Welcome to your (new) newsletter!

This is the first installment of what I hope will be a regular series of newsletters addressing topics of interest in the area of academic leadership; my vaunting ambition is to produce one of these newsletters per academic term.

As those of you who have served or are serving in positions of leadership are aware, the Academic Leadership Program is intended to provide you with support, assistance, and training in order to help you carry out your role as an academic leader. Academic leadership per se, however, goes far beyond its embodiment in any one administrative position: collaborative and collegial leadership may be exercised independently and simultaneously by several individuals, regardless of whether they hold a specific title. It’s my view that the benefits of discussion around questions of academic leadership should be extended to all faculty, rather than being restricted only to those who occupy particular positions.

So, while for the moment the activities of UW’s Academic Leadership Program (lunches and workshops) are intended chiefly for people in such positions, this newsletter is for everyone. And as we move forward, we will be seeking more ways in which opportunities for leadership training can be extended to any and all faculty who wish to participate.

Sheila Ager, Director, Academic Leadership Program

Message for all faculty from the Associate Vice-President Academic

I am pleased to have the opportunity to add some additional commentary related to the idea that discussion of academic leadership should be extended to all faculty, not just those currently holding leadership positions. The freshly minted Assistant Professor, now in their first ‘real’ job, naturally is thinking about tenure and promotion several years down the road, and justifiably avoiding getting sidetracked by heavy administrative or service responsibilities. I’d argue, however, that they should be keeping an open mind to future administrative roles, within departments, faculties or centrally in the institution. This not only gives back to Waterloo and its faculty, staff and students, but also enriches and deepens an academic career in a way that only leadership can. Positions of
leadership pull back the curtain to peek at how the complex machinery of the institution works and how things get done, including how faculty are enabled to carry out their research and teaching, and how students undertake their learning. And, yes, you will be sometimes surprised, and sometimes impressed—and believe me, never bored!

Mario Coniglio, AVPA

The Academic Leadership Program at UW

As this is a first issue, and given that many of you will not yet have heard about or participated in the Academic Leadership Program, it seems like a good idea to start with a few remarks about the ALP here at UW. The Program provides education, support, and mentorship for faculty members in positions of academic leadership at the University of Waterloo; at the moment, those positions are defined as Academic Chairs/Directors; Associate Chairs/Directors; and Associate Deans. Formal aspects of the Program include full-day Orientation sessions for individuals new to these positions, half-day workshops on various topics of interest, and Forum Lunches featuring guest speakers (workshops and lunches are intended for all faculty in positions of academic leadership, not just those who are new to the role). For most of these sessions, emphasis is placed on open debate and discussion, peer learning, networking, building of faculty and staff relationships across campus, and practical examples drawing on the experiences of participants. Informally, the Program offers one-on-one support to individuals with particular concerns through confidential consultations or meetings with the Program Director.

The Program runs under the auspices of the Associate Vice-President Academic’s office; assistance is provided by Organizational and Human Development. The Program Director is a tenured UW faculty member. An Academic Leadership Program Advisory Committee, made up of faculty representatives from each of the six UW Faculties, provides support and advice to the Director.

The ALP website provides links to a number of resources, including institutional information, a Chair’s Handbook, and materials from ALP Orientation sessions, workshops, and Forum Lunches.

Upcoming ALP Events (Fall 2018)

Currently, the ALP’s resources are such that the program of lunches and workshops is intended for individuals already in positions of academic leadership. However, if you do not currently hold such a position, but you find a topic of interest, please contact the Director (we’ll accommodate you if we possibly can).

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<tr>
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<th>Subject</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday Sept. 6, 2018</td>
<td>Forum Lunch: ‘What I wish I had known before taking up—or at least early on in—an administrative position(s).’</td>
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<td>Friday Sept. 28, 2018</td>
<td>Workshop: Time and Meeting Management.</td>
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<td>Thursday Nov. 15, 2018</td>
<td>Forum Lunch: Faculty Mentoring and Succession Planning in Academic Leadership.</td>
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<td>Tuesday Nov. 29, 2018</td>
<td>Workshop: Performance Management and Evaluation (Faculty and Staff).</td>
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<td>Tuesday Dec. 4, 2018</td>
<td>Forum Lunch: Mental Wellness at UW: the Role of Academic Leaders.</td>
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ALP Newsletter
Issue 1: Spring/2018

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If you have a topic you would like to suggest for a lunch or workshop session, please let the Director know!

Other Opportunities for Faculty Professional Development at UW

The Faculty Association (FAUW)

The Faculty Association provides various opportunities for faculty professional development (see their professional development and mentorship pages). FAUW's Faculty Guide pulls together a lot of useful information for faculty members. The Association runs annual workshops on preparing both for tenure and for promotion; in 2017 it began running a workshop for mid-career faculty (recently tenured faculty and new continuing lecturers).

The Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

The Centre for Teaching Excellence (Director, Donna Ellis) regularly runs workshops on teaching and learning ‘on topics pertaining to classroom dynamics, delivery skills, course design, blended learning, new educational technologies, ePortfolios, and more’; there is a specific workshop on ‘documenting your teaching for tenure and promotion’. CTE also provides one-on-one guidance, multi-day events, assistance for academic Chairs and Directors, and a host of other opportunities for enhancing teaching and student learning.

Organizational and Human Development (OHD)

The Office of Organizational and Human Development (Director, Katrina Di Gravio) provides professional development opportunities for all UW employees, both staff and faculty. OHD runs numerous workshops: the Core Development workshops, the Leadership Development Programs (Leadership Essentials and Leadership Foundations), the Inclusivity Series, and Business Communications. OHD partners with the Academic Leadership Program in delivering training and support to UW's academic leaders.

The Digest

One of the things I would like to do regularly with this newsletter is provide links to some of the vast scholarship on academic leadership and faculty professional development. Precisely because it is so vast (and ever-expanding,) I thought it might be helpful if I regularly provide brief summaries and links for a few select particularly relevant articles (I am afraid that you may have to put up with my idiosyncratic notion of what constitutes ‘relevant’, but I am always happy to receive suggestions for inclusion). For this issue (already a bit crowded), I’ve included just a couple for starters...

“Can you really restart your research after years in administration?” I was struck by the honesty of this article, which

Some Journals of Interest:
Academic Leader
CAUT Bulletin
Chronicle of Higher Education
The Department Chair
University Affairs
Surrounded and supported by my wonderful students at the Ara Pacis (the Altar of Peace), Rome 2018

presents some musings from a humanities professor who served a decade in senior administration, and is now wondering whether he will be able to reinvigorate his research. He speaks about applying the skills he learned during his administrative career to the difficulties of jump-starting his research program, including the option of researching and writing about academic administration (George Justice, CHE 24 June 2018).

“The top 5 faculty morale killers.” This article, aimed mostly at Chairs, is, I think, relevant for any of us who work in the academy. The author defines the top five behaviours or problems he sees as most destructive to faculty morale: micromanagement; trust issues; hogging the spotlight; the blame game; and blatant careerism (Rob Jenkins, CHE 25 April 2016).

Recommended Reading (novel): Julie Schumacher (2014) Dear Committee Members.

Current Director Profile: Sheila Ager

I joined the University of Waterloo as a sessional lecturer in 1987, and am now a Professor in the Classical Studies Department. My field of research is ancient Greek history, with particular interests in international relations, peaceful conflict resolution, and dynastic monarchy; my most recent course taught was a senior class on Cleopatra VII and her homonymous ancestors. In the three decades I have been at UW, I’ve served as Associate Chair (Undergraduate), Department Chair, and Associate Dean of Arts (Undergraduate); I’ve also chaired and served on numerous department, faculty, and university committees, including Senate, Board of Governors, and the task forces on academic integrity and English language competency. I became Director of the Academic Leadership Program in May 2016.

Inspirational (?) Quote

One of the truths of academic life is that we always seem to have too much to do; this is particularly so when unexpected administrative tasks—sometimes outright emergencies—spring on us out of nowhere. I would in no way suggest that we should embrace all opportunities to work ourselves into the ground: after all, the University is increasingly concerned with the mental well-being of all its members, and the ALP does offer training in personal and time management. Still, I’m grateful to my colleague Beth Jewkes from Engineering, who reminded me that there are two sides to ‘burning the candle at both ends’:

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends—
It gives a lovely light!

Edna St. Vincent Millay, Figs from Thistles: First Fig (1918)

You will note that these quotations will not always be particularly inspiring per se; but I like to think that they will at least provide some occasional—if rueful?—humour.