Academic Leadership Workshop
June 2024
Two Themes

- Institutional Authority & Authentic Leadership
- Transitioning into Administrator Role
Institutional Authority

- Basis
  - The appointment

- Purpose
  - Ensures institutional stability
  - Provides for delegation of decision-making
  - Ensures that stuff gets done
The Perspective...

- Consequence of a lack of interest in developing leadership
  - Fulfilling the institutional requirement
  - Perfunctory performance
  - Lack of spirit or enthusiasm that inspires
Authentic Leadership

- Leadership shown by individuals who know who they are, what they believe and value, and act on those values and beliefs while interacting with others.

- Leadership reflected in salience of self over role.
Authentic Leadership

- Four Dimensions
  - Self-awareness (i.e., knowing oneself)
  - Balanced processing (i.e., objectively thinking through both sides of issues)
  - Relational transparency (i.e., acting in accordance with one’s true nature rather than contrived or fake manners)
  - Internalized moral perspective (i.e. moral self-regulation and behaving in accordance with these moral values)

Developing Authentic Leadership

- Consider Developing Trustworthiness
Trustworthy Individuals Are...

- Competent
- Reliable
- Open
- Caring
Competence

- Knowledge of institutional procedures and policies
- Willingness to deal with difficult situations rather than ignore or delay addressing them
- Good judgement – not easy and often taken for granted
- Pause and consider context and implications
- Don’t go it alone
Reliability

- Timely response to inquiries and requests
- Doing what you say you’ll do
  - Requires reasonably explicit shared understanding of what the task is and expected time completion
  - Don’t overlook communication on “how it’s going”
- Acknowledgement that if you do not know the answer, you’ll find it
  - Rather than just saying you don’t know the answer
Openness

- Willingness to hear different ideas
  - Requires emotional agility
  - Requires emotional capacity to hear new ideas
  - Course scheduling

- Conveying willingness to hear different ideas
  - Not this: “We have a problem and this is how I think we should fix it”
  - Instead this: “We have a problem and we need to find a way to fix it. Any ideas?”
Caring

- Respect everyone (i.e., tenured faculty, assistant professors, instructors, adjuncts, and staff... through the institution)
- Avoid a pattern where you might be perceived to be listening to only one group
Caring

- Protect others and yourself from difficult people
  - Mean People
  - Mediocre People
Sutton’s Experience

“Well Bob, now that you have satisfied the babies here on campus, perhaps you can settle down and do some real work.”

“I don’t care if he won the Nobel Prize, I don’t want any [jerks] ruining our group.”
Sutton’s Test

“After talking to the alleged [jerk], does the “target” feel oppressed, humiliated, de-energized, or belittled by the person?”
The Dirty Dozen
Common Everyday Actions That [Jerks] Use

- Personal insults
- Invading one’s “personal territory”
- Uninvited physical contact
- Threats and intimidation, both verbal and nonverbal
- “Sarcastic jokes” and “teasing” used as insult delivery systems
- Withering e-mail flames
The Dirty Dozen
Common Everyday Actions That [Jerks] Use

- Status slaps intended to humiliate their victims
- Public shaming or “status degradation” rituals
- Rude interruptions
- Two-faced attacks
- Dirty looks
- Treating people as if they are invisible
We’ve all said and done things we’re not proud of...

- Difference between
  - “States” – fleeting feelings, thoughts, and actions
  - “Traits” – enduring personality characteristics
Implementing the No [Jerk] Rule

- Take great care to not hire them
- Take great care to protect others
  - Anonymous feedback from colleagues may help
  - Try to avoid spreading the behavior by calling it out
Mediocre People

- Individuals who are quite pleased with themselves while their performance is barely adequate.
- Individuals who insist that the department chair’s annual evaluation under rate their performance.
- Individuals who overcompensate for their lack of performance by inflating expectations of students.
- Sometimes these are faculty who have “checked out”.
Implementing the No [Mediocre] Rule

- Take great care to not hire them
- Take great care to protect others
  - Anonymous feedback from colleagues may help
  - Try to avoid spreading the behavior
### Anonymous Feedback

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Mediocre Informs Mean

- The behavior is retribution or retaliation toward another.
- The behavior is related to the prior mediocre performance of the faculty member who is engaging in the retaliatory actions.
- The target of the behavior can be a previous supervisor or a junior faculty member who is seen as a threat.
Surviving Difficult People

- Reframe the nastiness that comes your way
  - Avoid self-blame
  - Develop indifference and emotional detachment
    - “Dismiss whatever insults your soul.”  *Walt Whitman*
  - Develop learned optimism
    - Difficult situations are temporary, they are not going to ruin the rest of your life!

- Don’t struggle against larger forces that you can’t control.
  - Aim for “small wins” — a more comforting and ultimately effective strategy
Transitioning into Administrator Role
Patterns and Cycles

- **Faculty**
  - Rhythm of the semester and research project development

- **Administrator**
  - Cycle of institutional deadlines
    - Faculty assignments, evaluations, activity reporting, annual department reports, hiring process, and personnel issues
Time and Presence Management

- **Faculty**
  - Blocking
  - Working at home
  - E-mail is convenient, efficient, and many times sufficient

- **Administrator**
  - Expect the unexpected
  - Interruptions are the norm
  - E-mail is convenient, efficient and many times insufficient
  - One cannot management in absentia
  - Management by walking around
Managing Groups and People

- **Groups**
  - Learn the dynamics and nature of faculty interactions
  - Develop an understanding of how to present proposals

- **People**
  - If you want to grow a department, build careers
    - Assistant professors need mentors and advocates
    - Associate professors may need encouragement to sustain research
    - Professors need to demonstrate leadership
    - Instructors need opportunities to expand professional development
    - Adjunct professors need to be part of “the group”
    - Everyone needs to be appreciated and many need to become “owners”
Occupational Hazards

- Success in responding quickly can reinforce short-term management patterns at the expense of long-term planning.
- Investment of time in the administrative role and sense of responsibility for outcomes can result in emotional challenges when faculty do not respond or respond in unforeseen ways.
- Time spent on difficult situations or individuals can mask institutional strengths and recognition of good people.
Your Words Matter... More

- Color of the paint
- Gossip
- Annual Evaluations
Commencement Time of Year

- “Remembering 2 Things Will Prepare You for Every Challenge Ahead” by Margaret Renkl. [An essay adapted from an address delivered in May at the University of the South.]

- “Life is in the Transitions” and “The Search: Finding Meaningful Work in a Post-Career World” by Bruce Feiler. [A guest on 1A focusing on commencement addresses.]
Trust Yourself!