(Re)Envisioning the Role of Department Chair
Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

• Discuss nuances between department chair responsibilities (past versus present)
• Identify political pressures impacting higher education administrators
• Apply best practices for a successful career in higher education administration
The Chair Selection: Musical Chairs
The Madness Begins...
Perception & Role of Department Chair

“The role of department chairperson is not well-defined…[and] is perceived as more of a burden than an honor.” (Sirkis, 2011, p. 46)

Sirkis (2011) asserts:

- Selecting a chair is like playing “musical chairs”
- Newly appointed chairs are unaware of extensive responsibilities
- Community college chairs receive little or no training at all (a “sink or swim” working environment”)
Did you know?

- 80% of strategic decisions are made at the department level.
- The work of the department chair goes far beyond the purview of faculty responsibilities…chairs must mediate issues between:
  - Departmental affairs
  - Academic affairs
  - Student affairs
  - External communications
  - Budgetary affairs
  - Office management
  - Personal professional performance
“Chairs are both bridge and buffer between the academic department and the college’s administration” (Sirkis, p.49)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Role</th>
<th>Chair Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Managerial/Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>Mediator/Counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committees</td>
<td>Budget Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Advisor/Recruiter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accreditation/Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building External Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paradox: Organizational Models

Department Chair
- Faculty/Program Directors or Coordinators
- Budget
- Accreditation
- Recruiting
- Scheduling
- Enrollment Mgmt.
- Performance Evaluations

Academic Dean
- Faculty/Program Directors or Coordinators
- Budget
- Accreditation
- Recruiting
- Scheduling
- Enrollment Mgmt.
- Performance Evaluations
Trends in Higher Education
Top 6 Best Practices: Navigating the Waters

Category 1
• Professional Mentorships
• Build Relationships

Category 2
• Faculty Professional Development
• Celebrate Faculty/Staff

Category 3
• Attend Leadership Programs/Institutes
• Invest in yourself!
Contact Us

Dr. Larry Johnson, Jr.
Campus Provost, Forest-Park
St. Louis Community College
ljohnson756@stlcc.edu

Susan Wright
Dean, School of Business & Computer Information Systems
Georgia Piedmont Technical College
wrights@gptc.edu

Q&A

Thank You