Academic Leadership at UW
Orientation:
Associate Deans, Associate Chairs
and Associate Directors

Nancy Waite
Director, Academic Leadership Program
Start of the day

• Introductions (name, title, Department/School, when you started your administrative position, something about yourself that others may not know)

• A bit about me
  • My background
  • Why did I take the Director, Academic Leadership Program

• A bit more about you and why you are here
  • Creating space for learning
  • How did you get here
Intent of Orientation

Intent IS NOT to:
- Create information overload
- Hand over the prescription for leadership success

But it IS to:
- provide the bigger picture on academic leadership broadly and here at UWaterloo
- inspire you to grow and succeed
- give you enough info to stay out of trouble!
- entice you to learn more – maybe by attending the lunches and workshops that ALP offers throughout the year?!
Overview of the Day (you are popular!)

- Principles of academic leadership
- Understand the UWaterloo working environment
- What you are accountable for
- Policies, rules, and regulations
- Network
- Where/how to get help if needed
What is Academic Leadership?

Academic leadership is both very challenging and very simple:

- it presents us with some of the hardest quandaries and most exciting opportunities of our professional lives

- yet two of the most important principles we should follow are humanity and common sense
Challenges of Academic Leadership

• Most of us have no formal training (like teaching)
• The pathways are dissimilar to the corporate world, or even to other public institutions
  • Our leadership position is temporary
  • Moving back ‘down’ the ladder can be challenging
• The collegial model of leadership
  • Faculty members whom we work with may be accustomed to extreme autonomy and have been rewarded for it
  • That same group may also have served in leadership roles
• You may feel like…
Remember there is a welcoming community of administrators who are eager to help.
The Upside of Academic Leadership

• Opportunity to contribute and effect change
• Help people
• Learn about the institution
• Meet new people and develop relationships across the institution
• Personal growth and insight
• Job satisfaction
Collegial Governance

"Collegial governance, which is sometimes referred to as 'shared' governance, connotes two concepts: one whereby various groups of people share in key decision-making processes; and the other whereby certain groups exercise primary responsibility for decision making in specific areas."


- Participatory decision making increases morale, creativity and quality of contributions
Leadership vs Management
More like, Leadership + Management.

Leadership
- guiding, mentoring,
- providing opportunities for growth
- seeking out new resource pathways, creative restructuring, managing change

Management
- mechanics of hiring,
- evaluation, tenure, and discipline and grievance
- 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 consult widely and listen 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
• Understanding of University, Faculty, and Department policies and procedures.
• Ability to meet deadlines and stay on top of paperwork.
• Familiarity with budgeting.
• Willingness to ask questions and consult others on a regular basis.
• Ability to delegate and resist micro-management.
What type of leader are you?

8 TYPES OF LEADER

VISIONARY
- Follow me!
- Ooh, wait, a shiny new thing

OPERATOR
- Sorry, our plan doesn’t specify bathroom breaks

COMPROMISER
- Maybe we should just take a vote

DRILL SERGEANT
- When I say jump, you say how high

CHEER LEADER
- You guys rock! Who wants pizza?

PARROT
- Our strategy is whoever I talked to last

WIND BAG
- Blah blah blah

COACH
- Play hardball and give it 110%
Leadership Principles (as per NW)

• Key behaviours and actions
• Adaptive leadership
• What not to sacrifice
Role model
Manage your people well

• Get to know your people (professional goals, preferred working styles, strengths, personal situations)
• Don’t forget “management by walking around”
• Remember to give responsibility and authority
• Give credit where credit is due, recognize achievement
• Treat people as you would want to be treated
• Find something good in everyone
• Let people know you care
Recruit, hire and train those better than you

Faculty Training (not!)
Remember you now have influence – use it wisely
Manage up, down and all around
NEVER be afraid to ask for help

- Process protects
- Know who to call

I WAS STARTING TO HEAD DOWN A DARK PATH

LUCKILY I DID A GOOGLE SEARCH FIRST
Seek feedback and learn from it
Take responsibility and fix mistakes
Be willing to change your mind
Understand adaptive leadership

• Times of change – political, technology, global competition... creates sense of urgency and uncertainty

• See change as an opportunity for innovation and creativity

• Weathering the storm
  • Foster adaptation
  • Embrace disequilibrium
  • Generate leadership
Create a succession plan!

She never thought of herself as a leader

until she slowly

became one.
Look after yourself

• Be both optimistic and realistic
• Find sanctuaries
• Reach out to confidants
• Bring more of your emotional self to the workplace
• Don’t lose yourself in the role
"Leave things better than you found them."

~Everett Wiley Wilson
Thank you.

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