



Competencies for Family Medicine Department Chairs

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*Developed by the Leadership Development Committee
Association of Departments of Family Medicine (ADFM)*

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Mallon, William T. and Grigsby, R. Kevin. *Leading: Top Skills, Attributes, and Behaviors Critical for Success. AAMC Successful Medical School Department Chair Series.* Washington, DC: Association of American Medical Colleges; 2016.

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While the document is titled “Competencies for Family Medicine Department Chairs”, the domains of Leadership, Administration/Management, Personal Development and External Relationships are important for the development of all leaders in Academic Medicine. That being said, no one person could be reasonably expected to possess all of the competencies listed. That is why this document is intended as a tool for self-reflection and personal growth for an individual leader, not as a tool for evaluation. Also, as leaders identify their strengths and areas of development, this document can be a resource used in building one’s team by selecting people who have strengths in areas where the leader may not yet be fully developed.

### 1. Leadership

- a. Create, sustain, and reassess mission, vision and values
- b. Utilize iterative tools of strategic planning
- c. Assess, understand and change departmental culture
- d. Understand, monitor, and shape departmental structure
- e. Define current boundaries, then use innovation and creativity to create new boundaries to shape the future
- f. Build, develop and sustain leadership team
  - i. Identify the capabilities of your leadership team members and develop plan to promote growth and development
  - ii. Determine missing or weak capabilities on your team and develop strategies to address to maximize team effectiveness
- g. Select and utilize framework for leading and managing change
- h. Embrace inclusion and diversity, determine strategies to measure implicit bias and plans to promote increased inclusion and diversity
- i. Respect and support all faculty. Recognize that there are likely faculty with more experience and success than you. Accessing their abilities can accelerate department growth and success.

### 2. Administration/management

- a. Understand departmental finances, including:
  - i. Sources of income
  - ii. Matching revenues and expenditures

- iii. Budget development
  - iv. Budget growth and budget cuts
- b. Understand Human Resources issues, including:
  - i. Federal/state employment law
  - ii. Local institutional policies
  - iii. Leadership structure for faculty/staff
  - iv. Assessment of departmental resources
  - v. Talent development and management, including:
    - 1. Position development, recruitment, hiring
    - 2. Matching talent with departmental needs
    - 3. Matching effort with resources
    - 4. Mentoring talent
    - 5. Performance evaluation and management
    - 6. Promotion and career development
    - 7. Talent retention
  - vi. Succession planning
- c. Manage departmental communications
- d. Negotiate effectively across the departmental and organizational spectrum
- e. Facilitate difficult conversations
- f. Foster wellness and resiliency.
- g. Facilitate system change to improve the context and conditions.

### 3. Personal development

- a. Manage calendar, communications, administrative support
- b. Cultivate self-awareness and reflection; know your strengths, weaknesses, values and personal boundaries
- c. Develop and expand effective interpersonal communication
- d. Assess one's own skills and leadership style
- e. Manage time effectively
- f. Balance various roles of a department chair
- g. Seek out coaching and mentoring to promote continued growth and development.
- h. Evaluate and choose external leadership roles
- i. Manage transitions in leadership and roles
- j. Develop resiliency and self-care routines

### 4. External relationships

- a. Understand where the department fits in institutional culture, including:
  - i. Communicate value of the department to the institution
  - ii. Communicate values of the institution to department
  - iii. Network with others in your institution
  - iv. Partner/negotiate with other departments for mutual gain
  - v. Understand overlapping and different needs of medical school and hospital/health system
  - vi. Manage departmental image in the institution
  - vii. Manage your relationship with your Dean/President/CEO

- b. Manage relationships with other external entities, including:
  - i. Payers - Insurers, employers, government
  - ii. Teaching partners – e.g. preceptors, FQHCs, other external organizations
  - iii. Partners in patient care – community agencies, nursing homes, affiliated practice groups
  - iv. Research sponsors
  - v. Other Department Chairs at your institution
  - vi. Health Systems Leaders
  - vii. Pillars of community engagement (above and beyond patient care)
- c. Define role within the practice plan
- d. Continually reassess these roles and relationships as part of managing in a complex adaptive system with changing goals and communications
- e. Develop relationships with family medicine organizations
- f. Build endowments and philanthropy