

Developing Leadership Skills among Department Chairs

Panelists:

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Presiding:

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Critical Role of Department Chairs

- Front line of leadership / administration
 - Communicate and implement policy
 - Collectively, make most institutional decisions
 - Convey faculty concerns, interests to Dean
 - Manage budget, staff
 - Evaluate faculty
 - Represent University in conflict situations
 - Faculty, staff, students, parents
 - Lead innovation, change processes

Special Leadership Challenges of Department Chairs

- Selection is only partly based on leadership skills
 - Nominated or selected by peers
 - Few volunteers, few alternatives
 - We don't know how to identify important qualities
- Time-limited role, then (often) return to faculty
- Lead and evaluate their peers
- No prior experience in similar role
- Lead through interpersonal skills, not hierarchy
- Few opportunities for intentional development of leadership skills

Why Don't We Do More to Develop Leadership Skills in Chairs?

- Private sector
 - Expects to invest a lot in developing leaders
 - Expects their leaders to actively seek to develop skills
 - Effort division: 35% process, 65% task
- Universities
 - We expect to learn what we need to know without support
 - We don't place a high value on soft skills
 - We don't recognize that these are teachable skills
 - Chairs don't want to invest time
 - Institutions question the cost

Developing Leadership Skills among Department Chairs

Michael Stoloff

James Madison University

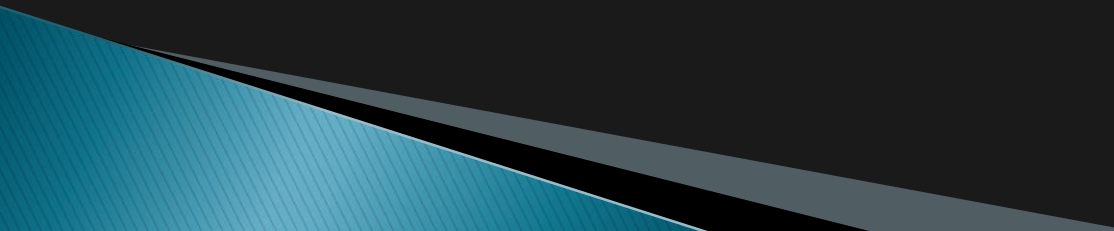
James Madison University (JMU)



- ▶ Comprehensive State University
- ▶ Total Enrollment: 20,181 (92% Undergraduate)
- ▶ 7 Colleges plus Graduate School
- ▶ 42 departments offer ~110 programs
- ▶ New Chairs
 - 10 during 2013–14
 - 8 during 2014–15



Domains of Professional Development for Department Chairs



Domains of Professional Development

- ▶ Position responsibilities
- ▶ College and University procedures
- ▶ Leadership skills
- ▶ Interpersonal & professional skills
- ▶ Priority projects

Position Responsibilities (General)

- ▶ Disciplinary and departmental representation
- ▶ Serving as primary point of contact for the department
- ▶ Communicating and coordinating among faculty, staff and students
- ▶ Maintaining an environment conducive to scholarship and academic accomplishment
- ▶ Maintaining and improving the quality of the department's academic programs
- ▶ Advancing the financial condition of the department
- ▶ Promoting conflict resolution among individuals including faculty

Position Responsibilities (Specific)

- ▶ Recruiting, mentoring, supporting and evaluating faculty
- ▶ Selection and supervision of part-time faculty and staff
- ▶ Recruitment, orientation, tracking progress, and supervision of students
- ▶ Management of finances, contracts, space, equipment and other resources
- ▶ Creating the schedule of classes and managing the registration process
- ▶ Supervising plans for program assessment; periodic review and accreditation
- ▶ Producing the department's annual report

Position Responsibilities (Faculty roles)

- ▶ Continuation of faculty roles: teaching, scholarship, professional service
- ▶ Serving in special roles reserved for faculty leaders

College and University Procedures

- ▶ The faculty handbook or contract
- ▶ Policies and procedures (for all domains of activity)
- ▶ Knowing which office is responsible
- ▶ The legal landscape

Leadership Skills

- ▶ Adopting a broader and longer-term perspective
- ▶ Establishing priorities
- ▶ Developing and communicating a vision and strategic plan
- ▶ Using data to make effective arguments
- ▶ Influencing departmental and campus-wide directions
- ▶ Communicating effectively
- ▶ Facilitating change

Interpersonal & Professional Skills

- ▶ Developing effective interpersonal relationships
- ▶ Developing a comfortable and productive departmental culture
- ▶ Dealing with difficult people
- ▶ Managing conflict
- ▶ Managing change
- ▶ Time management
- ▶ Maintaining work–life balance

Priority Projects

- ▶ Understanding university and college strategic plans
- ▶ Enhancing diversity
- ▶ Encouraging student engagement
- ▶ Diversifying funding sources
- ▶ Promoting the university QEP

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Opportunities for Professional Development at JMU



- ▶ Self-study of publications
(facilitated by faculty development center collection)
- ▶ Orientation
- ▶ Monthly lunch meetings with a Vice Provost & selected experienced Chairs
- ▶ Regularly scheduled meetings with Deans
- ▶ Monthly meetings of all chairs, facilitated by a Vice Provost
- ▶ For some:
 - Year-long leadership training program (Impact-3)
 - Participation in development activities through national and regional disciplinary organizations
 - American Council on Education (ACE) Leadership Academy

Resources

- ▶ Stoloff, Coté, & Heesacker (2014). Chairing the Academic Department. In *The Oxford Handbook of Undergraduate Psychology Education* (Dana Dunn, Editor).
- ▶ See handout for additional resources.

Thank you!



Leadership Programs for Department Chairs

Doug Doren

University of Delaware

Range of Program Options

- Sink / Swim (autodidactic)
- Intentional development
 - On-site / Off-Site / On-line
 - With colleagues / With strangers
 - Short (1-2 days) / Extended
 - One-time / Ongoing

Example 1: CCAS Seminar for Department Chairs

- Off site, with strangers, 2 days, one time
- Presentations plus small group discussions, case studies, several facilitators
 - Basics/Problem Solving
 - Managing People & Conflict
 - Recruiting/Retaining/Developing Faculty
 - Working with the Dean
 - Work-life Balance
- \$550/chair plus travel, including some meals
- www.ccas.net

Example 2: CCAS On-Campus Leadership Development for Chairs

- On site, with colleagues, 1 day, one time
- Presentations plus small group discussions, case studies
- Same material as off-site seminars, with options for tailoring to specific needs
- One facilitator
- \$2250/workshop, plus facilitator travel and local expenses

Example 3: ACE Leadership Academy for Department Chairs

- Off site, with strangers, 2 days plus follow-up and group interactions
- Focus areas
 - Chair as unit leader
 - Chair as academic leader in service to the institution and its mission
- \$1000/chair plus travel
- www.acenet.edu

Example 4 - Jossey-Bass Department Chair Leadership Institute

- Online program, extended duration (1 year)
- Self-assessment plus survey of faculty perceptions of chair
- Focus development on gaps, areas for improvement
- Recommendations of online resources
- \$399/chair
- www.departmentchairs.org

Example 4 - Jossey-Bass Department Chair Leadership Institute

From www.departmentchairs.org

The Chair Feedback & Development Program focuses on four major areas of responsibility:

- Promoting positive culture
- Administrative leadership
- Faculty management and development
- Department advocacy

And answers these questions:

- How effective am I perceived to be?
- What might I do to improve

Example 5: University of Delaware

- Combined Approach
 - On site, with colleagues
 - Large group meetings
 - 1 morning on operations, University-wide, annual
 - 1 morning on annual appraisals, College-wide
 - Ongoing modules on issues as they arise
 - 7 small group sessions led by external consultant
 - Semester long, experiential learning
 - Group and individual work, case studies and discussion
 - Individual assignments
 - Peer interactions between sessions
 - One-on-one coaching sessions with consultant

Example 5: University of Delaware Small Group Workshops

- Modules developed by consultant, in collaboration with Dean's office
 - Frameworks/strategies for
 - Leading change
 - Difficult conversations
 - Problem solving
 - Focus on self-awareness
 - Principles of group process
 - Lead with principles
 - Collaboration

Example 5: University of Delaware

The External Consultant

- Experienced in leadership development
 - Established frameworks for leading change, etc
- Confidential conversations with chairs
- “Thinking partner” for current challenges
- Small group modules (6-9 participants)
 - \$2000/day for consultant X 7 days
 - Consultant travel
 - Program development (one-time costs)
- Dennis Morris, www.lsrrpm.com

Future Opportunities

- Identifying characteristics of successful chairs
- Developing future chairs
- Leadership style assessments
- Stress management
 - Work-Life Balance
- Online approach for small group workshops
 - Combined with face-to-face sessions and phone consulting
 - On-site workshops at lower cost

Questions for Further Exploration

- What qualities should we look for in chairs?
- Can we identify specific development needs for individual chairs?
- What development approaches are effective?
- What are the costs of not actively developing leadership capacity?

American Council on Education:
Leadership Academy for Department Chairs

“The New ~~Normal~~ Instability”

- Will the role of the Department Chair ever be the same again?
- Is reinvention feasible? Possible?

When you Observe a Fabulous Chair – What Do you See?

- Passionate Commitment to the institution's mission
- Informed about the campus, the state, and the national scene in higher education.
- Well-informed about policies, practices, regulations
- Mindful of 'precedents'
- Enjoy saying 'yes'; willing to say 'no'
- Able to keep faculty focused on a positive vision of the future, and build the plan to get there.