Maximizing Staff Productivity and Satisfaction Through Performance Management

JANE R. WILLIAMS AND N. DOUGLAS LEES

Much attention has been given to faculty evaluation, especially in recent years in response to calls for accountability. However, another essential component of the personnel team in all departments—its staff—often are not associated with unit quality, productivity, and constituent satisfaction. Hence, there are many examples where they do not undergo systematic reviews. This oversight seems common even with the admission from department chairs as a group that their units would struggle in every way without competent and professional staff.

Staff members are found in academic departments in a variety of positions and in varying numbers. Ratios of faculty to staff can vary from very high (ten or more to one) to very low (from one to one or less) depending on the institution, departmental mission, and discipline complexity. Staff roles may range from advising students and managing budgets to providing instructional laboratory support or doing a variety of technical work. These individuals vary widely in expertise, educational attainment, and long-term career goals. Clearly, the evaluation paradigm needed here is more complex and perhaps less familiar than the faculty evaluation paradigm centered on teaching, research, and service.

Due Process Approach

The due process approach to staff evaluation or performance management (PM) incorporates the main tenets of our justice system: adequate notice, judgment based on evidence, and fair hearing. Systems structured in this way increase staff perceptions of fairness, satisfaction with the...
process, and increased openness to feedback, which are important prerequisites for actual behavior change.

**Adequate notice** is achieved when performance expectations and standards are clearly communicated well in advance of performance evaluation. It also requires that feedback be provided in a timely manner. One could think of this as a syllabus for our staff. Everyone would agree that effective instructors provide the list of assignments and a grading system at the beginning of the semester along with ongoing feedback to students so they can adjust effort in order to meet goals.

**Judgment based on evidence** is achieved when standards are applied consistently and when supervisors demonstrate efforts to be fair and honest. To achieve this, both supervisors and staff should be trained in how to use the standards, supervisors should fully explain their evaluations, and employees should be allowed to question and/or appeal the evaluations. Supervisors should be collecting and documenting performance examples from multiple sources throughout the year and use these to base judgments, rather than relying on just the most recent or most salient performance events. Staff should also be encouraged to collect evidence and complete a self-appraisal.

**Fair hearing** is achieved when supervisors demonstrate that they fully understand staff roles and performance. This is particularly important when staff have unique or highly specialized expertise. It is essential that supervisors show interest in and make a concerted effort to become familiar with staff roles. In addition, a fair hearing should incorporate the staff self-appraisal into the process.

PM systems that include due process elements are perceived as fairer, generate increased staff satisfaction, and lead to the perception that the information used in the evaluation is accurate and credible. In addition, these types of systems help staff to foster trust in the supervisor, which is critical in a relationship where one individual has the authority to influence important outcomes for the other.

The PM approach described next is designed to be a collaborative effort built on the concepts of due process. The strategies introduced should work within almost any existing system and are meant to promote an ongoing PM process rather than a single (potentially uncomfortable) yearly “event.”

**The Performance Management Cycle**

In keeping with this notion of a continual process within a due process framework, we present a dynamic model of PM that is characterized by continuous feedback and communication. Briefly, it begins with a review or identification of the major dimensions or responsibilities of the job. This discussion should commence at the beginning of the employment relationship, but the dimensions should be reviewed each year so that changes can be made as roles evolve. Once job dimensions are identified, behavioral standards that define performance levels should be discussed to allow staff to effectively self-regulate. Third, both supervisors and staff are responsible for collecting and documenting performance throughout the year and should communicate and share information as the year progresses. It is easy for a supervisor to fall into the trap of only acknowledging performance when it is below standard or when it is exceptional. However, staff can most effectively correct and adjust their performance when they receive feedback about all performance on a regular basis. The fourth step involves evaluation of performance. Finally, the supervisor and staff member should engage in a meeting that includes a performance review, goal development, and a review or update of job dimensions.

**Defining Job Responsibilities and Setting Behavioral Standards**

Most jobs can be described in five to eight major and unique job dimensions. Each dimension should include a description of behaviors that are required to complete the major components of the job. These definitions should include both the behaviors required and the intended outcomes. In addition, an importance weighting value (together totaling 100%) should be assigned to each job dimension.

Behavioral standards for the performance dimensions should be clearly defined in terms of behavior and articulate exceptional, acceptable, and below expectations performance. Behaviorally describing these performance levels can more adequately communicate job expectations, which is essential for employees to regulate their behavior. It may be helpful to include the staff member when developing these standards as they often have important insight. These types of conversations often reveal beliefs or assumptions that the supervisors use, but may not be aware of, when they evaluate performance.

**Making the Evaluation**

Fair and accurate ratings incorporate as much information from as many relevant sources as possible. In order to improve the efficacy and enhance the fairness of the process, the supervisor or chair and the staff member should together identify others who might provide additional perspectives to inform the process. The supervisor would make the final selection on the group to be solicited. There is no perfect formula for how to combine the information and select a performance rating. However, the goal is to provide a rating that accurately reflects an “average” of the performance information that is gathered. Along with the numerical rating, examples of both positive and negative behavior that support the rating are helpful for further explaining the rating. By documenting the behavior and consequences, the supervisor is providing additional evidence and justification for the rating. This also keeps the focus on behaviors, which can encourage dialogue and constructive problem solving.

**Preparing for the Review Meeting**

The PM meeting often elicits discomfort and anxiety, and while no amount of preparation will completely eliminate those feelings, it can increase confidence in conducting the meeting. One element of this preparation is to determine the desired outcome for the meeting (motivating, correcting, reinforcing). This will help the supervisor structure the meeting for success.
and stay focused. Supervisors should also review the staff’s self-appraisal to better understand the staff member’s perspective and prepare for differences that may exist. Finally, supervisors should consider whether there are any anticipated changes in the staff member’s position that would impact the job description, job dimensions, and behavioral standards.

The Review Meeting
It is important that supervisors be fully engaged in the conversation. This can be communicated by ensuring that adequate time is set aside for the meeting and that all possible distractions have been removed (email, phone calls).

Supervisors are advised to start the meeting with a conversation about the self-appraisal. This is a less threatening way to begin the meeting as the staff member has provided the information, and it sets the tone of the meeting to be one of inclusion. It also provides the supervisor with the opportunity to seek clarification of differences between the self-appraisal and the supervisor’s perspective, a process that could be useful to both parties.

Effectiveness is increased by language that focuses on behaviors and by the use of “I” rather than “You” statements. It is also helpful to monitor the staff member’s nonverbal behaviors. If employees display frustration or discontent through nonverbal behavior (crossing their arms, taking a deep breath), supervisors could respond with the following statements: “I get the sense that you don’t agree with what I just said. Can you explain to me what you are thinking?”

A number of years ago, Borman (1977) generated a set of seven criteria for evaluating supervisor behavior that is still relevant and may be helpful to consider. The first criterion assesses whether the supervisor structures and controls the session. Second, is rapport established with the employee? Third, does the supervisor react well to stress, remaining calm and responding to conflict in a problem-solving manner? Fourth, is the supervisor effective at eliciting information from the employee? Fifth, does the supervisor resolve conflict by providing good advice? Sixth, does the supervisor display interest in the employee’s development? Finally, is the supervisor effective at motivating the employee through encouragement and appropriate incentives?

Summary
Without competent and professional staff, academic departments would be unable to deliver in virtually every aspect of their responsibilities. In order to get the best out of staff, to increase their job satisfaction, and to improve individual and unit performance, it is recommended that chairs institute PM systems in their departments.

References

Taking on the Role of Department Chair

Sarah Willie-LeBreton

So you’re a department chair! When your colleagues discover that you have been elected or appointed to this position, they can often be heard offering you their condolences. This can make you doubt your excitement in or confidence for the position. In academia, we are seldom prepared for the administrative positions in which we often find ourselves. Furthermore, those of us who do the appointing rarely offer advice to or training for those we appoint. And yet faculty governance is one aspect of our jobs, remaining a point of pride when we describe the deepest satisfactions of our professional lives. Most department chairs are not ready or prepared for the role. As a result we often do not do nearly as well as we had hoped we would. The tenure of a chair can be frustrating and even humiliating. But there are actions we can take before and during our term that can turn the experience around for the better. Like anything, the more we anticipate, prepare, and practice, the better we will become. Chairing a department is no different.

Being a department chair selected by the dean often starts us off on a different foot compared to one who is elected by colleagues. But this need not be a stumbling block if you acknowledge it. Chairing a combined department that also serves several disciplines can be challenging in ways that are different from chairing a department that serves only one field. Finally, chairing a thirty- or forty-member department at a research university will have qualitatively different aspects than serving as chair at a community college or at a liberal arts college where you may have a department of three to ten people. I want to emphasize, however, that each institution has its benefits and challenges, and sometimes we can give each other advice across the differences.

From my conversations with chairs across the country and over the decades, I have observed that three aspects of chairing are crucial:

- Taking the pulse of your department
- Being transparent
- Reaching decisions

Especially in this era of tight budgets, institution-wide assessment, and suspicion...
toward any discipline that questions the status quo, many chairs believe their first responsibility is to advocate for and defend their department. While this is sometimes true, it is also important to model a larger vision of the discipline's role and possibilities, its place in the professorate nationally, and acknowledge the challenges that our students will face upon graduation. Although advocacy and defense have their place—especially if your enrollments are high, you are offering many courses that align with your institution's mission, and your faculty are shouldering more than their fair share of credit hours, advising, and service to the community—always keep in mind the first goal of a healthy department: it begets other good things—high enrollments, students who want to take their knowledge into other fields, majors who consider graduate school, and faculty who are supportive of each other's teaching and research, even if they don't necessarily socialize together.

**Taking the Pulse of Your Department**

If you are new to the chair role, it is a good idea to take the pulse of your colleagues—from the administrative assistant to the full professors and the adjunct faculty. The importance of communication cannot be underestimated. Taking the pulse means checking in with each department member. This may take the form of having lunch with everyone once a year, or popping your head into faculty offices during the semester. Taking the pulse does not mean sharing your vision, gossiping, or offering unsolicited advice. It really is about **listening**—finding out what is important to each of your colleagues, without responding immediately. Having a sense of each person's issues, concerns, excitements, and anticipations can also help you to weave a larger narrative about where you are as a department. This narrative should not be fictional but it can be aspirational, and it is the narrative that you can share with the whole department. After you have chatted with each of your colleagues, you may find it helpful to say at a department meeting, “Some of us are facing this and some of us are facing that; we all want this and we each are trying to move toward that. To this end, I’d like to suggest that we try X this year and then come together at the end of the year to see if it was helpful.” Having taken the pulse of your department, at least twice a year, you will be much less likely to be surprised by frustrations that your colleagues may be experiencing with the university administration, with each other, or with you.

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In regard to being transparent it is often easier to describe what it is not. Being transparent does not mean sharing everything that everyone has told you with everyone else. It does mean scheduling department meetings once or twice each month, or after you have met with administrators to report on that meeting. It may also mean having some meetings for tenure-track members only and others for everyone. It means being willing to represent your department members to administration or college-wide committees accurately and without undermining them, even if you disagree with the majority of your colleagues. It also means letting faculty know what is on the agenda for the year, inviting their ideas for agenda items meeting by meeting, and reaching clarity together about how you move through those items and decide whether to take action on them.

**Being Transparent**

Reaching decisions is one of the most important, as well as one of the trickiest, aspects of chairing. Some places have a culture of consensus while others have a culture of being told what to do and then reacting. Still others may follow Robert's Rules of Order for every meeting and have majority votes. You may have ideas for leading your colleagues to reach consensus, or reaching a vote at the close of every meeting, or hearing from everyone regardless of whether they are ready to be heard. Any of these can lead to frustrations, yours and your faculty
members’. Knowing the culture of your department and being honest with yourself about your own predilections can be the most helpful in guiding your faculty toward an outcome with which everyone can live. Try to reach goals collectively, determine the goals you will attempt to meet in a given time frame, and then decide how you will evaluate your goals.

Learning from a Master
One of my colleagues in the Department of Statistics at Pennsylvania State University, James Rosenberger, has developed a three-tiered holistic approach to chairing a department: integrity, consistency, and transparency.

- Integrity. If you say it, mean it. Walk the talk. Be trustworthy. Because of your role, every word is noted and remembered. Save your email so that you can recall what you’ve said and promised.
- Consistency. Know the basis for decisions from salaries to course buyouts to teaching assignments. Strive for fairness in these things.
- Transparency. Faculty and staff should understand the basis for decisions, and decisions should be able to withstand scrutiny by all.

Valuing Teamwork
Encourage your dean or provost to implement a department chairs working group (or set one up informally) that meets a couple of times each semester. This allows you to work with, rather than against, the other chairs at your institution and to learn from them. If you are unable to form such a group, call (rather than email) colleagues who you know at other institutions who are serving, or have served, as chairs and whose sense of fair play you trust. Bounce problems off of them and ask for help with solutions. Evidence shows us that teamwork often is more effective to achieving our goals, but we sometimes forget that when we’re put in the position of chair. It can feel like we’re a team of one, and anything we can do to remind ourselves that there are others who have faced similar challenges can be very useful.

At some institutions department chairs receive a stipend for their work, at others a course release, and some places offer nothing but the gratitude (and suspicion) of colleagues and administrators. Regardless, the position may be powerful or relatively powerless, but it always has influence. Especially if you have extra money or extra time, use it for the good of your department, not to further your own career objectives.

Conclusion
As a department chair, you represent your colleagues to the administration, to the larger faculty, and to majors, minors, and alumni. You may be the primary person through whom all communication occurs and be seen and felt as more powerful by your colleagues who do not have tenure or are not on the tenure track. Whether you feel powerful or not, it is important to acknowledge how you are seen, heard, and understood by others and appreciate the status and influence of the role, no matter how humble. If you listen to your colleagues carefully, represent them faithfully, help them to reach decisions together, and are clear about the process for decision making, you will nurture a mutually respectful department and excitement about what your program can bring to each generation of students. And that is a role about which any of us can be pleased.

Sarah Willie-LeBreton is professor and chair of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Swarthmore College. Email: swillie1@swarthmore.edu

Negotiating the Chair Position’s Terms of Acceptance and Exit

DENNIE L. SMITH

Academic department chairs seeking to return to faculty roles after completing administrative terms will benefit, as will the institutions they serve, from considerations of how best to negotiate the terms of initially accepting and serving as a chair and ultimately transitioning back to faculty. Relatively little attention has been given to this process and yet it is often critical in achieving and retaining quality leadership, sustaining individual productivity, and continuing to improve university work life.

The policies for selecting department chairs and other administrators vary from election, selection, or “take-turn” practices throughout higher education. Many studies have focused on the transition from faculty member to the role of academic leader, examining the actual selection of the department chair, strategies to be a successful department chair, and professional development required to be an effective leader (Foster 2006; Gmelch and Parkay 1999). In the selection process, there is often the assumption that a good faculty member will make a good department chair. The role and responsibilities of a department chair, however, are very different from those of a faculty member. Generally, faculty members have flexible schedules, teach classes in their specialty area, and often collaborate with students and colleagues who have similar interests. The department chair, on the other hand, is usually highly scheduled, works with a diverse group of faculty and students, and no longer has the freedom to devote significant time to research interests. Selecting someone who can make these role adjustments is important not only for the success of the individual but also for the continuing growth and development of the faculty and department.

In our recent research on department chairs’ expectations for work continuance...
after completion of their terms, most (65%) indicated that their plans included going back to faculty positions (Smith, Rollins, and Smith 2012). Their primary concerns for transitioning back to faculty included securing funding for reestablishing their research agendas and updating their currency in their teaching fields. However, 57% of the chairs reported that they would be provided no support for making the transition back to faculty. Several common contextual issues characterize the problem. Most universities have not developed transition plans for department chair positions or incorporated them into contractual agreements. Furthermore, many professionals who are seeking leadership positions are so focused on getting the position that little attention is given to exit conditions or whether they should differ under favorable or unfavorable conditions of performance. In addition, many academics are reluctant to accept these positions due to the encroachment on research and teaching responsibilities. In community colleges and smaller institutions, department chairs or program leaders are required to continue teaching, although at a reduced level, during their tenure as chair. Many academics realize that these positions are somewhat thankless in the overall reward structure of maintaining a research agenda that requires constant attention and only consider taking them at the end of their careers.

Much has been written about the transition of professors to academic leadership positions in learning about administrative matters related to budgets, procedures, personnel problems, and a long list of issues involving scheduling, contracts, and many other matters. Most new department chairs have to make major adjustments from successful research and teaching careers to administrative roles. The process involves a total emersion into the administrative functions at most higher education institutions to fulfill the complex responsibilities and assignments. Previous studies have indicated that, when a faculty member accepts the position of department chair, the biggest stressor and challenge—even more so than the actual responsibilities of the new position—is the greatly increased demand on the individual’s time (Aggarwal, Rochford, and Vaidyanathan 2009). Thus, assuming that a person is successful in his or her new role as academic leader for a few years with the required emphasis on more administrative matters, one’s research activity was probably scaled back due to the allocation of time and energy to administrative functions, especially representing the department in various meetings and dealing with human relations issues with various stakeholders. Also, teaching will likely suffer due to lack of time and effort to maintain an updated course syllabus or for incorporating the latest technology.

Because the chair’s position has different expectations and requires one to use time primarily for administrative matters rather than research and teaching as a faculty member, the return to a faculty role requires preplanning for how the process will unfold, how an individual’s time can best be structured, and which resources will be needed for restarting research and teaching functions in order to meet the expectation and reward structures of the faculty role. This investment in the initial development of contractual agreements would benefit departments by making the chair position more attractive and improving the retention of competent faculty. In addition, this investment and resulting contractual agreements would demonstrate the importance of the department chair position along with providing more continuity in the academic community.

Only recently have institutions and individuals begun to place more emphasis on exit strategies and benefits for successful academic leaders in order to recruit qualified and motivated individuals to these positions. These changes are being brought about by research and resulting institutional practices founded on the propositions that academic leader positions at all levels would be more attractive with incentives related to exit strategies from these positions. Central to the policies would be the question of after providing a few years of successful service, how would the transition back to faculty be facilitated to ensure and support the reclaimed productivity of the chair? It would seem to follow that the negotiation of specific conditions before accepting the academic leader position would attract younger faculty, improve the academic climate, provide more stability to departments, and result in higher overall productivity of the department and college.

**Negotiation Areas for Contracts or Agreements**

In identifying major areas for negotiation of contracts or agreements upon an academic leader’s transition back to faculty or to another role in the college, our national study suggested terms for accepting and leaving these positions (Smith et al. 2012). The areas were directly related to most academic leader responsibilities and included supplemental pay, reduced teaching load, graduate assistants, travel funds, start-up funds for initiatives, performance measures, length of appointment, staff assistance, personal time or vacations, and mentoring and professional development.

Performance areas that are critical for the position, including administration, leadership, decision making, program development, fundraising, grant activity, graduate rates, student retention, faculty retention, and diversity, are also key considerations for inclusion in contracts. A position description is usually embedded in the institution’s policies and can provide a framework for developing performance areas. In addition, the evaluation components and criteria should be discussed prior to accepting the position to clarify more specifically the responsibilities and areas of emphasis for the position.

Some of the more concrete terms that should be discussed include supplemental pay, length of term, teaching loads, research requirements, and the exit strategies upon successful completion of the term.

Supplemental pay usually includes a twelve-month contract that may result in an increase in salary during the time period of serving as a chair. Supplements should include monthly allowances to compensate for the work. Most importantly, the full supplemental and/or a percentage could be maintained for a few years after completing the academic leader term. Also, annual increases should be continued in the new
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Sample Academic Leader Agreement

Employee name:  Position:

Employment dates:

The employee agrees to perform all duties in a competent, professional, and effective manner, consistent with the prevailing standards set forth in the attached position description. Annual salary is $________ plus a supplement of $________ for a total of $________ to be paid monthly.

Performance evaluation. Specific performance areas and evaluation criteria are attached to this document. Termination of this agreement can occur at any time by giving the appropriate written notice as per university policy.

Completion of term. Upon the completion of a successful appointment term (number of years) the following support is available to academic leaders transitioning back to faculty.

Administrative/Professional Leave
• 2–3 years service = 1 semester of leave
• 4 or more years service = 2 semesters of leave
• 8 or more years service = 3 semesters of leave (not continuous)

Retention of Supplemental Pay
• 2–3 years service = 50%
• 4 or more years service = 100%

Teaching Load
• 2–3 years service = Reduced load for 1 semester
• 4 or more years service = Reduced load for 2 or more semesters

Research Support (assistant, equipment, technology, travel, etc.)
• 2–3 years service = (Depends on research)
• 4 or more years service = (Depends on research)

Professional Development Funds
• 2–3 years service = (University guidelines and field)
• 4 or more years service = (University guidelines and field)

Technology Support
• 2 or more years service

Other (Office space, specific responsibilities, staff support, etc.)

I accept the employment offer and agree to the terms and conditions as stated in this contract.

________________________  ________________
Signature                  Date

role as related to average increases prior to accepting the academic leader term. Length of term and possible reappointment are important negotiation options that would ultimately be based on performance evaluated by both departmental faculty and other administrators. Term limits are usually related to evaluation cycles in order to establish smooth transitions and term may range from one to multiple years depending on the institution. Some faculty may assume the responsibilities of an academic leader for a short time and others may want to serve for a longer period or seek another administrative position in higher education. The length of term impacts one’s research and teaching effectiveness over time, and the cycle of serving as an effective leader is often constrained by other institutional factors related to politics, funding, support, and one’s own motivation.

Teaching loads are often factors to be considered in academic leader contracts especially as they relate to the size of the respective departments and whether the university is classified as research intensive. Academic leaders of large departments may want to teach a course to maintain their interaction with students and stay current in their fields. On the other hand, some academic leaders find it difficult to maintain their teaching responsibilities while performing chair tasks and would be better supported by having a reduced teaching load for one or more semesters after returning to faculty positions.

Academic positions in research intensive universities often require professors to maintain a rigorous research agenda involving competitive external funding to support projects, labs, staff, and graduate assistants. Start-up funds similar to what a new assistant professor would receive may be necessary to gain momentum in a research area that has been somewhat neglected during the time of service as department chair. These funds would include travel, graduate assistant support, new technology and equipment, and other materials necessary for research.

Many universities have professional development or administrative leaves available to faculty and administrators. Leaves generally range from one semester to a year, are usually intended for pursuit of research and other interests, and can provide significant financial and psychological support to academic leaders making the transition back to faculty. The timing of the leaves can be negotiated at the end of the academic leader’s term for budget and personnel planning purposes.
Conclusion
Recruiting and retaining academic leaders continues to be somewhat challenging due to the nature of the positions and the lack of preplanning for exiting these positions. More attention to supporting academic leaders upon their completion of successful terms should not only enhance the position but also contribute to the overall success of the department or unit. The negotiation of a contract that includes clarification of expectations upon acceptance of the academic leadership role along with exit support after completion of a successful term will establish a new framework for enhancing leadership within the university. Deans and provosts are the leaders who should take the initiative to establish appealing service benefits and exit strategies in order to attract faculty and maintain the overall productivity of these individuals over a lifetime career.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Dennie L. Smith is dean of education at Texas A&M University. Email: dennissmith@tamu.edu

References


Faculty Assessment and Evaluation: Fair, Formative, and Focused

Karen Silva and Donna Thomsen

One of the responsibilities facing every department chair is how to conduct faculty evaluations and assessments that are productive opportunities for faculty growth and development. What constitutes a fair and comprehensive evaluation? What role does assessment play in evaluating faculty effectiveness? How can administrators and faculty work together to ensure that an assessment instrument is meaningful? Johnson & Wales University is in its second year of implementing a new evaluation instrument that was years in development. Our journey to find a reliable and effective instrument for faculty assessment has been arduous and time consuming, but we believe it has resulted in a worthwhile system that offers a process to effectively identify faculty accomplishments as well as address faculty challenges in the areas of teaching, professional development, service, and goal setting.

Faculty evaluation and assessment are instrumental for accountability and continued professional growth, yet administrators, chairs, and faculty continue to grapple with identifying procedures that are fair, formative, and easy to administer. All too often, assessment procedures are viewed negatively by faculty who worry about how the results will be used and how such information will affect their careers. Therefore, it is critically important to recognize accomplishments and address areas of concern and explain each step of the assessment procedure prior to its implementation.

How does a chair determine the best method for assessing a faculty member’s contributions, strengths, and weaknesses over the course of a year of service? Everyone agrees that assessment is integral to maintaining high standards of rigor, professional development, and sustained service to the academic community, but agreeing on assessment procedures and methods remains a source of debate, discussion, and even conflict on many campuses across the country. We do not propose that our assessment methods are without flaws and problems; however, we are proud that we continue to work on refining a system that recognizes faculty contributions, addresses faculty needs, and supports faculty development.

Johnson & Wales University is committed to excellence. Our administration and faculty agree that finding a way to assess every faculty member’s performance is part of our mission of continued improvement in creating an environment that supports faculty professionally, financially, and personally. Yet like many other institutions, we have struggled to find a system that meets everyone’s needs and garners university-wide approval. While we have not yet achieved these lofty goals, we have made progress toward them during the last few years. This has been a process demanding the involvement and support of both faculty and administration, with department chairs taking the lead in designing the assessment instrument and implementing the process. It must be stated here that at JWU chairs hold faculty status, thus making them keen stakeholders in the assessment process. They, like the faculty they supervise, are also responsible for completing the assessment portfolio, giving them a unique perspective on the time demands and organizational struggles of the process.

Some background may be necessary to set the scene for the most recent iteration of JWU’s assessment plan. After years of starting, faltering, and then resuming the process that involved dalliances in merit pay, across-the-board raises, little to no faculty accountability, and formulaic assessment plans from outside consultants, the university decided to empower faculty to create an assessment
ideally, this should be a time to celebrate productive, formative year-end meetings. and assessment. the ongoing process of continued planning of the assessment plan is the commitment academic year. as stated earlier, at the heart of the year, the culminating year-end meeting between the chair and faculty meet to plan the year’s activities through goal setting in three key areas: teaching, professional development, and university service.

the final portfolio consists of a year-long review of each faculty member as seen through the lenses of self-reflection, student evaluation analysis, and chair assessments and observations. each faculty member is charged with writing a narrative assessing his or her achievements and challenges in each of the three areas of teaching, professional development, and university service. these assessments are written to align with the goals of each faculty member as well as the goals of the department, school or college, and university to result in cohesive and complementary visions. it is then the responsibility of the chair to assess the narratives and other anecdotal material by writing summaries and recommendations for each of the three areas. these summaries are returned to the faculty member, who is given the opportunity to write a response. most importantly, the portfolio serves as the basis for a year-end meeting between the chair and faculty where the year is reviewed, action plans are discussed, and planning begins anew for the next academic year. if the assessment process has been adhered to throughout the year, the culminating year-end meeting is more of a continuation of discussions that have been a regular part of the academic year. as stated earlier, at the heart of the assessment plan is the commitment by both the chair and faculty member to the ongoing process of continued planning and assessment.

many chairs struggle with how to conduct productive, formative year-end meetings. ideally, this should be a time to celebrate accomplishments, review progress on goals, and plan creatively and optimistically for the year ahead. however, what happens if a faculty member has not achieved the stated goals or acceptable student evaluations and chair evaluations have identified concerns? what happens if a faculty member has been unproductive, uncooperative, or disengaged? if chairs have followed the timeline of a well-structured assessment, then the discussion of any problem areas will not be new to the faculty member. in fact, the year-end meeting could be a time to review progress on action plans that have already been created. it should be stressed that the year-end meeting is not the time to identify problems. rather, if chairs have been vigilant in their responsibilities, the year-end sessions are opportunities to gauge progress and plan for continued improvement.

much has been written about strategies for conducting positive, formative year-end reviews, but preparations, attitudes, and groundwork must all have been set throughout the year if the meeting is to be successful for both chair and faculty. both parties must be prepared, and that requires time spent prior to the meeting reviewing the portfolio and any other materials relevant to the faculty member’s accomplishments. when discussing with colleagues the factors that contribute to effective and mutually satisfactory year-end meetings, one word identified by many was energy—a powerful term that connotes excitement, a “can-do” philosophy, and a forward, positive attitude. the worst possible scenario is for the year-end session to be dreaded, like a trip to the principal’s office. rather, faculty should anticipate the opportunity to showcase their achievements, identify paths to improvement, and plan for another academic year. this is only possible if the chair sets the appropriate tone through all the channels of effective communication we have learned as educators. that means voice, body language, facial expressions, and overall attitude must be positive and focused. a place to begin is with chair comments on the faculty narratives. it has been our experience that these opportunities to reflect on teaching, professional development, and service elicit some of the most remarkable, honest self-analyses we have read. faculty are quick to identify their successes, as they should, but the majority are also well aware of their failings and are often very willing, even eager, to talk about them. having an unbiased, objective perspective from the chair may lead to better understanding and improvement if both parties enter into the discussion with clear goals and no baggage.

this is easier said than done, but it can be achieved with planning and practice. therefore, we offer these suggestions for well-planned, productive sessions:

• take detailed notes of the areas that need to be discussed.
• have some very specific, concrete comments on accomplishments and successes.
• if you do raise areas of concerns, be specific and have a series of strategies already planned to address the issue.
• avoid sounding as if you have all the answers. the faculty member’s perspective is as important as yours, and he or she may already have given thought to specific steps for addressing problems.
• be open minded and firm in devising strategies and assessing progress toward improvement.
• consider emailing your notes to the faculty member prior to your year-end meeting to allow him or her to review and respond with thought and planning.
• be sure you have blocked out enough time for a thorough conversation.

chairs will be able to add to this list of suggestions to create a more personal and
relevant style of engaging faculty in productive and formative year-end meetings. Previous interactions with the individual faculty member as well as the chair’s personal communication style will determine the best format for the year-end meeting.

One example of how to best personalize the year-end meeting is a common scenario involving a faculty member’s inability to meet obligations to post assignments, projects, and grades on Blackboard. Students complained and the problem was addressed. For a short time, improvement was made, but the faculty member soon lapsed into the former habit of failing to return papers and tests in a timely fashion or post grades on schedule. Because one of the faculty member’s teaching goals was to address this issue, the chair followed up throughout the year by asking the faculty member to provide evidence through the site that grades had been posted and tests returned promptly. The chair and faculty member would meet every two weeks to gauge progress, and these short but regular meetings provided an opportunity for other topics to be addressed. It also helped to establish a more positive relationship between the two because the sessions were not just “checks” to monitor progress but collegial discussions on assignments and teaching strategies. Because the chair took the time and energy to address this problem throughout the year, the year-end meeting was more positive and productive and did not result in animosity. Time will tell if the progress made will be sustained, but at the very least it was addressed, reinforced, and improved.

This example brings to light another controversial issue of assessment. What happens if progress is not made? What tools does a chair have at his or her disposal if goals are consistently not met and improvement is not realized? Every school has its own human resources protocol for handling serious offenses, but what about a problem similar to the one identified earlier? Most of us would agree that it is not cause for a faculty member to be placed on performance review or probation, or termination. Yet how does a chair respond to ongoing problems? How can faculty members be held accountable? In the scenario referenced here, the chair decided to withhold the opportunity for the faculty member to teach an overload class. Many faculty members seek out this opportunity to teach during the evening because it is a way to augment their incomes by teaching a class that meets just once a week during their nonteaching schedule. This chair felt that “rewarding” the faculty member with this financial opportunity only added to the existing time-management problems. This was explained to the faculty member as an opportunity to make progress toward goals rather than as a punishment for not reaching them. Once consistent progress had been realized, the opportunity to teach an overload class would be possible. However, it would be monitored carefully and regularly. The consensus among chairs is that we have very few tools available for addressing areas of concern. If the assessment plan is to be effective, there must be accountability and consequences.

Faculty assessment is an ongoing challenge. While we believe we are now on the path toward achieving a fair, formative, and focused instrument, we will continue to assess, improve, and revise the material. What has become apparent to us is that this instrument is now able to serve two functions, that of a yearly assessment of every faculty member and an instrument that can serve as a dossier for those faculty members who are in line for promotion. This melding of two critical faculty assessment tools reduces the amount of time faculty need to devote to both efforts while underscoring the ongoing importance of teaching, professional development, and university service.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Karen Silva is chair of the Center for Sports, Entertainment, and Event Management, and Donna Thomsen is chair of the Department of English, both at Johnson & Wales University. Email: karen.silva@jwu.edu, donna.thomsen@jwu.edu

Do as I Do: Modeling Scholarly Leadership as Chair

Jackie L. Booth and Susan Adragna

Leading an academic department carries with it unique challenges that differ from leadership roles in other arenas, such as business or industry. For example, department chairs serve more than one set of constituents as they are tasked to implement institutional mission and policy to faculty while representing faculty needs to the administration. In the past, department chairs were selected or appointed based on academic reputation or scholarship. Today’s chair may have been asked to fill the role because no one else would do it or because he or she has demonstrated leadership in meetings or committee work. The tasks of department chairs vary considerably but can include making and evaluating budget decisions, leading the processes of hiring and promotion, studying data to create plans to boost enrollment and retention, and pursuing faculty consensus building and development, among others. This work often prohibits the chair from continuing personal scholarly interests, making it difficult to set an example or motivate others to pursue research and publication.

Scholarly Leadership

Understanding the tradeoffs associated with department chair duties and the probable eventual return to regular faculty status, chairs must evaluate the importance of maintaining some degree of scholarship and solidifying commitments to research that make sense in terms of time and productivity. The price of leading a department can be steep in regard to continued scholarship without a realistic plan in place. Honestly
evaluating the contributions that can be made with administrative demands is key to managing stress and maintaining some semblance of balance. That personal appraisal includes evaluation of your own research skills and work habits related to research and publication activities. Self-assessment coupled with a cost-benefit analysis in decisions about scholarly work may be a critical first step in setting realistic goals about where and how to expend time and energy. From there, chairs must decide how to share the process and support the vision for the department in terms of scholarly activities.

Finding ways to collaborate with others on scholarly activities, both inside and outside the department, should be a priority. Again, expressing personal balance issues to colleagues helps demonstrate your understanding of the same dilemmas faculty face when they feel overwhelmed by the demands of teaching, service, and scholarship.

With an articulated personal plan and commitment to scholarship in place, the next step for the department chair is to focus on the rest of the faculty. Some effective strategies include:

**Differentiating work with faculty.** With new faculty, in particular, there will be many questions about what is expected, as well as a tendency to set unrealistic goals about research and publication. For faculty who began with a strong background and continue to add to their professional activities, finding ways to recognize them to the dean and others in the department can demonstrate attention and support.

For others who cannot seem to get on track with scholarly work due to content-specific, skill-specific, or time-management issues, motivating them may require varying approaches. For example, if a faculty member is dealing with escalating family or personal problems, the chair must determine which university or community resources may help and also whether this is a situation that has a definite time period after which more pointed counseling about expectations is needed. If the problem is that the faculty member has limited output with no completed or published articles, or is working on obscure topics that hold little chance of being embraced by the academic community, you must set up an individual, frank discussion about possible career consequences with follow-up assistance with resources, including a mentor, to support success.

**Building workable partnerships.** Pairing new faculty with veterans can provide benefits to both in sharing ideas and resources in addition to exchanging perspectives. As chair, your encounters with others in the college or university may be a rich source of collaboration between your faculty and those from other departments. Knowing the strengths and experiences of your own faculty in research and publication provides you with opportunities to connect them to others within the institution. It may also be useful to carefully select a committee within your department to develop a process for presenting options and facilitating collaboration as well as harnessing resources for support.

**Making accountability part of the plan.** Whatever the pairing, the department chair can facilitate the success of these groups by leading discussions about the power dynamics of groups, the need for setting realistic expectations, time commitments, an agreement of the type and rigor of peer review, and the necessity of each group or pair to develop a means of assessing frequently their relationship and the outcomes produced. Create a method for keeping track of the partnerships, collaborations, and discussions about research activities for both formal and informal progress reviews.

**Evaluating resources.** Many universities, particularly large, public universities, have well-supported, institution-wide research centers that offer assistance and resources for all faculty and students. However, some departments, including those with established institutional centers, have found success in developing an in-house department research center specifically devoted to their faculty. Assess the resources available to your faculty and ensure that information about accessing them is available to everyone. Develop a reporting system to ensure that resources expended for these efforts are successful in producing expected results.

**Effective Departmental Communication**

Success for these strategies is dependent on effective departmental communication. Verbal and written communication has the potential to influence the emphasis on quality scholarship. How much time in department meetings is focused on issues related to research and publication? How often do email messages underscore faculty opportunities or accomplishments in scholarship? If the expectation is that scholarly activity is important, then related messages should be obvious throughout all communication, including informal discussions among faculty. Although you cannot possibly control or set the agenda for all faculty communication, you can ensure that research and publication are discussed in all appropriate meetings and situations. If the message to faculty is hidden or submerged, there is room for doubt about its importance.

Finding innovative ways to discuss aspects of scholarship without appearing unrealistic or outlandish requires a delicate balancing act. Again, if the department chair is not fully committed to scholarship, this can backfire. Frank discussions about
work-life balance underscored by careful assignments of teaching and committee work demonstrate that finding time and energy to devote to scholarly activities is important to you in supporting and promoting your faculty.

If your goal is to improve the level of research and scholarship in your department, your ability to clearly communicate this goal and to gain faculty support of it depends on good communication. Considering the consequences of ineffective communication and the rewards of effective communication, time spent periodically reflecting on and evaluating this leadership characteristic can be worthwhile as a technique to emphasize research quality and output.

Conclusion
The challenges of leading highly educated, talented, and independent academics are enormous. If research is a priority for you and your department, the actions and work of the department should reflect agreement and consensus for achieving excellence in scholarship.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Jackie L. Booth is chair of education, Master’s Degree Programs, and Susan Adragna is chair of education, Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership, both at Keiser University. Email: jbooth@keiseruniversity.edu, sadragna@keiseruniversity.edu

Prioritizing the Mission in Times of Economic Uncertainty: Pragmatic Recommendations for Chairs

Craig D. Hlavac

Academic department chairs continue to face significant challenges in the administration of the contemporary university. Due to residual effects stemming from the 2008 global financial crisis, departments must operate effectively while dealing with hiring freezes, budget rescissions, increasing costs, and uncertain revenue streams. Coupled with rising tuition rates and additional pressures to compete for students, leading the academic department can be challenging at best and despairing at worst.

Fortunately, chairs have a “decisional compass” that can guide them when making tough decisions in times of economic uncertainty—their mission. The mission is not only the legal and public declaration of purpose for institutions of higher learning but a valuable source of direction and focus for all university stakeholders. In addition, as most departments have a department-based mission statement that further specifies how tenets of the organizational mission are meaningful to their discipline, both the organizational and departmental missions are useful in the chair’s decision-making process.

Unfortunately, chairs are often unsure how to incorporate these missions when making difficult decisions. In a recent qualitative study of current chairs, 91% indicated difficulty in making decisions that balance fulfillment of either the departmental or organizational missions with the resources available to the department (Hlavac 2012). In addition, 75% of respondents admitted that the mission did not impact their day-to-day decision making. If the institutional mission (and by extension, the departmental mission) is indicative of the vision, direction, and goals of the organization, why are most chairs unable to engage it in their decision-making processes? While many study respondents indicated their organizational missions were too vague to apply to their individual departments, 75% of chairs also purported the need to balance urgent departmental spending with inadequate financial support. Thus, despite the need for chairs to make exigent financial decisions without the necessary financial resources, most reported difficulty in using their mission to inform such decisions.

What can be done to aid chairs in similar situations? What support can be implemented by institutions (and possibly initiated by chairs) that can help them to use their mission when making tough financial decisions? Consider the following pragmatic approaches to purposefully and meaningfully include your mission in your decision-making processes.

Seek Out Professional Development
While most chairs see value in their university mission, some consider it inapplicable to their decision making at the department level. One possibility for this sentiment might stem from a lack of initial training, a truth that is only exacerbated by the absence of continuous professional development for chairs. Chairs are often ill-equipped to handle the drastic changes of the position (such as new roles and responsibilities, new stakeholders, fiduciary responsibilities, and narrow positional authority) and subsequently have limited time to focus on the functionality of the department in relation to the organization.

The provision of initial training for chairs coupled with continuous professional development that emphasizes the
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importance of the mission in financial decision making would effectively address the gap between the mission and the department chair. Administrators should seek to provide appropriate and specific professional development for chairs focused on the utility and importance of the mission. It is not enough for administrators and department chairs to engage in the occasional discussion regarding the mission prior to accreditation visits. Dialogue about effective methods for the consideration of the mission and long-term financial planning must occur on a regular basis. If such opportunities are not offered by the administration, they should be actively sought out by current and prospective chairs.

**Find a Mentor**

Although chairs are not often formally trained by their organizations prior to assuming the role, frequent dialogue between new chairs and experienced, successful chairs is extremely helpful in clarifying the duties and expectations of the position. Interestingly, while most universities have well-developed new faculty orientation and mentorship programs, very few offer mentorship for incoming chairs. Although mentorship from experienced chairs may be helpful in guiding new chairs, many new chairs are reluctant to seek out such opportunities for fear of being burdensome to peers or appearing incompetent to their faculty. Though a formalized chair mentorship program is best, if such a program does not exist, it is prudent for chairs (especially new chairs) to seek out these types of relationships.

Mentorship between new chairs and experienced chairs should also be incentivized by the organization. New chairs can be strongly encouraged by their dean to participate in such a program while experienced chairs may be offered small stipends or reassigned time to participate. As new chairs must learn to navigate the political, social, and hierarchical spheres of the university (some for the first time), mentors can help them understand these expectations and offer pragmatic advice for staying focused. Such a program can be overseen by the dean or another administrative designee, which would ensure the prerogatives of the organization (including the mission) are adequately addressed. Finally, new chairs should receive frequent and constructive feedback from both the mentor and the dean as a part of this mentorship process. Implementation of this type of program may lead to more clarity of the chair role, more confidence in meeting the expectations of the organization, a more meaningful and mission-based decision-making process for making financial decisions, and more success at fulfilling the directives of the organizational mission.

**Use Department Meetings**

As the responsibility for setting the agenda for faculty meetings usually resides with the chair, it is essential to recognize the importance of the departmental and organizational missions by setting aside time for discussion of them, especially in relation to how these missions directly impact departmental financial decisions. Department meetings can be an opportune time to discuss and assess the efficacy of the department’s actions in fulfilling its mission, and also whether departmental expenditures are aligned with the mission. Discussions such as these need not be relegated to annual retreats, but rather should occur regularly. Allotting a small portion of each faculty meeting to the mission keeps this overarching goal fresh in the minds of faculty and improves the likelihood that the daily business of the department is influenced by the mission. If variance between departmental actions and the mission is discovered, such disparity can be addressed quickly.

**Employ Mission-Based Advocacy**

Chairs must advocate for funding on an almost constant basis, especially in light of the current economic climate. In an effort to compete for financial and personnel-related resources, chairs should consistently and openly discuss with their faculty the departmental and institutional missions, brainstorming new ways the department may better serve these missions while competing for additional financial support. Frequent discussions regarding how the department can more effectively fulfill these missions are appropriate and should be followed up with assessments of the department’s offerings with regard to these missions. Chairs who can objectively evaluate the department’s actions based on the goals set forth in their missions will have valuable data that can validate department expenditures. In addition, chairs who can substantiate departmental expenses based on their alignment with the departmental and organizational missions will be more successful when competing for limited organizational resources.

**Consider Mission-Based Budgeting**

Mission-based budgeting, or the allocation of financial resources based on the organizational or departmental missions, is not unprecedented in higher education and has been shown to effectively focus organizational actions toward fulfillment of the mission. Although this type of fiscal management has not been widely documented in higher education, use of the mission to guide financial allocations has been reported in several schools of medicine (Howell, Hogarth, and Anders 2002; Jarrell et al. 2002; Mallon 2006; Ridley, Skochelak, and Farrell 2002). Departments that can segment budget monies based on the values and directives of their respective missions will not only focus their actions on those most closely linked to their overall goals and objectives, but will also give the chair clear direction regarding departmental spending. For instance, if a department is committed to supporting scholarly research (and such a commitment is stated in its mission), a higher percentage of departmental money can be earmarked for the support of faculty research. Regardless of the department’s particular focus, transparently clarifying these priorities will provide the chair with a clear guide for making financial decisions while focusing the actions of the department.

**Conclusion**

Despite the reality that higher education will continue to face financial uncertainty for the foreseeable future, department
chairs cannot myopically focus on immediate or urgent expenses when making financial decisions. Consideration of the organizational and departmental missions in the financial decision-making process contextualizes such expenditures within the overarching goals of the organization and department, allowing for the elimination of expenses that are not within the scope of these directives. Chairs who are able to substantiate their financial decisions based on their respective missions will be well equipped to defend such decisions in times of scarcity and successfully advocate for additional funds in times of growth.

This two-part article series recounts a peer-led chair development training series implemented at Carson-Newman University during the fall 2012 semester. As part of an ongoing campus leadership development initiative, the training series consists of four workshops. This first article describes the first two workshops—departmental leadership and financial responsibilities—and provides training strategies. The second article will discuss the last two workshops and their benefits to chairs: enhancing synergy and departmental autonomy and empowerment.

Department chairs play an important and multifaceted role in the academy. Our responsibilities are many and range from budgeting and program evaluation to dealing with difficult personnel matters. We also serve as a liaison between administration and faculty. However, at many colleges and universities, faculty members become department chairs with little to no training and varying degrees of leadership skills. At Carson-Newman University, four department chairs representing a wide range of academic disciplines created and implemented a chair development series that consisted of four workshops offered throughout the academic year.

An Opportunity for Training

The impetus for this workshop series began when several newly appointed chairs expressed a desire and need for training for their new positions. This need coincided with changes to the institution’s organizational structure. The university adopted a “flat” organizational model in which fourteen department chairs report directly to the associate provost. Under the previous structure, chairs reported to deans, who in turn reported to the provost. Without deans as intermediaries between chairs and the administration, department chairs were required to take on new tasks and more significant responsibilities. Thus, the time seemed ripe for a peer-led chair development series.

We obtained a mini-grant from the Appalachian College Association and attended one of its summer workshops where we participated in a development track for administrators and began our plans for a peer-led series. Part of the vision for this series came from our own limited experience as chairs, gained primarily through on-the-job training and varying degrees of mentorship from former chairs. Our intent was to begin a consistent protocol of chair training and encourage the fourteen chairs to view themselves as a team. We hoped to build on the synergy we developed through the bonding experience of attending this workshop together.

At the outset, we were concerned about two potential challenges to the workshop series. One was the varying level of expertise and experience of the department chairs as well as possible resistance from veteran chairs. Our goal was to capitalize on the strengths of the experienced chairs, several of whom had held their posts for more than a decade, and engage the fresh perspective of the newer chairs. An additional challenge stemmed from the aforementioned restructuring that required the merger of some departments; others simply went from being designated as a “school” to being called a department. Thus, not all departments experienced the same degree of change. A common factor,
however, was the increased responsibility and visibility of the department chair. Ultimately, we developed a series of four workshops, the first two of which are described here.

**Workshop 1: Personality Type, Communication Style, and Departmental Leadership**

With the support of the provost and associate provost, we were able to hold our workshops during scheduled chair meeting times, which helped avoid resistance to additional meetings. Our first workshop was scheduled just prior to the start of the fall semester as part of a department chairs retreat. It was geared toward helping chairs understand their personality type and how it affects their working style and their communication with their colleagues. At the first meeting we asked our colleagues to complete a Jung typology assessment. They were able to complete a free online version of the test (see www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp), but we also made paper copies available for those who preferred that option.

The test, based on the ideas of Carl Jung and their adaptation by Myers-Briggs, is designed to categorize individual preferences based on four key questions: (1) Where do you prefer to focus your attention? Where do you get energy? (2) How do you prefer to take in information? (3) How do you make decisions? (4) How do you deal with the outer world? The resulting score is a four-letter personality type that represents one of sixteen possible psychological preferences for individuals. These psychological preferences are generally represented as a continuum between two ideal, referent states.

The first of the psychological preferences deals with focus and energy. Those who prefer to focus on external energizers such as people and experiences reflect extraversion (E) and those who draw energy from within and focus inwardly reflect introversion (I). The second preference addresses how information is processed. Sensing (S) is a preference for collecting information through the senses contrasted by intuition (I), which is a preference for looking for patterns in the information. When making decisions, thinking (T) reflects a psychological preference for deciding based on objective principles. Feeling (F) is a preference for people and felt concerns. Finally, the psychological preference for day-to-day work is represented by judging (J), a preference for structure and order, and perceiving (P), a preference for flexibility and adaptation.

Although the idea of personality types was not new to our colleagues, our focus was to discuss the implications of our various preferences with the actual work of being a department chair. It was necessary for this discussion that our colleagues have current scores in order to reflect on their leadership and communication styles.

We organized our fellow chairs into small groups with a mix of temperament styles in each. The groups addressed a series of questions designed to stimulate discussion of how personality can affect communication and leadership. More specifically, they were asked: (1) Given your type, what are your strengths as a leader? What are your blind spots or areas for improvement? (2) Given your leadership style, how does that affect your communication with others in your department? (3) How do you prefer to receive bad news? How do you prefer to deliver bad news? (4) How do you adjust to change?

We also suggested that chairs ask their colleagues to complete the Jung typology assessment so they could further understand how to best work together. The following are strategies derived from the knowledge and understanding of preferences.

**Delegate tasks.** With a clearer understanding of the temperament style of each faculty member, chairs can divide jobs among their faculty according to their respective strengths. Extroverts may love to serve on committees and meet prospective students while intuitive thinkers may love to gather departmental data. Giving faculty members assignments that are in their area of strength can lead to better work products.

**Capitalize on different preferences.** Intuitive thinkers often want to spend a great deal of time gathering data before making a decision, while sensors may wish to move more quickly. Combining the strengths of each will enhance departmental collaborative decision making—decisions may be more reasoned and implemented in a timely manner.

**Minimize conflict.** Opposing personality types can cause conflict within the department, and understanding the various types can help the chair diminish conflict through developing skills within the faculty. If a perceiving type is in a department with a strong judging chair, then conflict can arise with regard to deadlines when the perceiving faculty member thinks that deadlines are fluid. The chair must implement strategies to help ensure deadlines are met.

**Harness the thinking power of introverts.** Often in department meetings some degree of discussion is needed in order to make a decision. It can be easy to overlook the introverts as they often tend to focus inwardly and think. Extroverts can be energized by the interaction in the discussion and so tend to dominate the conversation. One strategy is to seed the idea of the discussion in advance, either in writing or in conversation. This will give introverts time to prepare for discussion.

**Workshop 2: Financial Responsibilities and the Department Chair**

Budgeting and related financial management issues are important responsibilities of the chair; thus, for our second session, we invited our institution’s chief financial officer to address the chairs. Prior to that session, we solicited questions from our colleagues to submit to the CFO to make the most productive use of our time. Her presentation covered several important topics, such as the general financial state of our university, the manner in which financial priorities are decided, and the mechanics of constructing a budget. She also shared her perspective on how financial considerations impact the development of a department’s strategic plan. This was a valuable session as it helped faculty anticipate changes in the college financial picture over the next five years and how to correctly communicate departmental need via the projected budgets.
Summary

The primary focus of our series was to provide much-needed department chair training in the face of a changing organizational structure and the evolving responsibilities for many chairs. The first workshop offered chairs the opportunity to better understand ourselves and our colleagues, which can create more effective departments. The second workshop was very important for chairs to understand the overall financial picture of the institution as well as our role as chairs in the budgeting process.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Kara E. Stocksbury is chair of the Department of History, Political Science, and Sociology, Christine N. Dalton is chair of the Department of Chemistry, Mathematics, and Physics, Laura Wadlington is chair of the Department of Psychology, and Jeremy J. Buckner is chair of the Department of Music, all at Carson-Newman University. Email: kstocksbury@cn.edu, cdalton@cn.edu, lwadlington@cn.edu, jbuckner@cn.edu

How to Become a Reflective and Compassionate Leader

DARYL L. NARDICK

In February I led a workshop at the Academic Chairpersons Conference titled “Managers as Leaders: Making the Transition.” During the workshop, I presented on leadership qualities that research indicates are fundamental to success such as effective communication and self-awareness.

As we finished and everyone left, I noticed that I felt a pang of disappointment. Standing there in the stillness of the room, I realized what I felt had little to do with how well (or not) my workshop had gone but instead with the inauthentic way I had framed the material presented. Yes, I delivered relevant and important leadership material. The problem was that I neglected to frame the material in a way that allowed the participants to take away what my true intention had been: cultivating self-reflection and a sense of compassion for self and others. As a leadership coach who works with current and aspiring leaders in higher education, self-reflection and compassion play in your leadership so that you can benefit from the framing I neglected to offer during my first go-round.

How did this make you feel? Masking a true intention had been: cultivating self-reflection and a sense of compassion for self and others. As a leadership coach who works with current and aspiring leaders in higher education, self-reflection and compassion play in your leadership so that you can benefit from the framing I neglected to offer during my first go-round.

Reflective Language

It is by recognizing the importance of speech acts that we realize that language is not passive but dynamic, influencing and provoking our actions and the actions of others. In Language and the Pursuit of Happiness (2005), Chalmers Brothers offers us an interpretation of speech acts in action, grounded in the previous works of John Searle, J. L. Austin, and Fernando Flores (see Table 1). Brothers describes how speech acts—that is, language distinctions—are inherent to clear, intentional, and results-oriented communications. Becoming aware of the power of speech acts is critical for achieving clarity, building trusting relationships, and ensuring successful outcomes, all of which are essential for successful leadership. Being mindful of these language distinctions and the consequences of their use occurs when we take the time to pause and reflect on when and how best to use them.

One of the trickiest parts about using speech acts is what occurs when they become confused in our own mind. Have you ever encountered a situation in which your dean or provost asked you to do something (making a request) when in reality she was making a declaration (making a statement) such as, “Will you write up the assessment report for the accreditation committee? I have to be on a plane at five o’clock tonight.” How did this make you feel? Masking a

Table 1. Speech Acts

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<tr>
<th>Speech Acts</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>beliefs, opinions, subjective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assertions</td>
<td>verifiable, true or false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declarations</td>
<td>generates new reality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Requests</td>
<td>the “ask”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promises</td>
<td>(commitments and agreements) action-oriented, responding to a request in the affirmative</td>
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</table>

Source: Adapted from Brothers 2005.
control of the situation itself, yet we do have situations differently. We often don’t have everyone react to negative, stressful 

assertion a thought you consider to be an, a most likely be thinking about and acting on a value to offer. If this is the case, you would myopic role—a disruptor with nothing of cast this colleague into a very colleague? If you’re like many people, you always finds something wrong with every new idea posed? Who is consistently adversarial? What comes to mind when you think of this colleague? If you’re like many people, you might have cast this colleague into a very very being, often rooted in our past. Our saboteurs play a powerful role in our lives, particularly for those in leadership positions. Consider a department chair whose main saboteur is to “please others.” When he encounters a stressful situation, his immediate reaction is to please others, oftentimes regardless of the situation at hand. How does the activation of this saboteur play out when a faculty member asks for additional research funds and the department simply doesn’t have the money, and when the “ask” comes at a time when the chair is feeling particularly stressed? What happens? If the chair is aware of his saboteur, he might be mindful of his automatic reaction. In this case, he could make a conscious shift to not simply react 

according to his saboteur. Instead he could respond consciously, thereby creating a more positive outcome than would have occurred had his saboteur been activated. And herein lies the gift of the five saboteurs. By becoming aware of our saboteur patterns, we can choose our actions and reactions as opposed to having them choose us. This awareness of self gives us the ability to cultivate a sense of compassion toward ourselves. It speaks directly to our internal critic who blames us for consistently acting in a way that produces unsatisfactory results. 

As leaders we have the added responsibility—and gift—to become aware of our colleagues’ saboteurs as well. Through this compassionate view of others, we can help them to become aware of their own saboteurs so that they in turn can make new choices when they are in the position of having to make decisions under stressful situations.

Conclusion

Academic leadership is complex. For department chairs, the hurdles to overcome are many, yet the rewards are equally as great. Being in a situation that calls us to shift our lens upon ourselves—to notice ourselves and others differently—creates an opportunity that has far-reaching benefits for our colleagues and our students. When we add the quality of compassion for ourselves and others, we fulfill a mission much greater than the current tasks we face. We advance the state of humanity in our work and the work of others.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Daryl Nardick, formerly with Georgetown University, is a leadership development coach and consultant in higher education. Email: daryl@creativeleadershipllc.com

References


Author’s Query/Reader Response

Jeffrey Buller, a frequent contributor to The Department Chair, is working on a book about change management in higher education. If you’re aware of a significant change that was attempted at your institution or in your program, he would like to know about both successful and unsuccessful change processes. Dr. Buller may be reached at jbuller@atlasleadership.com.
Leading Faculty Through Times of Change: The Chair’s Evolving Role

DOMENICK PINTO

The department chair’s role has become increasingly managerial and administrative in that we are now often intimately involved in strategic planning (departmental, college, and institutional), budgeting, fundraising, managing conflict, increasing student retention, motivating and encouraging faculty to achieve academic excellence while maintaining scholarship and research, and leading change while maintaining our own standards of excellence in teaching and research.

The growing demand for program assessment and the outcomes necessary for accreditation and evaluation on many levels have taxed our ability to effectively manage our time. Performance appraisals and the increasing emphasis on teacher “accountability” have also tremendously impacted our role. How do we juggle it all in order to maintain our status as working, thriving, full-time faculty while increasing our duties and responsibilities as administrators and/or managers?

I have been at Sacred Heart University for almost thirty-seven years, of which thirty-two have been as a full-time faculty member. During that time I have been a department chair for almost twenty-six years, as well as the graduate program director for fifteen of those years. The big question is: Why be a chair? Is it because it seems like fun? Is it full of adventure? Is it peaceful and relaxing? Most chairs would likely answer a resounding no to all of these. But there are some compelling reasons why we decide to take on the role. Here are some observations from other chairs with whom I have spoken:

• You feel you can lead the department in the direction it needs to go.
• You are respected by your colleagues and they want you to be chair.
• You like the perks you receive as chair (released time, modest stipends, more involvement with the strategic planning of the department, college, and university, being invited to an endless number of meetings).
• You like the “power.”
• You are “insane.”

Consider as well these anonymous and unedited quotes from department chairs throughout the country in answer to the following question posed by the Chronicle of Higher Education: “What is the real compensation for being a chair?”

• “At my 4/4 state regional campus the chair of our department gets a 50% course load reduction, a bigger office, and a stipend of less than $2,000 for managing our 17-person department. The real ‘payoff’ is that the chair gets first crack at teaching summer courses regardless of seniority. If he takes on two courses a summer that means around $7,000.”
• “A large office, a parking spot, and a bigger desk—though he may have bought that himself. Damn little for all the aggravation.”
• “Psychic dollars.”
• “Power or the perception of such.”
• “Here it is a one course reduction (to a 2/2 load), about $3,000 during the academic year, another $3,000 for the summer, and a guaranteed summer course, which is worth about $4,000. So, you end up with a 2/2/1 load rather than a 3/3/1 load, get paid about $10k, and work about 10k more hours a year. . . . No thanks!”

The Evolving Chair Role

I began my role as department chair in 1987. Then, my responsibilities consisted of the following tasks:

• Composing the schedule of undergraduate classes for two semesters and summers.
• Evaluating full-time faculty in the department.
• Advising students (we had only undergraduate students in our department then).
• Hiring adjuncts.
• Staying within the budget developed by the administration for my department.
• Reviewing curriculum.
• Reporting directly to the division dean and the associate vice president for academics.

In 2013 my responsibilities as chair have evolved to include the following tasks and activities:

• Composing the schedule of undergraduate and graduate classes for two semesters, three trimesters, and several intensive periods.
• Evaluating full-time faculty in the department.
• Supervising student advising (undergraduate and graduate students numbering close to 175).
• Hiring, evaluating, and training adjuncts.
• Developing, presenting, and justifying the departmental budget.
• Overseeing new curriculum development for the department with an emphasis on timely and relevant courses and programs.
• Reporting to the dean and working closely with the vice president for academic affairs and the provost.
• Dealing with issues of class size, budget, and retention.
• Advising all graduate students (as graduate program director).
• Working with admissions to recruit new students (undergraduate and graduate level).
• Recruiting international students.
• Serving on numerous committees at college and university levels.
• Assisting with career development and job placement.
• Communicating with parents as needed (current and potential students).
• Maintaining alumni relations.
• Writing or supervising grants, fundraising, and managing the department.
• Navigating the role of middle manager with faculty status.

Looking again at the Chronicle of Higher Education, consider the following anonymous and unedited quotes from chairs throughout the country when asked this question: “What do chairs see as their primary responsibilities?”
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A Six-Year Study of Department Chairs

ROBERT E. CIPRIANO AND RICHARD L. RICCARDI

Since 2007 we have been surveying department chairs throughout the country to help define who they are, what they do, what they are expected to do, and, ultimately, what drives them to want to be in their current position. The survey questionnaire was designed to elicit responses about demographics (age, gender, rank, how they became chair, etc.), perceptions of the skills and competencies needed to effectively function as chair, and reflections on the pleasant or unpleasant nature of the tasks. Chairs are routinely expected to perform. The study has evolved each year as analysis of the current year’s data has brought to light deeper and more complex issues.

In 2007 we surveyed a state university system on the past, present, and future aspirations of department chairs (Cipriano and Riccardi 2008) and found that they set their own expectations at almost unrealistic levels: a “master of all trades.” In 2008 we

• You lose a certain degree of the flexibility you have as a faculty member—you have to adjust yourself to other people’s schedules (students, faculty, deans, provosts, presidents). . . . The job is a mix of fire-fighting, paper-pushing, advocacy, and leadership (and the percentages in each of these areas fluctuate over time—making the job interesting).
• Some of the administrative stuff comes with the job (faculty evaluations), but it is possible to delegate some things. I was actually less involved with assessment as chair because it was done by a committee that I wasn’t on (but had been chair of before I became department chair). Sometimes leading means doing all the work yourself, but sometimes it just means herding the cats, mobilizing the faculty toward a common goal.
• The reason you do a chair position is to develop the department—you get to build programs, help senior faculty win more grants, and develop the newer faculty. It is about people. You get more access to building the college and whole university . . . as one of the administrative leaders. If that does not sound fundamentally interesting to you, don’t take the job.

How can chairs cope with the evolving and numerous demands of the job today?
• Be supremely organized and prepared well ahead of deadlines.
• Never assume you will get to your office and have time to do something other than problem solve.
• Hire extremely competent support staff who know you and your style and can act on your behalf for routine tasks.
• Seek and maintain the support of your department faculty.

Seek and maintain the support of your superiors as much as possible.
• Always remember that you represent your department, because in many people’s eyes you are the department.
• Be social, articulate, and fair.
• Be willing to deal with problems at the student, parent, department, college, and university levels.
• Be able to work with senior faculty who are less than willing to accept necessary change.

• Be willing to mentor new faculty.
• Be able to time manage extremely well.

Here are some additional noteworthy observations about chairing in our current climate.
• There is no real training to be a chair, because every department in every university is unique with a different set of issues to deal with.
• Getting advice from a previous chair or a current chair with longevity can be helpful.
• The ability to delegate well is essential to your success and is something that many chairs (including myself) struggle with.
• Your willingness to admit that you are human, with a life outside the university that includes family, social, and personal issues that need to be addressed, is a plus.
• Admitting your flaws and asking for help when you need it will often motivate other faculty to step up to the plate.
• Maintaining your presence in the classroom and keeping up relationships with students helps remind you why you are doing this in the first place.
• Preserving the faculty aspect of your job is essential to your well-being as chair.
• You will have to deal with helicopter parents even before the students arrive on campus.

• Everything is about measurable outcomes and most faculty hate this.
• Budgets differ wildly among colleges and departments.
• Because of budgetary considerations, retention and recruitment often take on disproportional importance.
• Politics are as rampant as ever in academia.
• Lawsuits by grieving faculty, unhappy students, and parents aren’t so unusual.

Conclusion

The department chair role varies widely from department to department and university to university. There is no question that the responsibilities assigned to chairs have evolved tremendously within the last twenty-five years. Organizational skills, a profound knowledge of the workings of the university and the people in key positions, and the ability to sometimes not take everything too seriously are important components that chair’s day-to-day function as chair, and reflections on the
broadened the survey in scope and distance (Cipriano and Riccardi 2010a), surveying chairs from across the country on their satisfaction levels and the reasons why they remain in their positions. This study revealed that more than 85% were either satisfied or very satisfied serving as chair, yet the number one reason they remain in their position is that “no one else will do it.” Further qualitative research resulted in modifications to the 2008 survey instrument when focus groups with chairs brought to light that “making a difference” was a key factor in becoming a department chair. Therefore, as part of the 2009 study comparing current and former chairs (Cipriano and Riccardi 2010b), two additional answers to the question of why people remain as chair were included: to make a difference and to shape the department’s direction. As part of the 2010 and 2011 studies, the following two questions were added: What are the challenges in serving as a chair? and Should collegiality be the fourth criterion for tenure decisions? The 2012 study included the following modification to the collegiality question: If an objective assessment tool for measuring a person’s collegial behavior was developed, do you think that collegiality should the fourth criterion for tenure decisions? Overall, in the six years of the study: 3,762 surveys were mailed and 1,464 surveys were returned, a 38.9% return rate. The survey responses for the six years of this research follow.

Demographics: 2007–2012
Over the six years the survey sample has remained constant, with little variation in the demographic variables.

1. Gender: 57.7% were male; 42.3% were female.
2. Highest degree held: 12.0% held a master’s degree, 1.4% held a sixth-year degree, 73.6% held a doctoral degree, and 10.8% held a postdoctoral degree.
3. Academic rank: 5.4% were assistant professors, 30.3% were associate professors, and 60.0% were full professors.
4. Age when first became chair: 46.
6. Total years as chair: 5.
7. Tenure status: 83.5% were tenured, 14.7% were not tenured, and 1.8% did not respond.
8. Consider self as member of the faculty or the administration: 74.3% considered themselves a member of the faculty, 22.8% considered themselves a member of the administration, and 2.9% did not respond.
9. Came to the position: 32.0% were appointed, 19.9% were elected, and 47.3% indicated a combination of appointed and elected.
10. Number of full-time faculty in department: 4.4% had 1–3 members, 8.6% had 4–5 members, 16.0% had 6–8 members, 11.7% had 9–10 members, 21.9% had 11–15 members, and 37.0% had 16 members or more.
11. Formal training or education in becoming a chair: 96.0% had no formal coursework or training; 3.0% had formal coursework.
12. Formal management training: 16.3% had management training; 82.9% had no formal management training.
13. Term limits: 17.6% had term limits; 74.1% had no term limits.
14. Plans after serving as chair: 44.3% will go back on faculty, 16.7% did not know, 13.7% will retire, 14.1% will go into administration, 0.5% will leave higher education, and 9.6% did not respond.
15. Overall satisfaction as chair: 52.3% were satisfied, 28.7% were very satisfied, 8.3% were not satisfied, 0.5% were totally unsatisfied, and 10.1% did not respond.

The satisfaction level of department chairs has remained steadfast throughout the six years of this study: consistently more than 80% were either satisfied or very satisfied. The other variable that was equally constant was the lack of formal department chair education or training (95% or higher each year).

Pleasant and Unpleasant Tasks
A review of the literature revealed twenty-seven tasks and responsibilities that department chairs regularly perform. More than 70% of the respondents indicated the following are pleasant tasks they perform:

1. Interpersonal communication: 89.0%
2. Encouraging professional development of department faculty: 86.3%
3. Representing the department at professional meetings: 83.3%
4. Developing and initiating long-range departmental programs, plans, and goals: 78.8%
5. Interacting with the administration on behalf of the department: 78.6%
6. Recruiting new full-time faculty members: 75.7%
7. Encouraging faculty research and publications: 74.8%
8. Planning and reviewing curricula, academic programs, and courses: 74.3%
9. Department organizational tasks: 73.7%
10. Retaining untenured faculty members: 72.7%

Greater than 50% of the respondents indicated the following are unpleasant tasks they perform:

1. Terminating part-time adjunct faculty: 77.5%
2. Terminating nonteaching personnel: 68.6%
3. Terminating full-time faculty: 68.6%
4. Maintaining morale and reducing conflict among faculty: 55.4%
5. Requesting additional resources from administration: 53.6%
6. Evaluating full-time faculty: 51.8%

Clearly, there are a variety of positive duties that chairs perform, and the most important ones revolve around the individuals they interact with on a regular basis.

Skills and Competencies
A literature review indicated there are sixteen competencies department chairs should possess, which we asked respondents to first rate as necessary (yes/no) and then rate as essential, desired, or not needed. As a true indicator of the diverse skill set required of a department chair, fifteen of the sixteen competencies were rated as necessary by at least 87% of the respondents. The only skill that was rated as unnecessary by 87% or more of the chairs was fundraising ability, which was rated as essential by only 33.3% of the respondents.

1. Ability to communicate effectively: 98.9%
What are the challenges you face in serving as department chair? The percentage indicates those people who signified that, yes, this is a challenge to their chairship: dealing with bureaucracy, 62.9%; excessive workload, 62.4%; dealing with noncollegial faculty, 59.8%; lack of time to devote to individual research, 59.4%; stress associated with the job, 57.2%; and lack of adequate resources, 50.7%.

Collegiality and Challenges: 2012 Survey
The question on collegiality was modified slightly to read, “If an objective assessment tool for measuring a person’s collegial behavior was developed, do you think that collegiality should be the fourth criterion for tenure decisions?” A greater than 6:1 ratio of department chairs favored having collegiality as the fourth criterion for making tenure decisions.

The question on challenges that chairs face was modified to include more responses. The following represent the seven most-often cited challenges in serving as chair, along with their respective point totals:

1. Dealing with noncollegial, uncivil faculty: 216 total points
2. Excessive workload: 212 total points
3. Lack of adequate resources: 182 total points
4. Dealing with bureaucracy: 172 total points
5. Lack of time to devote to individual research: 127 total points
6. Stress associated with the job: 105 total points
7. Working with unmotivated faculty: 100 total points

Conclusion
In his book Communication Miracles at Work (2002, 228) Matthew Gilbert noted, “Conflict and disagreement offer wonderful opportunities to learn and grow. As long as you respect others’ differences and things don’t get personal, as long as you question the idea and not the person, then there will be room for discovery and movement toward the best solution.” Clearly, department chairs are at the epicenter of this epic struggle, yet universities have failed to give them the tools to strategically manage this conflict. Faced with the ever-increasing demands of their position, it remains almost inconceivable that department chairs continue to be consistently satisfied or very satisfied with their position (over 80% on average) when 96% of them have never received any training in this role. Perhaps the word satisfaction does not embody the essence of what department chairs truly strive to do. As the six years of our survey revealed, making a difference lies at the heart of this role.

Robert E. Cipriano is professor emeritus in the Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies, senior partner in ATLAS consulting, and author of Facilitating a Collegial Department in Higher Education (Jossey-Bass, 2011), and Richard L. Riccardi is director of the Office of Management Information and Research, both at Southern Connecticut State University. Email: ciprianor1@southernct.edu, riccardir1@southernct.edu

References

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEW! Get hands-on, problem-solving tips for dealing with the challenges of chairing. View these 15-minute quick tips at your convenience!</td>
<td>Our popular online workshops will be back! Join fellow chairs, Jossey-Bass authors, and other thought leaders for interactive live and on-demand workshops:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Things Your Dean Wants You to Know</td>
<td>• Program Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Habits for Highly Effective Use of Email</td>
<td>• Faculty Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Keys to Creating Healthy Relationships with Staff</td>
<td>• Fundraising and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Keys to Defusing a Department Bully’s Behavior</td>
<td>• Budgeting and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Keys to New Faculty Success</td>
<td>• Managing Conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Strategies for Melting Resistance to Change</td>
<td>• Managing Time and Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminating Your 3 Biggest Time Wasters</td>
<td>• Collegiality in your Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secrets of Satisfying and Efficient Meetings</td>
<td>• Working with your Dean, Faculty, and Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tbody>
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Career Pathways: Retention and Recruitment Strategies for Academic Departments and Institutions

Richard S. Rafes, Shauna L. Malta, and Mary T. Siniscarco

Institutions of higher education are faced with increasing challenges in student recruitment and retention, particularly during times of economic uncertainty. Recruitment of undergraduate students into academic programs together with retention of enrolled students is paramount to the survival of many colleges and universities. Academic administrators who are creative in linking program offerings to career opportunities may be able to decrease attrition and attract additional students to their campuses. Increasing concern raised by legislators and the public has led to an expected accountability that college graduates secure gainful employment given the escalating cost of higher education and resulting student debt.

Career Maps

Like most institutions of higher education, Utica College offers quality academic programs to students. Unfortunately, some students succeed in meeting program outcomes only to learn that job prospects are limited upon graduation. At a time when the unemployment rate is less than favorable, students must be keenly aware of their marketability. For example, students who major in English may not consider the wide range of opportunities beyond teaching the subject at another college or at a primary or secondary school. In her 2011 article, Jayne Drake describes Bernie, an English major who initially questioned this choice. Drake indicates Bernie’s attribution to his career outcome as follows: “He has been working in the pharmaceutical industry for the past seven years managing IT implementation for Regulatory Affairs and working on projects that literally extend across all regions of the world” (12).

In his own words, Bernie credits his English degree as foundational to his success:

I use the critical thinking and communication skills I learned studying literature at Temple every day. The ability to read, assess, and communicate those assessments has been key to my success in the industry. The study of literature fed my analytical side, and forced me to articulate my analysis, opinions, and decisions. I was once told by a vice president after working there for four years that she wasn’t sure hiring an English major was going to work until she met me. (Drake 2011, 12)

It was apparent to us that many “Bernies” exist in our institution; we asked how we might help students envision career possibilities that link to particular programs of study and skill sets. As we consulted with our career services department, reviewed various publications and government reports, discussed with our faculty, and recalled the success of our graduates, we were able to create an extensive list of possible career opportunities in a variety of occupational areas for our students in each major. We considered the best instrument to deliver this information to students, understanding that many are visual learners and also prefer information be presented in a clear and concise manner. Through trial and error we created a unique and visually appealing template for career mapping. When faculty at Utica College were presented with this concept, many felt a sense of engagement as they developed the career map for their specific programs. Department chairs included program faculty members, which led to participation in the marketing process. Key program characteristics were defined and student learning outcomes were identified and promoted on the career maps. The maps have been used by faculty, academic advisors, career services personnel, admissions recruiters, and high school guidance counselors. Figure 1 is a sample English major career map.

This career map connects some possible careers to occupational areas and academic major. It includes links to the U.S. Department of Labor information and statistics as well as additional websites that provide, among other things, detailed job descriptions, salaries, and the current and future job outlook.

On the reverse side of the career map we identify distinguishing characteristics about the major and skills students learn when completing the program. A sample from our health studies major is provided in Figure 2.

This map has a dual purpose, serving as a source of information for retention as well as a recruitment strategy that can be provided to high school guidance counselors and college admissions’ recruiters. Most important, the map provides current and potential students with the opportunity to connect their interests to a specific job or series of jobs, facilitating career goal setting and supporting persistence through degree completion. The map also provides options to students who are unable to meet the academic requirements within a particular major or career path. Additional career pathways are uncovered, thereby promoting retention.

Choosing a major early in one’s academic journey is key to the retention of students. We believe a strategy such as the career map may help students to solidify their career objectives and contribute to increased retention. We also recognize that a tool is only as helpful as the one who uses it. While providing a map without guidance may work for some students, in most cases students will gain the greatest benefit through consultation with an academic advisor. The role of the academic advisor has continued to evolve over the years, moving well beyond simple clerical checks. We have seen...
The potential benefits of the advisor-student relationship, and integrating career maps into advising appointments has enriched these meetings at Utica College. The visual map provides a catalyst for conversations that are often hard to initiate. Students as well as parents have reported the maps to be helpful in their academic planning.

Students who determine a realistic career path by their sophomore year appear more likely to find success and achieve their academic goals. Conversely, students who do not have a personally attainable career objective identified during the first two years of college tend to struggle academically and are at greater risk of withdrawing. Using a directed approach such as the career map will assist students in focusing their career plans on a realistic and attainable path and will allow institutions to increase student retention.

Conclusion

The career map is an example of an intentionally designed strategy that can improve retention and recruitment in higher education. This novel idea can impact decision making and career planning, particularly when used with students early on. Student satisfaction and retention are likely to improve when academic programs are identified and pursued that students find meaningful and congruent with their skills and interests. In addition, students and those financially responsible for their college education will be provided with a visual plan that may assist decision making and further promote recognition of the practical value of education.

Figure 1. Sample English Major Career Map

Note. The English career map was developed with the assistance of Mary Ann Janda, professor of English at Utica College.

Figure 2. Sample Health Studies Major Career Map

Points of Distinction
Health Studies Major

1. Small classes with individualized attention
2. Interdisciplinary and inter-professional education provided
3. Opportunities for students to complete non-clinical professional field experience
4. Expert faculty with diverse clinical experience
5. Exposure to varied career options

Student Learning Outcomes
Skills Acquired for Health Studies

1. Effective communication and interaction with individuals having diverse backgrounds
2. Awareness of the varied roles and responsibilities of different health care professionals (OT, PT, Nursing, Therapeutic Rec, Psych-Child Life)
3. Application of concepts related to human development when working with individuals across the lifespan
4. Critical thinking to analyze current evidence in order to advocate for patients and clients and become consumers of research
5. Identification of professional conduct and behaviors expected of a health care professional

Note. The health studies career map was developed with the assistance of Mary Siniscarco, assistant professor of health studies at Utica College.

This article is based on a presentation at the 30th annual Academic Chairpersons Conference, February 6–8, 2013, San Antonio, Texas.

Richard S. Rafes is interim dean in the School of Health Professions and Education, Shauna L. Malta is chair of the Department of Physical Therapy, and Mary T. Siniscarco is chair of the Department of Health Studies, all at Utica College. Email: rsrafes@utica.edu, smalta@utica.edu, mtsinisc@utica.edu

References

Lawsuits and Rulings

Tenure Denial

Department Chair May Have to Answer for Negligent Statements to Tenure Applicant

Case: Taha v. William Marsh Rice University, No. H-11-2060 (S.D. Tex. 05/03/12)

Ruling: The U.S. District Court, Southern District of Texas, dismissed one element of the plaintiff's claim against the defendant but allowed a second claim to proceed based on negligent misrepresentation.

Significance: A supervisor such as a department chair may be liable for negligent misrepresentations to employees that are detrimental to the employee's future professional prospects.

Summary: Walid Taha, a Muslim born in Egypt and educated at Kuwait University, began employment with Rice University in 2002 as an assistant professor in the computer sciences department. In 2007 Taha approached Keith Cooper, the department chair, to express a concern about Joe Warren, the incoming department chair. He told Cooper that a prior confrontation with Warren regarding derogatory comments that Warren allegedly made about Egyptian students could affect his chances for tenure. Taha further asked Cooper whether Taha should defend his teaching record in his tenure dossier.

Cooper allegedly responded that he would handle Taha's tenure consideration, and there was no need for Taha to defend his teaching record. Cooper did not attend the department's first tenure meeting, and Warren chaired the first four meetings. In 2008 Warren informed Taha that the department had denied him a tenured position, citing dissatisfaction with his teaching record in his dossier. Considering Cooper's experience as department chair, and the fact that Taha's eventual denial of tenure was premised upon questions about his teaching record, it was plausible to the judge that Cooper's statement was false and carelessly made—to Taha's detriment. Therefore, he denied the motion to dismiss with respect to that statement.

Hostile Environment

Professor's Hostile Work Environment Claim Survives Summary Judgment

Case: Yedes v. Oberlin College et al., No. 1:11 CV 465 (N.D. Ohio 03/23/12)

Ruling: The U.S. District Court, Northern District of Ohio, denied the defendant's motion for summary judgment in Ali Yedes's claims of a hostile work environment under Title VII.

Significance: A college or university may be liable if the plaintiff shows that a person with authority failed to implement prompt and appropriate corrective action in response to the plaintiff's complaint of a hostile work environment.

Summary: Ali Yedes, a Muslim of Arab descent and Tunisian national origin, was hired by Oberlin College in 2000 as a nontenured assistant professor of French. In March 2006 Oberlin awarded him tenure and a promotion to the rank of associate professor. In 2007, after Matthew Senior became chair of the French department, he allegedly made discriminatory comments to Yedes, including stating “you are a terrorist.” In March 2009 Yedes complained to the dean about Senior's alleged discriminatory conduct.

After a mediation attempt fizzled, Senior filed a motion for summary judgment, asserting that the defendant's motion for summary judgment in Ali Yedes's claims of a hostile work environment under Title VII.

Significance: When a college or university may be liable if the plaintiff shows that a person with authority failed to implement prompt and appropriate corrective action in response to the plaintiff's complaint of a hostile work environment.

Summary: When Taha sued the university for tenure denial, Rice filed a motion to dismiss. District Judge Gray Miller said that Cooper's statement to the effect that he would handle the tenure proceedings was not actionable because it was a promise of a future event. He explained that such promises could never form the basis of a suit. However, he ruled that Taha had pled a plausible negligent misrepresentation claim with respect to Cooper's statement that Taha need not defend his teaching record in his dossier. Considering Cooper's experience as department chair, and the fact that Taha's eventual denial of tenure was premised upon questions about his teaching record, it was plausible to the judge that Cooper's statement was false and carelessly made—to Taha's detriment. Therefore, he denied the motion to dismiss with respect to that statement.
Development for Academic Leaders: A Practical Guide for Fundraising Success

by Penelope C. Hunt
Jossey-Bass, 2012
256 pp., $40.00 (plus $5.00 s/h)

Penelope Hunt’s Development for Academic Leaders: A Practical Guide for Fundraising Success fills a long-neglected need: it provides a crash course in the basic vocabulary and strategies of fundraising to all levels of college administrators, ranging from department chairs to university presidents. People who are new to these roles have needed a brief guide to the fundamentals of development. Not that long ago academic leaders required only extensive knowledge of their own programs and could leave the fundraising work to others. No longer. There’s rarely an administrative position today that doesn’t entail at least some involvement with donors, corporations, and not-for-profit foundations. As a result, those assuming leadership roles discover that they have a steep learning curve before them on how development offices work, the difference between a major gift and a principal gift, what to say (or more importantly, what not to say) during a solicitation visit, and so on. Development for Academic Leaders provides exactly that type of overview.

In twenty-three short, easily read chapters, Hunt’s book explains such issues as what academic administrators can do in order to help their development officers be more effective, how to respond when a prospective donor asks me to serve on this board?” question. One of the book’s most valuable chapters deals with time management and its relationship to fundraising success. It’s not uncommon for academic leaders to ask, “With all the other responsibilities of my position, how can I carve out even a few hours each week to implement my development plan?” Hunt approaches this question head on, discussing how to set priorities in fundraising, which duties are best delegated to others, how to organize your calendar in such a way that you free up more of your time, and why you should tackle small tasks like writing thank-you notes in those short blocks of time between appointments.

As one would expect in a volume intended for academic leaders, this book devotes considerable attention to the administrator’s role in campaigns, annual giving programs, and campus events that have a fundraising component. Hunt notes the importance of alumni giving rates because they can affect college rankings, even while other factors (such as donor retention rates) are better indicators of fundraising success at large universities. She notes the difficulty schools have in creating a culture of philanthropy among recent graduates because new alumni are usually at the lowest point in their careers in terms of earning capacity and the highest in terms of student loan debt. Her chapter on how to plan fundraising events will help administrators capitalize on activities like guest lectures or student research days they may be planning anyway. The key is to be practical and focused, avoiding the temptation to accomplish too many goals at once. Ask questions such as “What’s the specific fundraising objective of this event?” and “How might an external sponsorship defray our costs while also solidifying our relations with an important partner?”

Hunt also reminds readers of the effect that personal visits from a chair can have on a potential donor. Those of us in higher education, who are surrounded daily by faculty and administrators, may well perceive chairing a department as a challenging and often thankless job, a duty sometimes undertaken simply because no one else will do it. But for many community members, college professors still conjure up images of those remote and intimidating figures whose quizzes they approached with dread. To receive a personal visit from a faculty member, therefore, is a significant event for many donors; when a department chair comes in person, it’s an even greater honor. For this reason, chairs and other
academic leaders should take full advantage of the status they have with potential donors and direct the positive impressions they can leave toward gaining external support.

As an introductory work, Development for Academic Leaders provides only limited information about certain topics. For instance, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, a major source of fundraising information and training for academic administrators among others, is mentioned just once and only with regard to its ethics statement. Planned giving, which is increasingly becoming an important part of fundraising in higher education, is addressed in little more than a page. There's relatively little discussion of endowments and trusts, and academic leaders who find themselves baffled by such terms as quasi-endowment and charitable remainder trust receive no guidance here. Moreover, the section of the book that offers advice to presidents is so brief as to be of little help at all. It consists mostly of insights that nearly all academic leaders will have on their own well before assuming an executive role (for example, always be briefed before meeting with a donor, focus on board members and large donors so as not to overextend yourself, and the like).

None of these limitations should suggest, however, that the book doesn't have tremendous value for chairs, deans, and other academic leaders who need a quick survey of development practices. You can think of Development for Academic Leaders as Fundraising 101. If you've already done some solicitation from donors, corporations, and foundations, you may find your needs better served by the ASHE (Association for the Study of Higher Education) reader Philanthropy, Volunteerism and Fundraising in Higher Education (Walton and Gasman 2012), which, at nearly 900 pages, covers its topic in far greater depth. Nevertheless, if you're new to fundraising and need to learn the basics, Development for Academic Leaders will provide just the type of background you need.

References

by Robert M. Hendrickson, Jason E. Lane, James T. Harris III, and Richard H. Dorman
Stylus, 2013
448 pp., $29.95 (plus $5.00 s/h)

Sometimes I think I am hearing voices. Perhaps they are better described as echoes. They surface in moments when I recognize familiar patterns—organizational dynamics foretold long ago, human relationships following predictable pathways, warning signs of danger ahead, opportunities not to be missed, explanations of historical realities that inform the present. It's as if I have moved into Dumbledore's office in Hogwarts, and the portraits are those of the great historians, theoreticians, analysts, and leaders of higher education. Their voices have guided my professional journey for the past thirty years. I would not know what to do without them.

As I read Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education, I felt I was visiting briefly with old friends, colleagues, and professional mentors. The authors of this important work followed an impulse that has proved to be very successful. They gathered into one intellectual space the collected ideas and insights from the most recognized thought leaders in higher education for a generation and added a fresh perspective. Had I known such an endeavor was under way, I would have been highly skeptical about its prospects for success; the body of literature is simply too big. Yet they have achieved something students of higher education will deeply appreciate. They have collectively wrapped their arms around fifty years of higher education literature and coherently mapped it into a framework that is well organized, highly integrated, and contextually rich.

After I explored the book's conceptual framework and organization by way of its table of contents, foreword, and introduction, I paged through the references. I was impressed by the breadth of the literature the authors incorporated. The backbone of the book is its authentic presentation of writings that have chronicled the history of colleges and universities, and helped us to understand how and why our institutions are changing so quickly in the present era.

Yet for those who have no frame of reference for the rich cannon of literature that undergirds the text, the work is very accessible. The authors have intended to address the needs and interests of many audiences involved in higher education and they have succeeded. Devoted students of higher education will appreciate the theoretical and historical substance, while those seeking to understand higher education through a single institutional or even broader societal lens will find the work very informative. I see the benefits for those on the faculty who are interested in academic leadership. Trustees and policymakers at all levels will gain insight into and an understanding of the ambiguities and complexities inherent in colleges and universities. This book can effectively bridge gaps in understanding and help to extend some common language to groups that are having a more difficult time interpreting the past and preparing for the future.

One of the strengths of this text is its intent to do more than just describe. It serves as an able reference tool. Once Part One is read, the remaining sections are organized into coherent topics that can be examined in any order. However, readers will underutilize this work if it is treated simply as a compendium of topics related to higher education for occasional review. The recurring theme throughout the book rests on three elements the authors suggest have made colleges and universities...
successful for centuries despite periods of enormous change:

1. Institutional decisions are made based on a core mission and a set of values.
2. Institutional adaptation to environmental change is in alignment with the mission and core values.
3. Institutional leaders seek to create and foster democratic partnerships with myriad constituents.

The authors note, “it is the combination of focusing on a specific mission, adapting to a changing milieu while maintaining a mission, and promoting democratic partnerships that has allowed institutions of higher learning to become arguably the most respected organizations in society today” (3).

That framework of understanding informs the reader of the intent to elevate the discourse above simple descriptions and explanations to a more thoughtful understanding of the fundamental role colleges and universities play as organizations in the broader social and cultural context.

The book is content rich for those looking for detailed background information on a wide range of topics. The list is far too long to repeat here, but suffice it to say that this is a comprehensive work that addresses issues related to organizational dynamics, policy frameworks, government interests, academic programs, faculty responsibilities, trusteeship, global education, legal matters, strategic planning, and, of course, student success.

If there is one comprehensive text you are prepared to study about higher education, make it this one. It will bring back memories for some, whet the appetites of those new to the field, and extend the conversation for all. Perhaps more of us will begin to hear the echoes of the past that have some important things to tell us about the future.

Mark L. Putnam is president of Central College and author of the blog Mark: my words (http://blogs.central.edu/president/). Email: president@central.edu

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