

SOR Department Chair Principles and Practices

1. Support and evangelize the school's mission to teachers, students, parents, and the broader community.
2. Articulate specific ways in which their department helps achieve the stated goals of the school.
 - a. See the Humanities Handbook for specific ways our mission is articulated in various humanities departments
 - b. Student feedback is a key part of this -- students need to be getting regular feedback that actually helps them grow
 - c. Setting clear goals is also a good idea as well -- students need to know the expectations
3. Provide mid-level direction for the courses under their supervision.
 - a. This means knowing and helping to establish the big picture goals of each course, its core principles, and how it fits in the broader scope of alignment both vertically and horizontally:
 - i. Assessments -- scaling them for skill appropriateness (research, writing, analysis, etc.)
 - ii. Thematic -- work with teachers to provide big picture themes and goals for each course, especially in relationship with other courses vertically and horizontally
 - iii. Skills -- developing the framework for what skills should be developed in each grade level (this involves both vertical and horizontal alignment)
 - iv. Department Chairs should not be down in the weeds of day to day lesson planning for classes they're not teaching.
 - b. Guidance for teachers in helping them accomplish the school and departmental goals.
 - c. Regular observation of teachers with feedback meetings after each observation. Chairs should try and see different types of classes (lectures, harknesses, Socratics, etc.) to help teachers improve their craft as best as possible.
4. Keep and regularly update (yearly, at least) a list of potential hires for their department of at least 3 names.
5. In addition to observing teachers at least once a semester, department chairs are responsible for providing insight and recommendation to the Head of SOR regarding future leadership opportunities for those within their department, as well as recommendations on when teachers should be released. The Head of SOR is the final decision-maker on all hiring and firing in the SOR.