

# CRA New Chairs Workshop

Snowbird, UT  
July 2014

Organizers: Eric Grimson & Susan Davidson

# Nuts & Bolts of Managing a Department

Anne Condon, UBC

Greg Hager, Johns Hopkins

Dan Lopresti, Lehigh

# Dept Nuts and Bolts | Anne Condon UBC

## Plan for:

- Consistency, transparency: teaching assignments, retirement planning (use associate heads/exec to air precedent-setting requests)
- Feedback: e.g., annual meetings to work through post-tenure slump, poor teaching performance
- Delegation: associate heads & senior staff, e.g., to handle external awards, grant mentoring, grad student issues, ... plus nurture future chairs
- Assessment and improvement of departmental processes
- Respectful dialogue

# Dealing with the Nuts Without Driving Yourself There

Greg Hager, JHU

- Focus on learning early on
  - People (faculty, staff, leadership)
  - Processes and policy
- Identify clear principles and boundaries
- Act with clear objectives
  - Are you trying solve a problem or start something new?
  - Make your role clear and stick to it
  - Choose between objectives and mechanisms



# My "Nuts and Bolts"

## Dan Lopresti

- Be both collegial and a leader (and, yes, it's okay to delegate).
- Ask lots of questions.
- Give visibility to outcomes that are the result of good behavior.
- Find opportunities to promote diversity and inclusion.
- Value other people's time.
- Developing talent (mentoring) is part of the job.
- Treat the staff with respect.
- Address problems as soon as you become aware of them.
- Take legal issues (discrimination / harassment claims) seriously.
- Be empathetic yet dispassionate.

# Dealing with Stakeholders

Ellen Zegura, Georgia Tech

Julia Hirschberg, Columbia

Rob Rutenbar, Illinois

# Dealing with Stakeholders

## Ellen Zegura

- “Department chair is the most difficult job in academia.” Why? because you are directly answerable to the most diverse stakeholders (faculty, staff, students, upper admin)
- About upper administration
  - Manage up. Make your boss successful.
- About faculty
  - Listen. Coach. Don't do it all yourself. Everyone needs/wants praise (even your boss).
- About peers
  - Your new best friends. Competitors and collaborators.

# Care and Feeding of Your Stakeholders

## Julia Hirschberg

- Step 1: Who are yours? Upper admin, dean, faculty, staff, other chairs, alumni (board of visitors), students, ??
- Step 2: How do you connect with them?
- Step 3: How do you prioritize their demands?
- Step 4: How much "tending" can be delegated?
- Step 5: How can you maintain your own research program in all of this?



# Stakeholders, Stakeholders, Everywhere...

Rob Rutenbar

## Villa El Salvadore, Peru Managing...



- Clarity of intent: **concision**
- Don't whine: persuade w/ **data**
- "Make your boss(es) look good"



- Play nice: graceful **co-opetition**
- (Some whining ok: don't **overdo**)
- Make your organization look **good**



- Clarity of intent: **consistency**
- Never whine: **positivity**
- Execution: Deliver as **promised**

# Strategic Thinking

Kevin Bowyer, Notre Dame

Hank Levy, Washington

Frank Pfenning, CMU



Faculty	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Ajay	3-year			P&T			
Betty		P&T					Full
Chaoli				retire elig			
Doug		sabbatical					
Ellen	P&T					Full	
Fritz			sabbatical				



Kevin Bowyer – Snowbird New Chairs Panel, July 20 2014

# Strategic Thinking

## Hank Levy



- Why are you chair?
  - If you're here because "it's your turn," then just resign today!
- What will be your legacy?
  - You need to have something you want to accomplish
  - What will have the biggest impact on your department?
    - Update the curriculum?
    - Teach more students?
    - Increase Diversity?
    - Build a new Building?
    - Create a new research center?
    - Grow your faculty?
    - Increase research or institutional funding?
    - Build industrial interactions?
- What resources and constituents will you need?
  - Industrial support?
  - Money?
  - Dean/Provost support?
  - Money?
  - Faculty buy-in?
  - Money?
- How do you get there?
  - What approaches have the biggest bang for the buck?
  - How long will it take to get where you want to go?
  - How do you create the political environment for change?
  - How can you lead change without doing all the work?
- How do you avoid distraction?
  - Keep focused on what's important to you!
  - Why are you chair?

# Strategic Planning as a Balancing Act: Frank Pfenning

- Faculty: the most permanent asset
  - Concentration ↔ coverage
  - Junior ↔ senior
  - Research ↔ teaching
  - Revolution ↔ evolution
- Curriculum and education
  - Faculty goals ↔ student goals
  - Fundamental skills ↔ vocational knowledge
  - Majors ↔ non-majors
  - Trends ↔ fads

Topics for breakouts

# Group Problems

## Organization

1. Groups of 4-5 people
2. Introduce yourselves
3. Person whose birthday is next is *Scribe*
4. Clockwise from Scribe are *Facilitator, Presenter*
  - Scribe – Write ideas down, make up .ppt slides
  - Facilitator – Keep group on task
  - Presenter – Tell us group's ideas
5. 25 minutes brainstorming
6. 4 minutes to present

## Your Charge

- Suggest ways to deal with your assigned scenario
  - May be ambiguous, underspecified, open-ended
- Define the problem
- State the issues
- Identify guiding principles
- Suggest approaches
- Consider possible assistance

The Cut



# Problem

The Dean has been told to cut the school budget by 10%. She in turn has told all department chairs to propose 10% cuts in their budgets by a week from today.

# The Distant Satellite

# Problem

The University Trustees identify a need for a satellite campus 100 miles away to offer graduate certificates in Security, Crypto, and Forensics. None of your faculty wants to teach there.

# Faculty Diversity

# Problem

You have only one female out of 25 total tenured/tenure-track faculty members. The search committee has recommended against making offers to either of the female candidates you interviewed this year.

# The Feud - version 1

# Problem

A bitter feud has arisen between 2 faculty members, one a highly respected senior professor and the other an untenured rising star.

# The Funding Model



# Problem

The Provost has developed a new funding model whereby colleges will be funded based on the total number of student credit hours taught. You learn that another college plans to stop requiring a CS service course and instead offer its own version. Fully  $\frac{1}{3}$  of your student credit hours are wrapped up in this course.

# The Complaint

# Problem

The CS Grad Student Council president and vice-president complain that the graduate core curriculum is outdated, uninteresting, and leaves students ill-prepared for Qualifying Exams.

The Grad Committee chair blames today's "complacent and self-indulgent" students.

Cheating

# Problem

Cheating has become an issue, in particular in your Master's courses. Junior faculty are confused about the best way of dealing with it, and are concerned about the amount of time it takes to handle these cases.

# Course Explosion

# Problem

Course enrollments are exploding, not only at the introductory programming level course but at the upper level courses (e.g. algorithms). The Dean is unable to provide new TT faculty lines, and finding TAs for upper level courses is problematic. It is also hard to find large enough classrooms in which to teach. How do you balance access to classes within these constraints?

Switching advisors



# Problem

A PhD student has been working productively with an advisor for several years. However, they do not like the working relationship and want to switch to another advisor. The student has not yet told the original advisor, who is untenured and will not want to lose the student, and comes to you for help/advice.

# The Discussion

# Problem

A tenured faculty member has become unproductive, and is a long way from retirement. They do not bring in grants or write scholarly papers; they do, however, blog on topics of interest to the press and some sectors of industry. Their teaching is fine, but since they are on the road a lot their access outside of class is limited.

The Feud - version 2

# Problem

A graduate student and their supervisor both want to start a company based on the student's thesis work. The student wants to start their own company, the professor is insisting that the student must join forces with them.

.

The Feud - version 3

# Problem

A faculty member coming up for tenure within a year has a great graduate student about to hit the job market. They are ready to publish key results from the thesis. The professor insists that he should be first author; the graduate student fears that this will undercut her chances for a tenure-track position at a strong institution, and insists that this is primarily her work.

Thank you  
&  
Good luck!