

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 11212S

Date of Senate Approval 04/26/12

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**FWDC 13: Defining Departments and Programs (Faculty Handbook 1.4.3.4-5)**

**Effective date:** Fall 2012

**Summary:**

This document defines the difference between an academic department and an academic program. Departments are defined as any academic unit in which at least two tenured or tenure-track members of the faculty have their primary affiliation. As is currently the case, it is not necessary for a department to offer a degree program.

**Rationale:**

While the university has had academic programs become departments in the past (Mass Communication, Environmental Studies), the difference between departments and programs is not well defined, nor is the process by which a program becomes a department. This lack of clarity is resolved in this document.

**1. Delete current 1.4.3.4-5:**

**1.4.3.4 Department Chairs**

Most academic programs at UNC Asheville exist within academic departments. As a general rule, academic departments have full-time faculty members and host programs that grant baccalaureate degrees. The notable exception is the Education Department which grants various forms of teacher licensure and has the formal status of "department." Each academic department is supervised by a Department Chair.

Chairs are both the academic and the administrative leaders of departments. Chairs are appointed by the VCAA, generally for three-year terms, and their appointments may be renewed. For a detailed description of Chair duties, see [Section 3.1.2](#). For information on the evaluation of Chairs, see [Section 3.3.4](#).

**1.4.3.5 Academic Program Directors**

Some academic programs do not have the formal status of "department." Although these programs do not have full-time faculty, some do award degrees, others offer minors and

still others provide curricular activities that support the university's mission. These programs are supervised by Program Directors rather than Department Chairs. They fall into three basic categories:

1. Programs which grant degrees  
Includes the Interdisciplinary Studies program (B.A.), the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies (B.A.), and the Master of Liberal Arts program (M.L.A.)
2. Programs which offer minors but do not grant degrees  
Includes Africana Studies, Humanities, and International Studies. (Note: Some other minor-granting programs exist within academic departments.)
3. Programs which support the University's mission but have neither minors nor degrees  
Includes Arts and Ideas, Honors, Teaching Fellows and Undergraduate Research.

Like Department Chairs, Program Directors are appointed by the VCAA, typically for three-year terms, and their appointments may be renewed. For a detailed description of their duties, see the end of [Section 3.1.2](#). For information on the evaluation of Program Directors, see [Section 3.3.5](#).

## 2. Replace with:

### 1.4.3.4 Department Chairs

Academic departments have at least two tenured or tenure-track faculty positions (as the primary affiliation in the case of joint appointments). Most departments also host baccalaureate degree programs; the notable exception is the Education Department, which grants various forms of teacher licensure. Each academic department is supervised by a Department Chair.

Chairs are the academic and administrative leaders of departments. Chairs are appointed by the Provost and VCAA, generally for a four-year term, which may be renewed. For a detailed description of Chair duties, see [Section 3.1.2](#). For information on the evaluation of Chairs, see [Section 3.4.4](#).

### 1.4.3.5 Academic Program Directors

UNC Asheville has a number of additional academic programs which offer interdisciplinary and collaborative curricular opportunities that are essential to the university's mission and that offer members of the faculty opportunities to collaborate with faculty from other departments. Some programs offer interdisciplinary degrees, others offer minors, and still others provide enriching curricular opportunities for students. Academic programs become departments when they have at least two tenured or tenure-track faculty positions. These programs fall into three basic categories:

1. Programs which grant degrees  
Includes Interdisciplinary Studies; Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies; and the Master of Liberal Arts program (M.L.A.)
2. Programs which offer interdisciplinary minors but do not grant degrees  
Includes Africana Studies and Humanities.
3. Programs which support the University's mission but have neither minors nor degrees  
Includes Arts and Ideas, Honors, Teaching Fellows and Undergraduate Research.

Program Directors, rather than Department Chairs, are the academic and administrative leaders of academic programs. Program Directors are appointed by the Provost and VCAA, typically for a four-year term, which may be renewed. For a detailed description of their duties, see [Section 3.1.2](#). For information on the evaluation of Program Directors, see [Section 3.4.4](#).