Academic Leadership at UW
Orientation Day I

Sheila Ager
Director, Academic Leadership Program
Introductions and Welcome.
Ian Orchard, Vice-President Academic and Provost.
An ounce of practice is worth more than tons of teaching.
Welcome to tons of teaching.
But at least you don’t have to bother with note-taking (unless you want to).
Orientation Themes

• Accountability.
• Responsibility in the larger framework of the University as a whole.
• Leadership/management.
• Policies, rules, and regulations.
• Helping you –
  • Meeting people and putting names to faces or vice versa.
  • Personal survival (Day II – you have to come back).
Note: most of this is not rocket science.
New Job Descriptions in Policy

• Chair: Policy 40.
The chair of a department [or director of an academic unit of departmental status] will be a person of academic stature, appointed for her/his intellectual and administrative abilities, devotion to education and research, and qualities of leadership. The chair will be a tenured associate or full professor who has the ability to create an environment conducive to the growth of intellectual life within the department and to maintain the confidence and co-operation of her/his colleagues.
Or – sometimes you’re the only one who was willing to do it.

It was your turn.
New Job Descriptions in Policy

• Chair: Policy 40.

• Associate Dean: ‘The Dean may recommend the appointment of one or more Associate Deans to assist in these tasks.’ (Policy 45.2).
  • But see also Policies 70-72 and the final exam regulations.

• Associate Chair: ‘The chair may recommend the appointment of one or more associate chairs to assist in these tasks.’ (Policy 40.1).
Systemic Challenges of Academic Leadership

• Collegial governance.
  • Most of us have no formal training (like teaching).
• The pathways are dissimilar to the corporate world, or even to other public institutions.
• Faculty members whom we attempt to lead/manage may be accustomed to extreme autonomy.
• That same group may also have served in leadership roles.
• There may be times when some of your colleagues will make you feel like a lonely outsider...
Some days you may feel like this...
The Personal Upside of Academic Leadership

• The opportunity to contribute and effect change.
• Learning about the institution.
• Meeting people and creating relationships across the institution.
• Personal growth and insight.
• Job satisfaction.
• The downside (?) and ways to mitigate it – Day II.
The Oxford English Dictionary on ‘Leader’

• ‘One who leads.’
• ‘One who guides others in action or opinion; one who takes the lead in any business, enterprise, or movement; one who is “followed” by disciples or adherents; the chief of a sect or party.’
• ‘As a rendering of German Führer, Italian Duce, or Spanish Caudillo: the head of an authoritarian state.’
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Can we really ‘define’ leadership?  
Or is it better to think about identifying principles of good leadership? 
(This is what is known as a rhetorical question, as in, I already know what I want to say here.)
Creating Academic Leadership at UW

• Guiding and modeling rather than ordering and lecturing (notwithstanding the shape of today’s events...).
• Taking responsibility and being accountable.
President Harry S Truman and his famous desk sign
Creating Academic Leadership at UW

• Guiding and modeling rather than ordering and lecturing.
• Taking responsibility and being accountable.
• Distinguishing between having a vision and having an agenda.
A little Latin: *cum*- and *co*-compounds

• Collegiality (*con-lega*, ‘a partner in office’).
• Communication (*com-municare*, ‘to share out, impart’).
• Consultation (*con-sulere*, ‘to reflect, consult, consider’).*
• Confidence (*con-fidere*, ‘to have trust in’).
• Consensus (*con-sentire*, ‘to feel together, agree’).
• Cooperation (*co-operari*, ‘to work together, unite’).
• Collaboration (*col-laborare*, ‘to work together’).
• Compromise (*com-promitto*, ‘to agree to refer to arbitration’).

*Roman consuls supposedly being individuals who would do this kind of thing.*
And yes, yes, I know that command, control, compel, combat, connive, compete, conceal, conceited, and corrupt have the same derivation.

Just work with me here.
Aliens (1986):

An example of the consequences of non-consultative leadership and an ignorance of the classical languages.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tF529mmjnM*

*Rated R for coarse language and some icky violence
Aside on Consensus and the Non-Academic Model

• Tom Barrack (Republican National Convention, 20 July 2016): ‘Consensus is just the lowest common denominator.’

• ‘Consensus is Poison! Who’s With Me?’ (Keld Jensen, Forbes, 20 May 2013) –
  • ‘Consensus is a proven decision-making approach for sapping the intelligence of your entire team and creating watered-down results.’
  • However... ‘As Martin Luther King, Jr., proclaimed, “A genuine leader is not a seeker of consensus but a molder of consensus.”’

• All that said – don’t let yourself be paralyzed by persistent naysayers who offer no solution.
Creating Academic Leadership at UW

• Guiding and modeling rather than ordering and lecturing.
• Taking responsibility and being accountable.
• Distinguishing between having a vision and having an agenda.
• Getting people to want to support you and your ideas, not forcing them to.
A leader may simply be ‘one who leads’: but are ‘followers’ all it takes to distinguish a true ‘leader’?
I taught national security law. Praising dictators was an automatic F in my class.

Retired Rear Admiral John Hutson
Dean of University of New Hampshire Law School
Democratic National Convention, 27 July 2016
Greek tragedy is full of examples of the temptation to hubris inherent in leadership...
King Agamemnon treads down the rich tapestries, symbolic of his hubris (Aeschylus’ Oresteia, first produced in 458 BC)
Clytemnestra, Agamemnon’s wife, awaits him...
A more personal example of hubris, and pride going before a fall...

Alta Vista Public School, Ottawa 1961
Creating Academic Leadership at UW

• Guiding and modeling rather than ordering and lecturing.
• Taking responsibility and being accountable.
• Distinguishing between having a vision and having an agenda.
• Getting people to want to support you and your ideas, not forcing them to.
• Respecting, empowering, and being mindful of others.
• Giving recognition to the contributions of others.
Leadership or Management?
Visions or Nuts-and-Bolts?

John Everett Millais
*Joan of Arc*
1865

**Leadership**
Personnel – guiding, mentoring, providing opportunities for growth.

Resources – seeking out new resource pathways (where possible), creative restructuring, managing change anxiety.

**Management**
Personnel – mechanics of hiring, evaluation, tenure, and discipline and grievance.

Resources – understanding budgetary processes and space allocation, identifying gaps, maintaining balanced budget.
The Skill Sets of Academic Leaders

• A questioning and creative mind that seeks improvement and recognizes opportunity.
• Willingness to listen carefully and with an open mind.
• Courage to make and defend difficult decisions.
• Ability to manage conflict and seek win-win solutions where possible.
• Ability to inspire, mentor, trust, and empower others, both faculty and staff.
The Skill Sets of Academic Managers

• Excellent communication skills (and regular utilisation).
  • Especially in assessments.
• Understanding of University, Faculty, and Department policies and procedures.
• Ability to meet deadlines and stay on top of paperwork.
• Familiarity with basic budget processes.
• Willingness to ask questions and consult others on a regular basis.
• Ability to delegate and resist micro-management.
The Rules (more next time)

- Policies, procedures, and guidelines.
  - Everything from promotion and tenure to academic discipline to alcohol, smoking, pets, and firearms (not all the same policy).
- The Secretariat web page.
- The Memorandum of Agreement.
- UW’s Strategic Plan.
Subject Matter Experts
(‘SME’s’)

You don’t have to know everything – you just need to know who does.
Some highly recommended reading

Dear Committee Members
A Novel
Julie Schumacher
Orientation Day II

• October 6 (Chairs).
• October 13 (Associate Chairs and Associate Deans).
• Featuring: ‘Survival – or, how to *really* do the job’.
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