OFD for critique and review.

3. A final set of expectations are agreed upon among the liaison, A/A Dean, chairperson, and OFD.

Note: The above steps are to be completed by September 1.

4. The liaison will inform the A/A Dean and OFD periodically during the academic year of progress regarding the faculty development portion of his/her expectations.

5. At the end of the academic year, the liaison will develop a self-appraisal regarding the achievement of the liaison expectations and attach documentation to support the self assessment.

✓ 6. The A/A Dean and OFD will comment upon the self-appraisal. The compilation of these assessments will be provided to the chairperson for inclusion in the liaison's performance appraisal.

7. The chairperson will maintain responsibility for the completion of the performance appraisal but will not comment upon the liaison expectations.

The appraisal should be completed by the end of June.

### **Feedback Interactions**

For purposes of program viability, a network of feedback interactions exist. The liaison coordinates the collection of feedback from faculty, advisory group members, A/A Deans, and OFD (including other liaisons). This information is analyzed by liaisons with their respective faculty development committees and routinely at OFD meetings. It may be appropriate to include some of this feedback during the periodic reviews of a liaison's progress toward meeting his/her expectations.

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

This document is designed to describe the roles and responsibilities of a faculty development liaison in the context of the evolution of a School-based Faculty Development Program at NTID. Although the degree and range of liaison involvement in faculty development related activities has shown much variation during the first years of these efforts, great progress has been made with respect to the establishment of programming to meet the needs of faculty and with respect to recognizing future possibilities for expanding and improving programming. As this description becomes refined and more clearly understood by all participants in the process, the efficiency of programming efforts will increase and the potential benefits to all members of the faculty community will be realized. It is anticipated that this document, too, will continue to be reviewed and "fine-tuned" as more is learned about the process of facilitating faculty development liaison efforts.