

# Physical Science Department Charter

## Department Philosophy:

As the faculty of the Physical Sciences Department, we are committed to thinking innovatively to achieve our goals as individuals and as a department, understanding that optimal results occur when both individual and collective goals are attained. We strive to create and maintain a positive working environment characterized by mutual respect. While we cannot succeed without each other's support, we remain responsible for our individual success. As faculty, we have the right to be heard, respected, and valued by one another, and we share responsibility for ensuring the department's success.

We establish this charter to outline the guidelines and principles we will use to foster the culture we aim to create in the Department. The charter outlines the process and principles for developing policies and procedures to govern the operation of the Physical Sciences Department.

## Our Mission:

As a department within Glendale Community College, the Department of Physical Sciences is committed to educating the College's students to meet the demands of a changing world. The Department aims to support the College's mission by offering courses and activities that enrich and benefit our students and society. This Charter contains the precepts that its faculty has determined will best enable it to support the mission of GCC. If any of these precepts conflict with Maricopa County Community College District policy and procedures, the MCCCCD policy and procedures will take precedence.

## Our objectives are:

- *To create an academic environment that fosters the intellectual and professional development of students and faculty.*
- *To deliver courses for all students that meet the educational and technical demands of the Astronomy, Geology, and Physics disciplines.*
- *To deliver courses in Astronomy, Geology, and Physics that provide the necessary base for students' career goals.*
- *To prepare students for lifelong learning.*
- *To maintain a faculty that is actively involved in their respective professions.*
- *To model effective organizational performance based on commitment, individual competence, integrity, self-management, and pride.*

## 1. Guidelines for Approving and Amending the Charter:

Department Charters will be reviewed each spring semester, with revisions approved by September 15th to be provided to the Faculty Senate for public posting and inclusion in an Appendix of the College Plan. Revisions will include updates based on changes to the Faculty Agreement and College Plan. However, a Faculty Chair may, with faculty input, revise a specific section of the document to comply with District and College policies at any time. If a Charter conflicts with the Faculty Agreement and/or College Plan, the Faculty Agreement and College Plan shall take precedence.

The department will offer an open comment period of at least two weeks for all Residential, Probationary, and Adjunct faculty who teach within the department to suggest Charter revisions and provide feedback on proposed revisions for at least one week. The Faculty Chair may designate one or more Residential faculty to manage the revision process. Following the open comment period, the Faculty Chair or Designee will moderate a conversation with all voting members, followed by a vote on the revisions, with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority required for approval. Voting members include Residential and Probationary faculty members who hold 51% or more of their faculty load assignments within the department. The Faculty Chair votes as a regular voting member of the department. At the request of any voting member, the vote shall be held by secret ballot, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality. Voting members who are unable to attend in person due to travel, illness, or other reasons will have the opportunity to vote remotely.

## 2. Process of Identifying, Selecting, Delegating, Compensating, and Evaluating Department/Division Supervisor Roles

Every academic year, the Faculty Chair may delegate responsibilities and leadership roles consistent with the Faculty Agreement and the College Plan based on individual faculty members' expertise, current needs, and faculty interests. The Faculty Chair assigns workload, including, but not limited to, teaching responsibilities, supervisory duties, and summer supervision. The Faculty Chair distributes responsibilities in consultation with individual Residential, Probationary, and Adjunct faculty members each semester in accordance with the College's mission and priorities, the Department's goals, and the Department's supervisory budget. Department roles may be reassigned by the Faculty Chair annually (per academic year) or as needed to support the department's needs. Individuals serving in a compensated role will receive feedback from the Faculty Chair (see evaluations below).

The Faculty Chair will determine the dispensation of supervisory compensation in consultation with faculty members receiving supervisory pay after the annual supervisory budget is received and College policy decisions regarding supervisory roles and compensation have been finalized.

Every academic year, the Faculty Chair will solicit feedback from faculty in their department regarding their interest in assuming departmental roles as designated from the above duties and assignments. The Faculty Chair may revoke delegated duties at the beginning of each semester. In consultation with the department's dean of instruction and/or human resources, the Faculty Chair will decide the timeline for the revocation.

The purpose of this section is to differentiate and list the job duties for the Faculty Chair and Assistant Program Directors, in accordance with RFA 7.2.4. The majority of the section for Faculty Chair is extracted directly from RFA 7.2.4. Duties for the APDs have been determined by mutual consent of department faculty.

## Supervisory Duties Performed by the Physical Sciences Faculty Chair

- Plan, manage, and oversee the Department budget
- Facilitate Department meetings
- Represent the Department on college leadership councils
- Ensure all other Department Supervisory Duties are performed
- Review and provide final approval for the selection and evaluation of Adjunct Faculty in accordance with current Human Resources procedures.
- Review and provide department-level approval for Department reports (e.g., annual reports, staffing requests, program reviews, assessment reports)
- Plan, manage, and oversee the Department class schedule
- Submit the final schedule from Academic Program Directors to the VPAA or Designee for approval.
- Identify, select, and evaluate other supervisory and non-supervisory roles in accordance with procedures outlined in the College Plan.
- Communicate and ensure adherence to College and District objectives, policies, and procedures applicable to Department/Division faculty and staff.
- Engage in progressive interventions for faculty and progressive discipline for staff, as appropriate
- Address, manage, and resolve conflicts effectively.
- Manage and work to resolve formally registered student concerns *[in cooperation with faculty members and with the support of the appropriate Academic Program Director]*
- Manage Physical Science department and program-specific budgets
- Plan, manage, and oversee the Department/Division class schedule in collaboration with APDs.
- In collaboration with APDs, recruit, review, and recommend approval for the selection of Adjunct Faculty in accordance with current Human Resources procedures
- Supervise and support All Faculty, including Adjunct, OSO/OYO, and Residential Faculty.
- Chair any Residential Faculty position search committees
- Evaluate Probationary Residential Faculty in accordance with the Residential Faculty Agreement

- Perform supervisory duties, including evening and summer supervision *[unless delegated to APDs]*
- Coordinate completion of required program reports (e.g., program reviews) *[if applicable and necessary for assessment purposes]*
- Supervise and support Residential and Probationary faculty
- Supervise, support, and evaluate staff and temporary employees in accordance with the Staff Policy Manual.
- Perform supervisory duties and summer supervision.

## Other Department Supervisory Duties assigned to Assistant Program Directors (APDs)

All Faculty within the Department may perform the following duties in exchange for remuneration as designated within the Department Charter:

- Identify program-specific needs and budgetary requirements
- Plan, manage, and oversee the discipline's class schedule prior to submission to the Faculty Chair
- Recruit, review, and recommend approval for the selection of Adjunct Faculty in accordance with current Human Resources procedures prior to submitting to the Faculty Chair for review and approval. *[This may include verifying FMHQs have been met.]*
- In conjunction with the Faculty Chair, supervise and support Adjunct Faculty, including evening classes
- In conjunction with the Faculty Chair, evaluate Adjunct Faculty and OSO/OYO Faculty.
- Perform supervisory duties for adjunct faculty, including evening classes
- Oversee and guide program- or common-course assessment in cooperation with the Physical Science DAC (Department Assessment Coordinator)
- Evaluate syllabi of program faculty (both residential & adjunct) to ensure they contain all required components (see MCCCD Admin. Regulations 3.6)
- Collaborate with department lab technicians and relevant faculty members to ensure the complete construction and maintenance of lab setup sheets for the program.
- Assist in developing an inventory of program-specific lab materials and annotating which courses/instructors utilize the materials. Collaborate with lab technicians to optimize storage utilization and organization for program-specific materials, including annotating use on lab setup sheets (see above).
- Obtain information from ICs (Instructional Councils) regarding program-specific changes and seek input from appropriate faculty on any change.

### 2.0a Summer Faculty Chair(s)

The Summer Faculty Chair will execute all duties required of the Chair as outlined in the RFA. The Summer Chair position may be delegated to Department Faculty as allowed by the RFA. The Chair will retain responsibility for approving summer Time and Labor (unless delegated); however, all other duties may be the responsibility of the Summer Chair(s). Compensation for the Summer Faculty Chair is outlined in the RFA and will be distributed based on the duties assigned.

## Additional Supervisory Duties:

### **eCourses Coordinator**

College [eCourses Coordinator Position Description](#)

Please note that our department does not require the eCourses coordinator to assist in hiring or administering student evaluations of faculty members. Significant student and faculty technology issues are referred to the Help Desk and are beyond the scope of a faculty member's duties.

### **Department Assessment Coordinator (DAC)**

College [Department Assessment Coordinator Position Description](#)

The DAC position is paid and supervised by the college's assessment leadership. As a Department, we acknowledge and support the role of assessment in providing quality instruction.

## 2.1 Evaluation of Faculty Chair, APDs, and Other Supervisory Roles

The Physical Science Department recognizes the need for employees to provide meaningful and constructive input regarding the processes and supervision of the department.

### 2.1a Evaluation of Faculty Chair

As described in the College Plan, the Faculty Chair is evaluated annually by the appropriate Vice President or Designee. All Residential Faculty members, OSO/OYOs, Adjunct Faculty, and staff receive an invitation from the VPAA to complete an evaluation of the work of the Chair as well as plans for the following year. Results are anonymous. Results of these evaluations are distributed to the Faculty Chair within 30 days of the close of the evaluation period.

### 2.1b Evaluation of APDs and other Supervisory Roles

The Physical Science department, due to its small size, has a restriction on how APDs can be evaluated by other faculty in their discipline (i.e., 1 person evaluating one APD is too recognizable). The Department has chosen to implement a Google Form evaluation process where Faculty and Staff can select the individual they wish to evaluate and for which role, and then complete a standardized evaluation for that employee in that position. We have additionally chosen to include staff in this evaluation process. The survey will be distributed no later than April 15th of each academic year, with a 2-week response window. The results of the evaluation will be accumulated by the Faculty Chair and distributed to the named individual while maintaining the anonymity of the results to the best of their ability. Results are intended for self-reflection and self-improvement purposes only and are designed to support the professional development and continuous improvement of individuals in supervisory positions. Results will

be used by the Faculty Chair in conjunction with the employee holding the supervisory position to help guide that self-improvement.

### 3. Process for Shared Academic Freedom Decision-Making: *Required*

The Residential Faculty Agreement, the College Plan, and this Charter all support academic freedom for all faculty members in all of its forms: freedom of instruction, freedom of research and publication, freedom of intramural speech, and freedom of extramural speech.

RFA 3.1 (Verified 25/26; direct quote, italics added): “All Faculty are entitled to instructional freedom in discussing their subject with students, and they should exercise their best effort to ensure topics are relevant to their subject. Residential Faculty, in consultation with OYO, OSO, and Adjunct Faculty, *will determine curriculum and relevant subject matter for courses, recommend the appropriate pedagogy, textbooks, and other materials relevant to teaching their subject.* All Faculty shall maintain the right and responsibility to determine grades and other evaluations of student performance. In a multisection course taught by several faculty members, responsibility may be shared among the instructors for identifying common course elements...”

Faculty of the Physical Science Department collaborate with instructors in their discipline and with those who teach the same subject and course to determine the best pedagogical and instructional materials for student needs. This review takes place annually in an informal meeting of the Faculty within the discipline. The choice of instructional materials and pedagogy is ultimately left to the determination of the individual faculty.

RFA 3.1 (Verified 25/26; direct quote) “Outside of class, when Full-Time and Adjunct Faculty express themselves as citizens or as public employees, they shall be free from institutional censorship or discipline. When acting as citizens, All Faculty will exercise their best efforts to indicate that they are not speaking for the institution and to conduct themselves as scholars and representatives of higher education. When acting as public employees, All Faculty will be allowed to speak freely on all matters of institutional governance, as is necessary to support a robust system of Shared Governance. All Faculty are entitled to freedom in research and in the publication of the results, consistent with the provisions of Article 4 Intellectual Property Rights.”

### 4. Teaching and Non-Teaching Assignments: *Required (RFA 6.3)*

Course assignments are made by the Faculty Chair, Academic Program Director, or Their Designee, consistent with the Department's and the College's mission, priorities, and

instructional needs, in an efficient and fair manner. In consultation with each faculty member, the Faculty Chair/Academic Program Director/Designee determines the course load distribution for each faculty member. If course assignments and load distributions are designed by an Academic Program Director or Designee, the Faculty Chair retains the authority to make changes to address departmental needs in consultation with the appropriate Academic Program Director. Courses are assigned to faculty based on their expertise and student needs, while ensuring a base 15-credit faculty load. The scheduled start and end times, as well as the modality of each course, shall be set appropriately to meet student needs, comply with college policies, and maintain quality instruction.

The Department recognizes the need to provide students with faculty and courses in a manner that best serves students. The Faculty Chair, Academic Program Director, or Their Designee will work with the Administration and other parties to determine these needs as they evolve over time. The Faculty Chair, Academic Program Director, or Designee will work to match faculty schedule requests with schedule needs. In cases where requests and needs do not align, the Faculty Chair, Academic Program Director, or Their Designee will work with the faculty member to identify alternative options that satisfy all parties, if possible, while acknowledging that the needs of students take priority.

During the academic year, Residential and Probationary faculty members may replace Adjunct faculty in courses if one or more courses remain unfilled, thereby causing the Residential or Probationary faculty member to fall below the 15-load minimum. Reassignment of Adjunct courses to Residential or Probationary faculty wishing to maintain an overload (>15 load hours) will occur only under extenuating circumstances or in close consultation with the Residential and Adjunct faculty member. During the summer, Residential faculty may not replace Adjunct faculty after classes have been assigned. The Department commits to honoring Adjunct faculty schedules and limiting last-minute changes to the greatest degree possible.

## 5. Department/Division Meeting Schedule

The Faculty Chair will schedule monthly Department meetings to include Residential Faculty, Probationary Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, and staff. The schedule for regular meetings will be announced at the beginning of each fall and spring semester. The Faculty Chair shall prepare and distribute a tentative agenda prior to the meeting with sufficient time for Department Residential, Probationary, and Adjunct faculty and staff members to request that items be included on the meeting agenda. Residential and Probationary faculty are expected to make every effort to attend department meetings. Although Adjunct attendance is suggested, it is not required. Minutes will be taken at these meetings to archive discussion points and decisions.

## 6. Expectations of Department/Division Faculty

Department faculty are expected to meet their professional and institutional commitments at the College and within the Department. Faculty should familiarize themselves with the Residential Faculty Agreement, the College Plan, and the Department Charter to ensure compliance with all policies and procedures. Faculty members should be active participants as committee members, student advocates, or in any other capacity that enables them to provide the best service to the affairs of the Department, the College, and the District. Faculty members are expected to support the college's educational mission by participating in the student learning assessment process, which facilitates continuous improvement.

### 6.1 Absences

Department faculty are expected to notify the Faculty Chair of any absences as soon as possible and work with the Faculty Chair and/or Administrative Assistant to properly document the absence. Department faculty are expected to notify students of any absences from a class quickly and to make their best effort to obtain a substitute instructor for the time(s) of their absence(s) from the course. If a substitute is not available or realistic, the faculty member is expected to provide detailed information to students about how the absence will impact the course and/or to provide appropriate learning materials to ensure uninterrupted instruction. This adjustment may include moving instruction to an online environment, even for in-person classes; in-person students who do not have access to online content, as it is not a requirement of the course, must be given an alternative to a strictly online substitution.

### 6.2 Communication Expectations

The Department is committed to maintaining regular communication between all faculty and staff, both in written form and through formal and informal meetings. Faculty and staff are expected to participate in faculty meetings (as appropriate), and if attendance is not possible, they are expected to review the meeting minutes. Faculty and staff are expected to regularly review and respond as needed to all Department, College, and District communications sent to their Maricopa email address. Faculty and staff are expected to complete all required MCCC training and acknowledgments in a timely manner.

### 6.3 Professional Development

All faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in professional development opportunities. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, events sponsored by the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Engagement (CTLE), the Maricopa Center for Learning and Innovation (MCLI), the Employee Learn Center (ELC), and professional organizations. Faculty and staff are

encouraged to utilize the professional growth funds provided by MCCCCD to support their ongoing development.

## 6.4 Assessment for Student Learning

Faculty are expected to support the college's educational mission by participating in the student learning assessment process to facilitate continuous improvement. Guided by the Department Assessment Coordinator (DAC), all faculty are expected to participate in assessment activities. These activities include, but are not limited to, data collection for course assessment and implementation of identified interventions to improve student outcomes. Residential, Probationary, and Adjunct faculty who are sole instructors for a specific course will be expected to serve as Course Leads. One faculty member will serve as the Course Lead for courses with multiple faculty. Course Leads are responsible for developing (or selecting) assessments in collaboration with course faculty (including dual enrollment faculty), submitting course assessment reports, and guiding faculty through identified interventions before reassessment.

## 6.5 Student Evaluations

Faculty are expected to initiate student evaluations in each course taught at least once a year, but preferably at the end of each semester. Probationary faculty must evaluate all courses as directed by the PAR Process. Faculty members are also expected to review the results of student evaluations and make relevant changes based on student feedback.

## 6.6 eCourses

Faculty, especially those teaching online courses, are expected to incorporate Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) components and effective communication into their courses. Faculty teaching online courses are encouraged to complete an RSI training course. Online courses will be evaluated by the Department's eCourses Coordinator on a regular basis.

# 7. Adjunct Rights and Support

## 7.1 Process for Assignment of Department Adjunct Faculty Members

Fluctuations in enrollment can create unanticipated staffing needs. To the extent possible, the Faculty Chair will notify Adjunct faculty of reappointment or non-reappointment, with as much advance notice as possible, so that Adjunct faculty can anticipate how many sections of a given course will need to be staffed. All Residential, Probationary, and Adjunct faculty understand that

enrollment and College budgetary needs may impact the timeliness of reappointment notification.

## 7.2 Adjunct Non-reappointment

After having been assigned for an initial term, an Adjunct Faculty Member who is subsequently notified of nonassignment may request from their Faculty Chair or Faculty Supervisor the reasons that contributed to this decision. Upon the Adjunct Faculty member's written requests, the reasons will be confirmed in writing by the Faculty Chair, as described in the Adjunct Faculty Handbook.

## 7.3 Adjunct Support

The Department is committed to upholding the rights of adjunct faculty as outlined in the [Residential Faculty Agreement](#) and the [Adjunct Faculty Handbook](#). The Department recognizes that Adjunct faculty are an integral part of the College. Adjunct faculty voices are essential in considering Department goals, textbook selection, and course scheduling for those courses that Adjunct faculty teach. The Department is also committed to providing tools and resources, including student support, office space, instructional materials, and notice of professional development opportunities, to support the retention and success of adjunct faculty in their courses.

## 8. College-Specific Requirements from the College Plan

If a Charter conflicts with the Residential Faculty Agreement, Adjunct Faculty Handbook, and/or College Plan, the [Residential Faculty Agreement](#), [Adjunct Faculty Handbook](#), and [College Plan](#) shall take precedence. Identified Charter conflicts with policy documents should be remedied through timely edits to the Charter, in no case later than the next annual Charter amendment cycle.