

# Performing More than the Role

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TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
KINGSVILLE.

# Texas A&M University-Kingsville

- Part of the Texas A&M University System
- Hispanic-Serving, public university
- Primarily undergraduate, residential
- Moderate Research Activity Doctoral University
- In 2015 ranked as the fastest-growing doctoral-granting university in the US
- Student population 9,200

# Research Questions

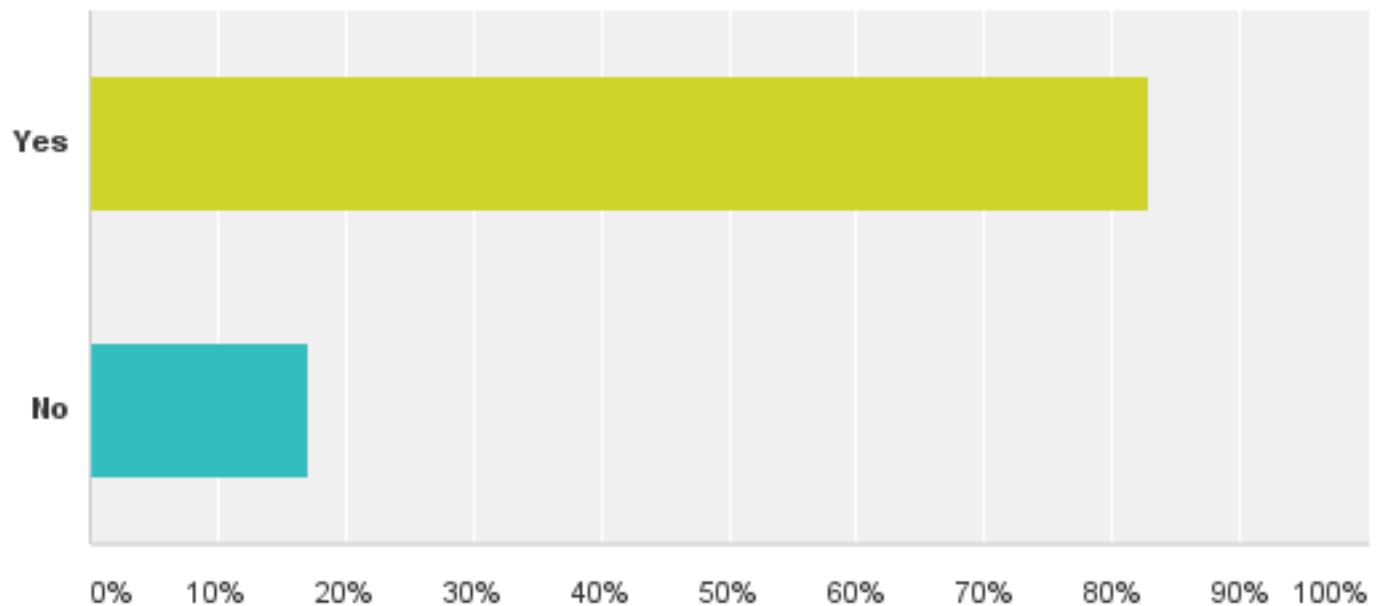
- We wanted to know if other Assistant/Associate Deans had duties beyond their “portfolio.”
- Or, duties as otherwise assigned by the Dean.
- Are you tired too? How do Assistant/Associate Deans manage their load and the “add-ons”?

# Methodology

- After deciding to conduct a survey of Assistant/Associate Deans, I filed an IRB request.
  - We both took the CITI training
- We devised a survey through Survey Monkey
- I contacted CCAS for a list of Assistant and Associate Deans and then sent out the survey to around 900 email addresses, out of which about 100 were not deliverable. We received 282 responses.

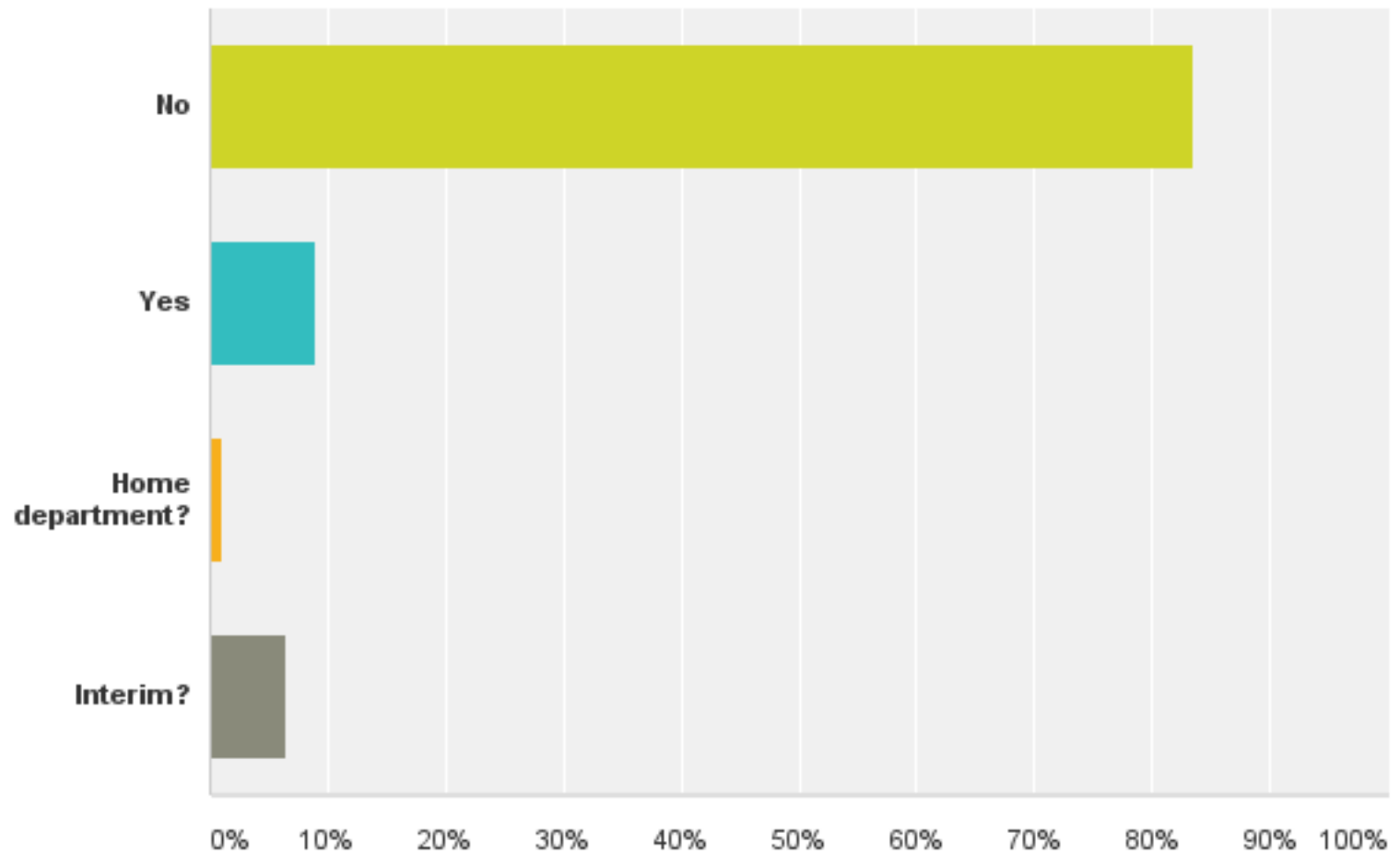
### Q3 In addition to your "portfolio" as Assistant or Associate Dean, do you have or have you had other duties?



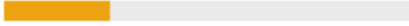
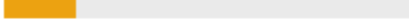
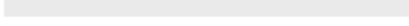
Answered: 282 Skipped: 0



## Q4 Do you chair a department?

Answered: 279 Skipped: 3



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| <b>1 year or less</b><br><a href="#">View all</a> • <a href="#">Edit</a> • <a href="#">Delete</a>      |  | 50%    | 23 |
| <b>2 years or less</b><br><a href="#">View all</a> • <a href="#">Edit</a> • <a href="#">Delete</a>     |  | 6.52%  | 3  |
| <b>Invalid Response</b><br><a href="#">View all</a> • <a href="#">Edit</a> • <a href="#">Delete</a>    |  | 26.09% | 12 |
| <b>three years or more</b><br><a href="#">View all</a> • <a href="#">Edit</a> • <a href="#">Delete</a> |  | 17.39% | 8  |
| <b>Uncategorized</b><br><a href="#">View all</a>   |  | 0%     | 0  |



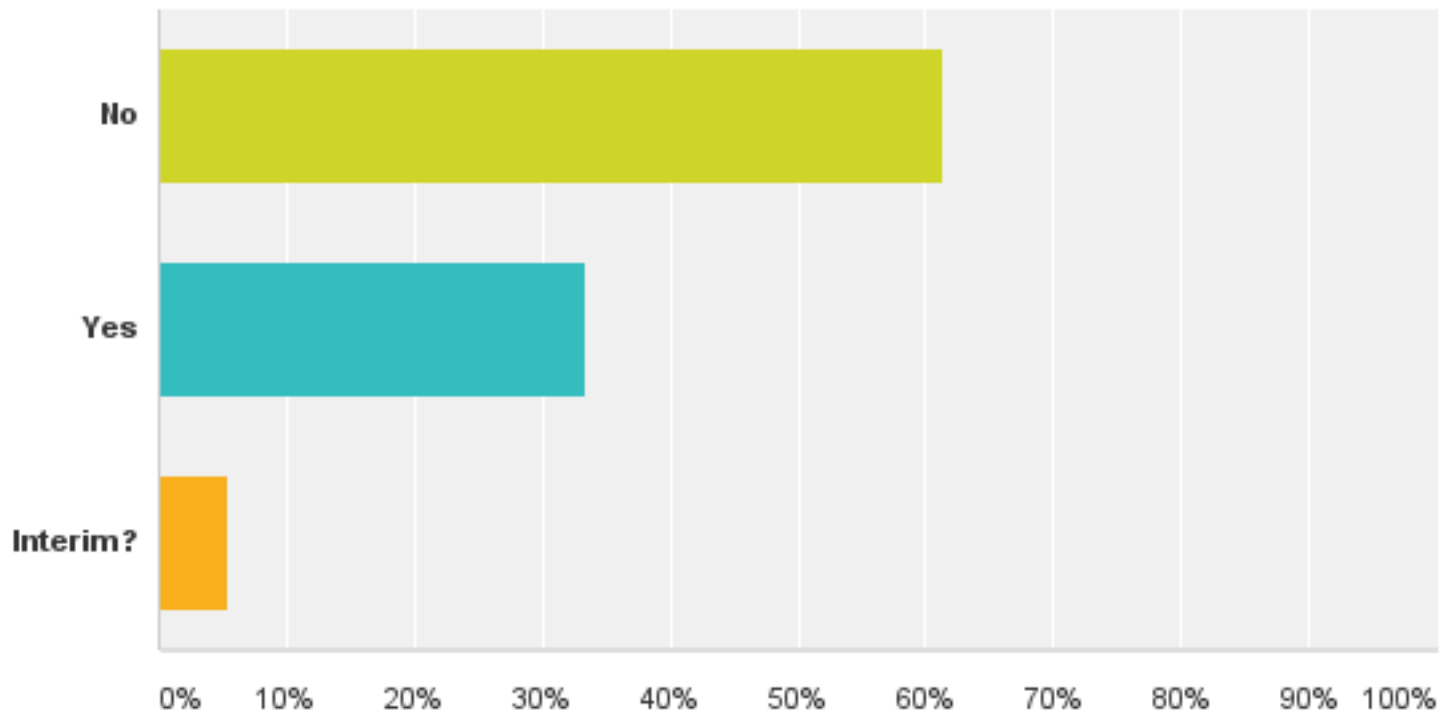
# Chairing Department Comments

- At various points in my work as Associate Dean, I have served as interim chair for several departments, usually for a period of 6 months to one year. This is done on an as-needed basis.
- 9 months and counting . . . will be at least year before the end is in sight
- I have twice served, while Associate Dean, . . . as interim chairperson for a department not my own, for 16 months and then a year later for 2 months.
- I am not now, but did serve as Chair of Physics for 3 years while I was also an Associate Dean



## Q5 Did you serve as Director or Coordinator of another unit?

Answered: 279 Skipped: 3



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| <b>Advising/ Students</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete |  | 3.19%  | 3  |
| <b>Center</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete             |  | 11.70% | 11 |
| <b>General Education</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete  |  | 7.45%  | 7  |
| <b>Graduate Program</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete   |  | 7.45%  | 7  |
| <b>Honors</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete             |  | 4.26%  | 4  |
| <b>Interdisciplinary</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete  |  | 6.38%  | 6  |
| <b>Invalid Response</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete   |  | 29.79% | 28 |
| <b>MISC</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete               |  | 8.51%  | 8  |
| <b>Research</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete           |  | 8.51%  | 8  |
| <b>Undergrad Program</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete  |  | 18.09% | 17 |
| <b>Uncategorized</b><br>view all                      |  | 1.06%  | 1  |

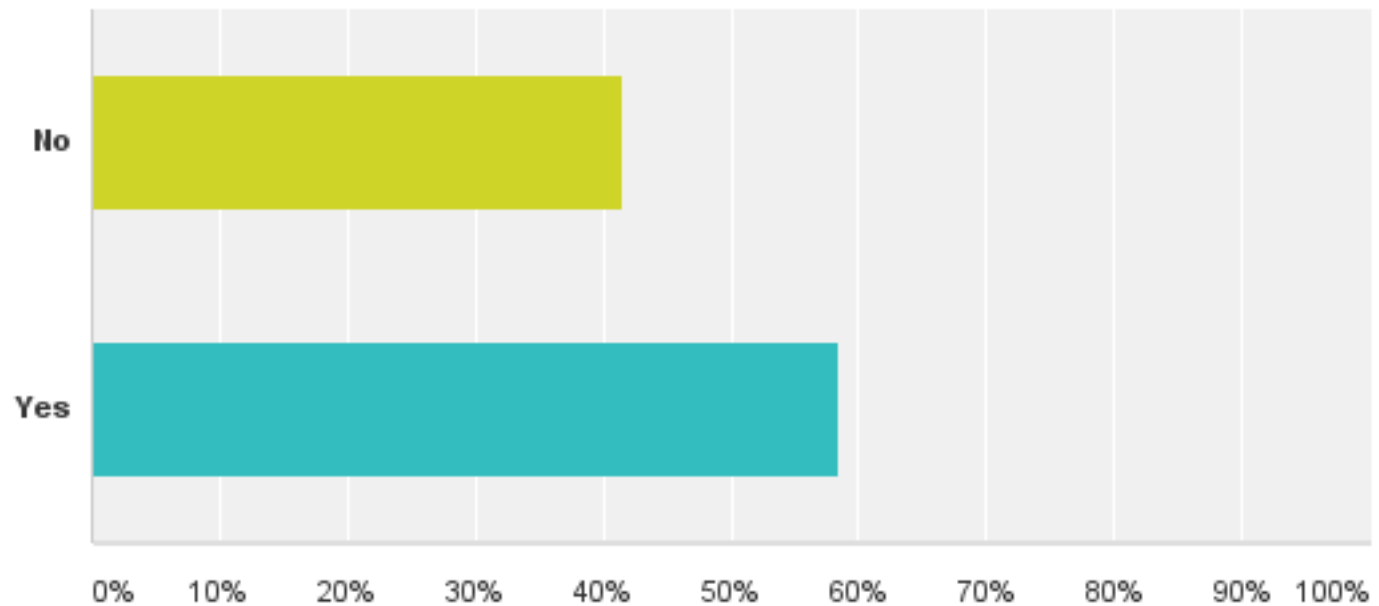



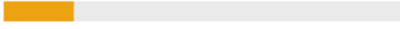
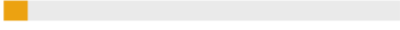
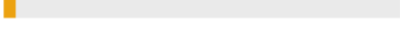
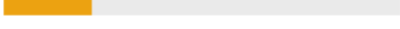
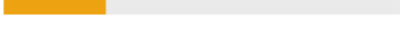
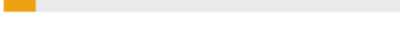
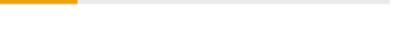
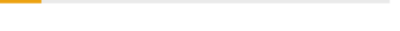



# Director/Coordinator

- American Indian Studies
- Global Studies
- Curator, Natural History Collection
- Undergraduate Research Institute
- Vice Provost
- Coordinator of Deaf Studies
- MS in Data Analytics
- STEM Education
- Center for Excellence in Communication
- Innovation Greenhouse
- Writing Center
- Energy Frontier Research Center

## Q6 Did you serve as Chair of a major committee?

Answered: 277 Skipped: 5



|  |  |        |    |
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| <b>Accreditation/QEP</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete         |    | 3.68%  | 5  |
| <b>curriculum</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete                |    | 17.65% | 24 |
| <b>Gen. Ed.</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete                  |    | 5.88%  | 8  |
| <b>Invalid Response</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete          |    | 2.94%  | 4  |
| <b>Misc.</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete                     |    | 22.06% | 30 |
| <b>multiple committees</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete       |    | 25.74% | 35 |
| <b>non-specific</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete              |    | 8.09%  | 11 |
| <b>planning and assessment</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete   |    | 21.32% | 29 |
| <b>Research and Grad Studies</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete |    | 11.76% | 16 |
| <b>search committee</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete          |    | 13.24% | 18 |
| <b>Tenure and Promotion</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete      |  | 5.15%  | 7  |
| <b>Uncategorized</b><br>view all                             |  | 0%     | 0  |

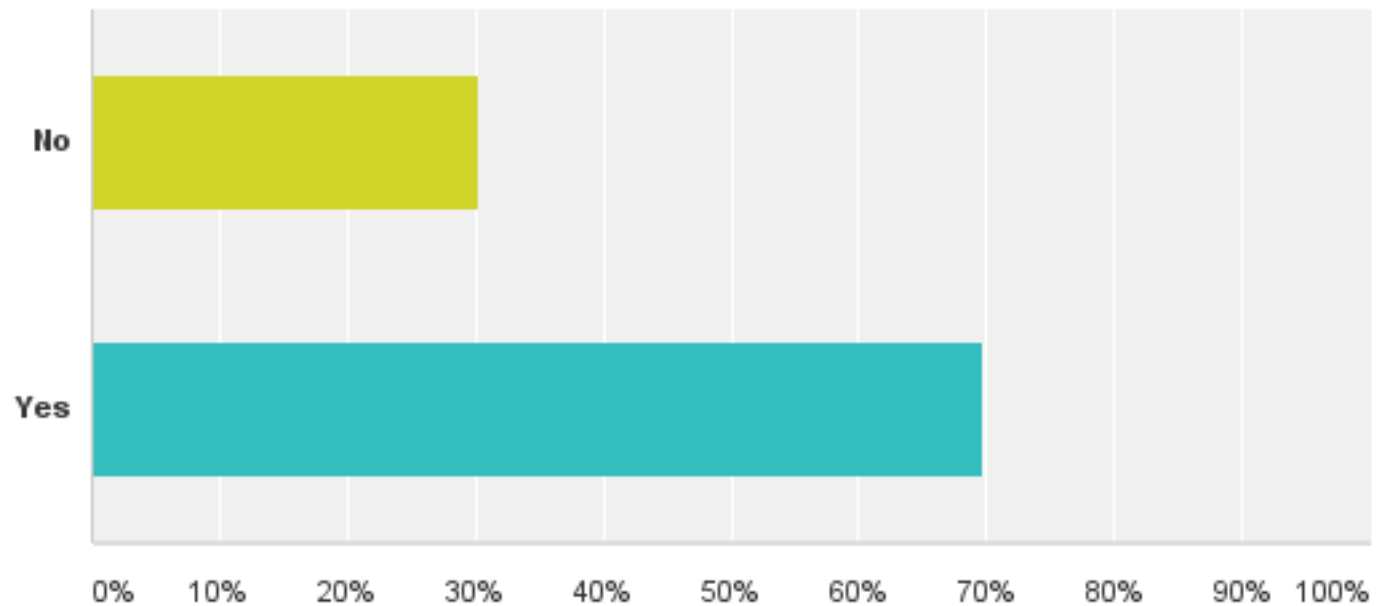


# Chairing Committee Comments

- Campus Strategic Planning Committee in academic year 2015-16, 5-10 hours per week. Campus Student Success Task Force, AY15-16, 2-3 hours per week.
- I have chaired the University's Institutional Effectiveness Committee (a standing committee) for over 10 years.
- Chair of Department Chairs Committee and System-wide Biology Chairs Committee
- Women's Status Presidential Committee. 30 hours
- Director of Development Hiring Committee: 40 hours; Steering Committee for Digital Media Center: 30 hours; FLAC Committee (to implement Banner module for NTT faculty hiring) 25 hours; AAAC (University accreditation) Committee: 20 hrs.
- Too many to list

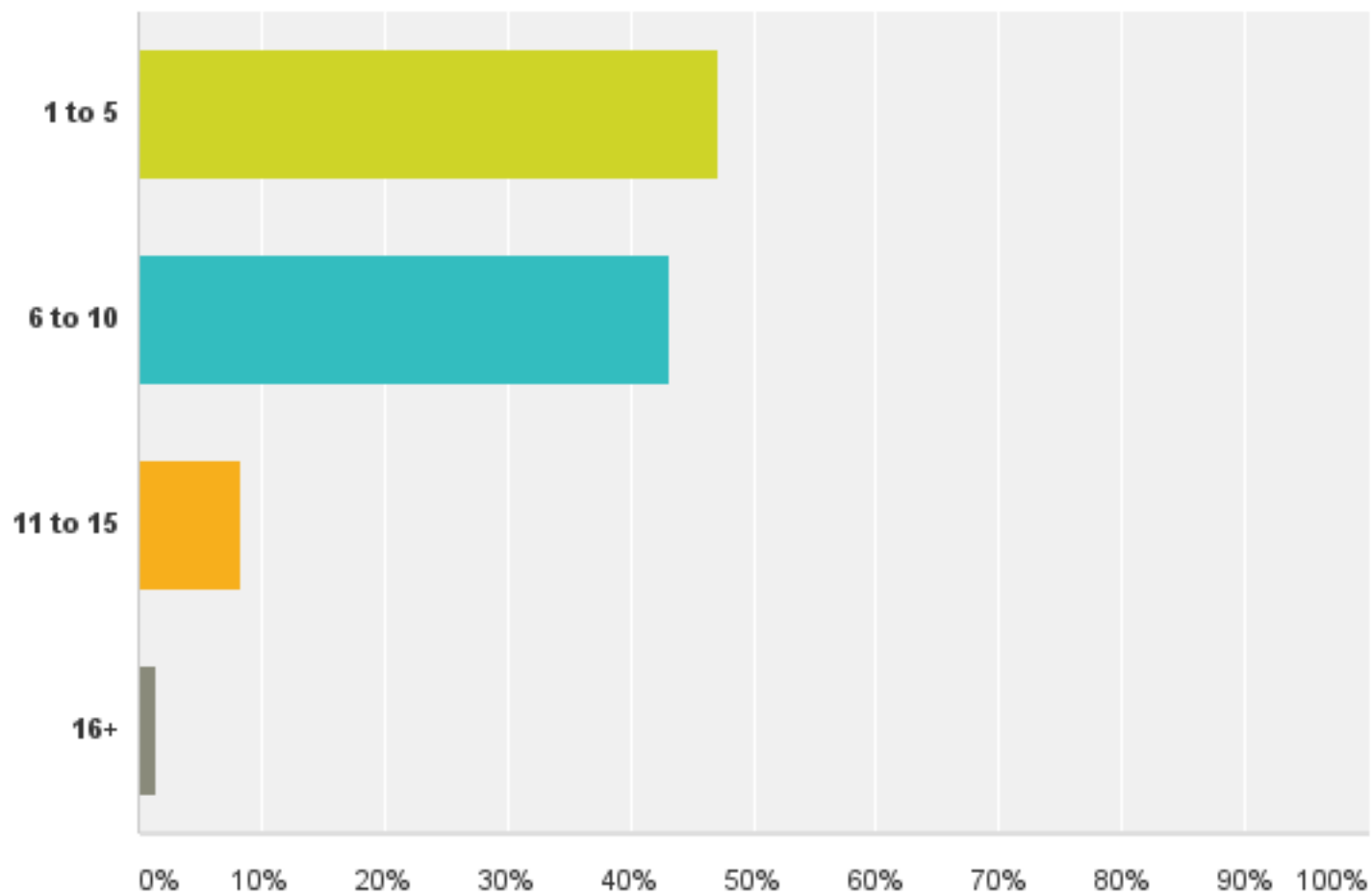
## Q7 Other added duties not part of your portfolio or not mentioned above?

Answered: 248 Skipped: 34



## Q8 Number of committees on which you serve

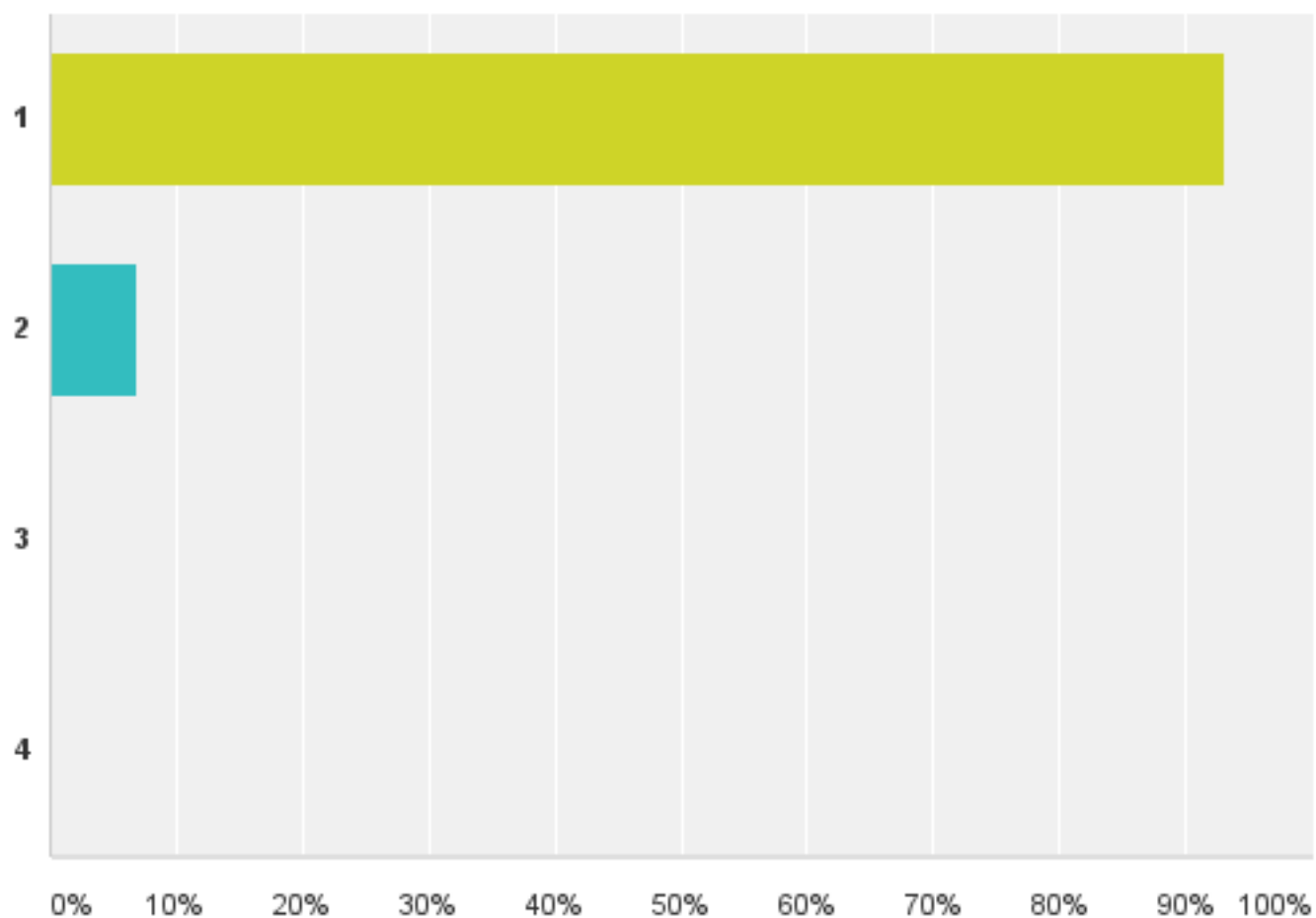
Answered: 278 Skipped: 4



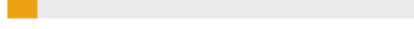
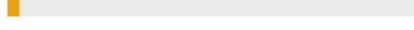
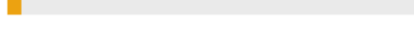
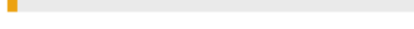









## Q9 Number of classes per semester you teach

Answered: 174 Skipped: 108



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|--|--|--------|----|
| <b>Calendar/Planning</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete |    | 38.75% | 93 |
| <b>Delegate/No</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete       |    | 25.42% | 61 |
| <b>Email Mgmt</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete        |    | 7.50%  | 18 |
| <b>Exercise</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete          |    | 2.92%  | 7  |
| <b>Liquids</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete           |    | 3.33%  | 8  |
| <b>Meditation</b><br>view all • Edit • Delete        |    | 2.50%  | 6  |
| <b>None</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete              |    | 9.17%  | 22 |
| <b>Prioritize</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete        |    | 18.75% | 45 |
| <b>Time Away</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete         |    | 12.08% | 29 |
| <b>Work more hours</b><br>View all • Edit • Delete   |    | 19.58% | 47 |
| <b>Uncategorized</b><br>View all                     |  | 4.17%  | 10 |



# Strategies

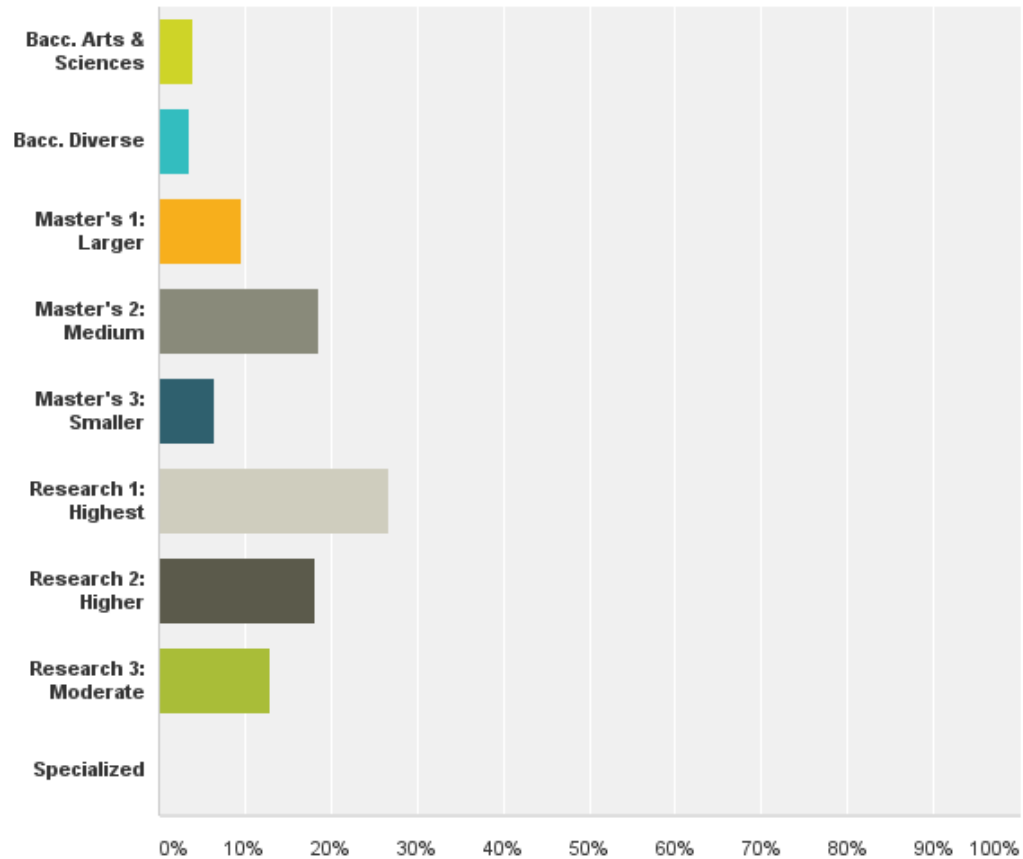
- Detailed planning, getting into a routine, and taking vacation 4 times a year when things die down on campus. I also don't check email after 7pm and on weekends
- Crying, whiskey, yoga (in that order)
- I use the 'Duck Strategy', calm on the surface, paddling as hard as I can below the water line AND, enjoy every day that provides another opportunity for growth and to help someone. Keep a healthy sense of humor, it's a fun assignment, just a little time consuming.

# Strategies

- Take one day/week as "research day"--work from home on research. Try to keep rolling agenda of urgent, medium and long term projects.
- Getting to work early, eating lunch at my desk, advance planning, tackling projects in stages, checking e-mail in the evenings, prioritizing projects/tasks, keeping good notes, adding reminders to my calendar

## Q10 How do you classify your university?

Answered: 280 Skipped: 2



# Thank you

- Many thanks to all who participated in our survey!

# WALKING THE TIGHT-ROPE

The Balancing Act that is Assistant/Associate Dean



Mark Sirkin, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean,  
School of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Mercy College  
Dobbs Ferry, NY

# Evolving Role of Dean

- The role of dean has changed in recent years
  - *More rapid turnover*
  - *More external facing – “mini-Presidents*
- Increasing accountabilities
- Fundraising
- Manage heavy flow of information up and down the “food chain”



# Current Challenges of Being an A/A Dean

- Day-to-day administration of the school often falls to A/A Deans
  - *Increasingly responsible for leading and managing more internal aspects*
- Yet “leading” academics is hard enough *with* a title, but for A/A deans ...
  - *In many ways, we are leading peers*
  - *Colleges were never command-and-control cultures anyway*
  - *Colleagues don't feel the need to follow our requests, suggestions*
  - *How does one lead without overt power?*

# Some Typical Areas of Responsibility

- Technology
- Pedagogy
- Faculty issues
- Administrative issues
- Increasingly “internal problem-solvers”
- Implementer of Provost or President demands
- And anything else!

# Associate Deans as Levers of Change

- Tend to have more “face time” with faculty and AUHs (academic unit heads)
- Can lay the groundwork for change
- Capable of working the issues on the ground, often in real time
- Can lever relationships within and across schools
  - *Up & down, and sideways*
- Sometimes there are advantages in NOT being the dean

# Requisite Skill Set for a New World

- Persuade
- Build alliances
- Interact with people at almost every level of the college
- Communicate with several constituencies
- Lead without coercion

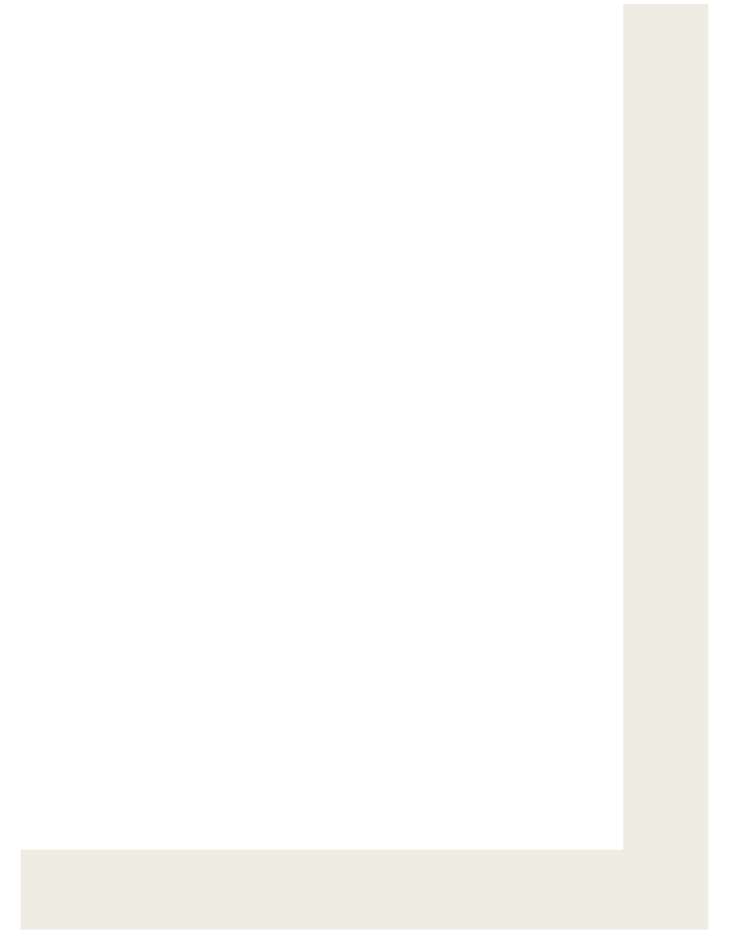
# Potential Problems and Pitfalls

- Being too deep in the weeds: captured in technical issues and minutiae
- Opposite: being so visionary that nothing gets implemented
- Lack of coordination with, and/or support of, your dean
- Splitting: Faculty, students, even administration may play one off against the other

# A/A Dean as Internal Consultant

- Consultants have expertise
- Consultants are a resource
- Rarely does anyone report directly to a consultant
- Consultants “manage” through relationships and persuasion
- Key is aligning goals, interests, and outcomes

QUESTIONS?  
THOUGHTS?  
INSIGHTS?



# Leading From the Middle

Kelly McConnaughay

Associate Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Bradley University



# Bradley's Institutional Context

- Private
- Midwestern
- Masters Comprehensive
- 5 colleges
- 5600 students (1100 LAS)

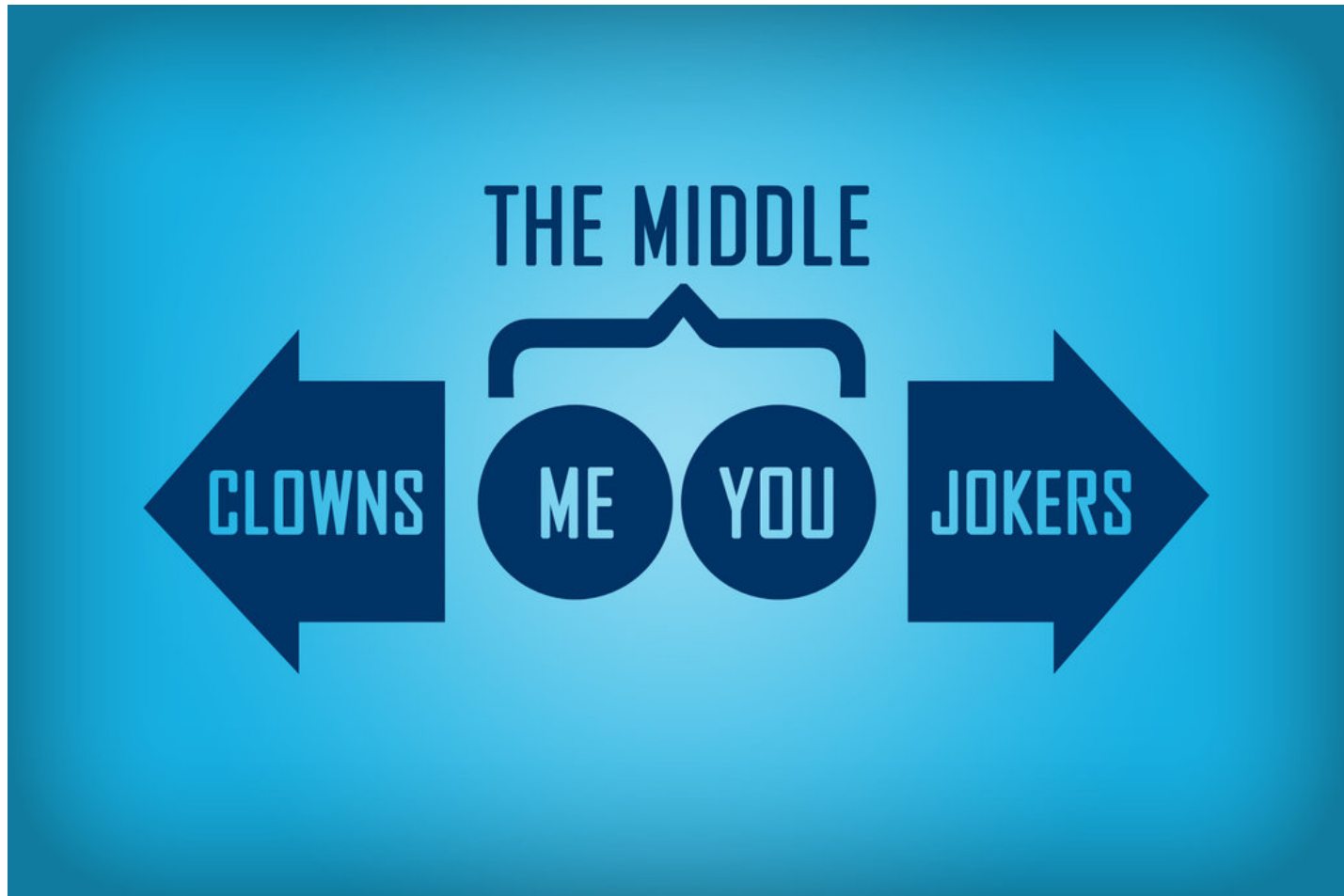
# Bradley's Institutional Context

- Private
- Midwestern
- Masters Comprehensive
- 5 colleges
- 5600 students (1100 LAS)
- Strong ethos on shared governance via **University Senate**

# Associate Deans



# Associate Deans



# Situational Context: General Education Revision

- Bradley founded 1897
- First unified General Education program 1982
- First changes to the program 2002
- 2012 Strategic Plan called for review/revision of General Education

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- 2012 Strategic Plan called for review/revision of General Education
- Early discussions revealed **deep differences** of opinion over every aspect

How can I lead from here?



# Leading From the Middle

- Lots of ways to get it wrong



# Leading From the Middle

- Lots of ways to get it wrong
- Six tips to help get it right

# Tip #1

*Identify common values* in diverse groups, and *connect* collaborative, messy work *to those shared values.*

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and *connect* collaborative, messy work *to*  
*those shared values.*

ability to see connections

ability to develop visual models

systems level thinking

## Tip #2

*Listen* to multiple constituencies, and *help them articulate* their own interests and concerns.

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listening skills

translational skills

rhetorical skills

empathy

## Tip #3

Learn to *facilitate* diverse groups (with often conflicting interests) so that they work *collegially and productively*.

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respect

sense of humor

attentive to deadlines and products

## Tip #4

Identify how and when *to empower diffuse leadership*, and how and when to *rein in* those running over the team or the process.



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Identify how and when *to empower diffuse leadership*, and how and when to *rein in* those running over the team or the process.

ability to let go

diplomacy

ability to redirect

## Tip #5

Practice *time* management, *people* management, and occasionally *anger* management.

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paper pushing skills

attention to detail

tolerance

ability to pause before reacting

## Tip #6

Understand it is almost always *not about you*.

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leave your ego at the door

look at what's behind negative comments

be willing to change your process