

New Chair Workshop

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Acknowledgements

- Dave Irwin, long-time chair at Auburn conducted this workshop I attended 10 years ago.
- Bill Schonberg, chair of CArE at Missouri S&T co-authored a paper on academic leadership at a conference 4 years ago.
- My own mistakes

What Topics Do You Want to Discuss?

Surprise!!

- How much were you really prepared for the position?
- You will deal more with people issues
- You are the “point person” for even the trivial issues.
- First year will be most difficult.

Outline

- Dealing with those “Below”
- Dealing with those “Above”
- Taking care of yourself
- “Best” Practices

You might be at Boy Scout JLT if..

- Your hot dogs resemble charcoal briquettes.
- You get into an argument about one-match fires.
- You have a 50-foot fire and a pizza not done.
- Your spice kit consists of sand, gravel, ash, dust, and grass.
- You're handed raw food and a stick for lunch.
- You spend a week making new friends, learning more scout skills than you new existed, and becoming a better leader.

Faculty Rules - 1

- Practice Good Leadership
 - Know your dominant leadership style
 - Recognize your shortcomings
- Treat Others Fairly
 - Students – Janitors – Staff – Faculty
 - Be perceived as a “nice” player



Faculty Rules - 2

- Extract the very best from each person
 - Work with what you have
 - Inspire and motivate, do not intimidate
 - Credit publically, criticize privately
- Hire the smartest and best you can find
 - Avoid filling a position just to fill it

“Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.” – George S. Patton

Faculty Rules - 3

- Never tenure someone who you know is a problem
 - However, you may not make the ultimate decision
- Fair annual evaluations
 - Document what is going on
 - Post-tenure review

“The art of leadership is getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it.” – Dwight D. Eisenhower

Faculty Rules - 4

- Delegate, delegate, delegate
 - There will be more than enough that you cannot delegate
- Your integrity and honesty is the most valuable trait you have
 - Hard to keep – easy to lose
 - Resist the temptation to use department funds to buy your “toys”

Faculty Rules - 5

- Communication is important
 - Keep an open door as much as possible
 - Keep meetings on task and moving
- Guard your privacy and your time
 - Allocate personal time on your calendar
 - Keep your cell phone number private to only a few

Faculty Rules - 6

- Lead by example
 - Do not ask the faculty to do what you are not willing to do
 - Distance class, teaching every day, teaching large section, research
- Convey hope
 - Be realistic
 - Send the message that together we can get through the crisis

Difficult Conversations

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=3gitAc0ahaY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gitAc0ahaY)

Up Rules - 1

- Develop a rapport and trust with Dean's office
 - Remember it is the staff that get the work done
- If you go to the dean with a problem, have one or more possible solutions
 - He/she will appreciate it

Up Rules - 2

- Create “good” problems
 - Not enough classrooms, needing more lab space for a very productive faculty member
- Be a responsible steward of your resources
 - Try to find ways to create resources
- Maximize revenue stream to dept
 - Protect it

Up Rules - 3

- Pick your battles
 - Not every budget cut will have “severe” consequences

Taking Care of Yourself

- Allocate some personal time on your calendar
- Keep doing a little teaching or research
 - A respite from administrative duties
- Have at least one other faculty member you trust to handle paperwork/duties while you are on “vacation.”

Best Practices

- Annual review of untenured faculty
- Training your successor
- Decisions, decisions
- E-mail
- Unproductive tenured faculty
- Regular meeting with fellow chairs

Annual Review of Untenured Faculty

- By dept P&T in February
- Faculty submit a dossier (short version of “real” dossier) + accomplishments since previous year
- Second year is the most important one
- No surprises by the end of the 5th year

Training Your Successor

- You will not be chair forever
- Appoint one or more asst/assoc chairs to handle administrative functions:
 - Undergraduate program(s)
 - Graduate program
 - Teaching Laboratories
- Assess their strengths/weaknesses, leadership, and “carry-through” qualities

“It is only as we develop others that we permanently succeed.” – Harvey S Firestone

Decisions, Decisions

- Don't do things in haste, out of fear, or out of pity
- On difficult decisions, get buy-in from key faculty
- Don't worry about collecting every bit of data before making a decision

E-mail

- Use “delete” liberally
- Use personal folders to file/organize
- Deal with urgent issues first.
- Allocate time to “clean up” InBox
- Use smartphone to deal with it while traveling
- Do not argue by e-mail – schedule a meeting

E-mail (contd.)

- The entire faculty is cc'd on an e-mail to you (and it is inappropriate)
 - Don't write an e-mail that would embarrass you if sent to the entire faculty
 - Unless it is an urgent matter, take some time (a few hours) to respond
 - If appropriate, cc the faculty, but it may be best to “ride out” the embarrassment. The faculty know the troublemakers, anyway

Unproductive Tenured Faculty

- Find what motivates them – recognition, working with students, etc.
- Give them some visibility, plug them into a leadership position
- Make some concessions where it makes sense – some lab space for “tinkering”
- Offer some training/conference re-tooling opportunities.

Regularly Meet with Chairs

- Weekly lunch meeting with engr. chairs
- Commiserate
- Invite the dean every once in awhile
- Learn how others deal with problems
- Come to a consensus in the absence of the dean

Parting Comments

- You serve a key role
- An institution can prosper with a team of good chairs and poor upper administration. An institution will not survive with excellent upper administration and poor chairs.