New Chair’s School

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The Day’s Agenda

I. Introductions

II. Role(s) of the Chair

III. Identifying and Responding to Program Challenges
    - Small Group Breakout Sessions
    BREAK

IV. Tips for Taking Action

V. Core Values and Attributes for Success

VI. Closing and Handout of Materials
Introductions

• Name
• Institution
• How long at institution?
• How were you selected?
• One reason why you want to be chair
Seriously, why are you doing this job?

• Way to demonstrate competence to move up the ladder?
• Contribute to the “good of the order”?  
• You have ideas that will make things better?
• Relieve the burden of administrative issues on others?
• Power, control, bossy, smarter, money
 Seriously, why are you doing this job?

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Seriously, why are you doing this job?

• Way to demonstrate competence to move up the ladder?
• Contribute to the “good of the order”? 
• You have ideas that will make things better?
• Relieve the burden of administrative issues on others?
• Other reasons?
• Whatever it is.....Keep it in mind
The Formal (and Informal) Roles of the Department Chair
“An institution can run for a long time with an inept president, but not for long with inept chairpersons.”

Formal Roles of the Chair

• There are many clearly established roles and responsibilities for Department Heads/Chairs.
• In many ways these are the easier parts of the job because the faculty, students, and administration generally understand these to be your responsibilities.
Common Formal Roles

**Budget Officer**
- unit’s budget,
- allocate funds,
- work with staff to track expenditures, etc.
- financial aid decisions
- allocate scarce resources for students
- accountable

**Facilities Manager**
- offices and classroom facilities
- allocate space, lobby for more space (never less!)
- recommend improvements and investments
- upgrades to technology
- enforce rules in the use of space
Common Formal Roles

Manage the Teaching Program
- schedule classes
- develop/Manage curriculum
- Honor Code violations
- assist with teachers struggling

Manage Academic Personnel
- faculty teaching loads and service assignments
- annual evaluations of faculty
- manage/recommend P&T
- hiring processes and start-up
Common Formal Roles

HR Manager
- staff workload/effectiveness
- staff annual evaluations
- staff hiring/firing

Development
- friend-raising for the program
- fundraising ideas/initiatives with Dean
- University booster in public gatherings
### Common Formal Roles

**External Representation**
- face of the unit
- emcee at events, host, customer relations
- positive attitude and impression

**Visionary Leader**
- lead the unit in new directions (curricular, research, professional, etc.)
- articulate a vision
- pursue vision with vigor, and bring along everyone for the ride
- leader and first among equals
Informal Roles of the Chair

• Include:
  – Encyclopedia
    • Examples: What courses will be offered in Spring 2016?; Does the graduate school allow transfer credits?; How many articles is “enough” for P&T?
  – Networker Extraordinaire
    • Examples: Who at DOT can I talk to about a project idea?; I want to intern at Firm X, who do you know?; There’s a program in the business school we should partner with, who’s in charge over there?
Informal Roles of the Chair

• Include:

  — **Fire Fighter**
  
  • *Examples: A data request from the Dean; An unhappy student; the copier is down; A RFP needs review and signatures*

  — **Referee**
  
  • *Examples: Disputes over space, departmental policy, allocation of resources; Student unhappiness with teachers, adjuncts*
Informal Roles of the Chair

• Include:
  – **Shrink**
    • *Examples: The junior faculty member having panic attacks; The student whose marriage is falling apart*
  – **The Law**
    • *Examples: Honor code violations; Grade challenges; Policy interpretations; P&T recommendations*
Informal Roles of the Chair

• Include:
  – **Cheerleader**
    • *Examples: Graduation ceremonies; Alumni events; Student meetings; Recruiting events*
  – **Tone Setter**
    • *Examples: Greeting people with smiles; Asking how they are doing; Clear communication of conditions and activities*
Identifying and Responding to Challenges
Identifying Challenges

Break into groups of 3-4 Chairs and discuss:

1. **What are the 2-3 major challenges your unit is currently facing or will be facing during your term as Chair?**

   We encourage you to think broadly: faculty, staff, students, resources, curriculum, accreditation, facilities, alumni, employers, etc.

   We will report back and hear about the challenges facing Chairs.
Responding to Challenges

Break into groups and discuss:

1. **What is the role of the Chair in dealing with your major challenges?**
2. **Who are the key additional players that need to be involved?**

We will report back and hear about the responses you develop.
How to Get Your Program Moving

• Don’t be afraid to meet, as a program, more frequently than usual at first
  – Know who you are in this role
  – Share ideas, information, brainstorm
• Meet with students regularly
• Staff meetings – share information, in the loop
How to Get Your Program Moving

• Use committees to develop “white papers/memos” to get ideas generated
• Delegate to others (faculty, vice chair, staff)
• Seek assistance (colleagues in other units, leadership, offices)
• Call on students, alumni, community partners (advisory groups, individuals, leaders)
How to Get Your Program Moving

• Be willing to develop “drafts” for comment and response without pride or attribution
• Your success depends on the program’s success
• The program’s success depends on your success
Workplan

• Key issues/challenges to be address
• Show your reasoning in working on an issue
• Set realistic goals for yourself and your program
• Keep yourself focused, less distracted
• Show progress, unexpected challenges, how you managed change
• Keep a journal....brief record of meetings, progress, new thoughts, concerns
Core Values

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Confidentiality
- Fairness
- Compassion and/or empathy
- Dedication to mission
- It’s NOT about you….it’s about the program or the students or the profession
Transition to Chair

• Specialist to Generalist
• Function as an individual to running a collective
• Loyalty to discipline to loyalty to institution
Core Attributes

• Specialist to Generalist
  – Ask questions of campus service staff (payroll, HR, budget, purchasing, IT, legal counsel)
  – Seek counsel (just not from your friends on the faculty)
  – Inform, communicate, seek help
Core Attributes

• Function as an individual to running a collective
  – Very few things are emergencies – know how to distinguish emergencies, crises, urgent issues, important issues
  – Manage relationships – Dean, faculty, staff
  – Listen more than you talk
  – Be present
Core Attributes

• Function as an individual to running a collective
  – Communicate, communicate, communicate – in person, by phone, by email
  – Get to know your faculty, staff, in different ways – Strength finders, Meyers-Briggs, etc.
  – Capitalize on strengths, minimize weaknesses rather than the other way around
Core Attributes

• Loyalty to discipline to loyalty to institution
  – Your institution is better when your program is better
  – Get things done on time (double your time estimate)
  – Contribute outside your discipline – chair’s meetings, committees
  – Take care of yourself – time off, research (you are in it for the long-haul)