

Developing as a Department Chair: Cultivating an Academic Leadership Mindset



An Associated Colleges of the South Virtual Workshop
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Lisa Jasinski (Trinity) | Duane Coltharp (Trinity)
Hilton Kelly (Davidson) | Jana Mathews (Rollins)

Seeing Yourself as an Academic Leader

Understanding the Lay of the Land

Things you'll want to know before you act

What's the culture of the department?

What matters to people? What motivates them (individually and collectively)?

What do others expect from me?

Understanding the Lay of the Land

Things you'll want to know before you act

Some ways to get the lay of the land:

- Set time aside from “the work” to attend to these questions
 - Individual meetings with faculty colleagues and senior administrators
 - A conversation with the outgoing chair
 - Group meetings with stakeholders
 - Personal reflection
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Nuts and Bolts

Knowing how to do what you have to do (policies, processes, and habits)

How do I?...

- Budget
- Faculty Evaluation
- Course Schedules
- Faculty Searches
- Promotion and Tenure

The fuzzier things...

- Time and email management
 - Protect time for teaching and research
 - When to act, when not to act, when to consult with others
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Nuts and Bolts

Knowing how to do what you have to do (policies, processes, and habits)

People who are “in the know” to help you...

- Experienced chairs
 - New chairs
 - Your administrative assistant
 - Campus experts (e.g., DEI leaders, budget professionals, HR)
 - Policy Handbooks / Websites
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People Skills

*Listener, Cajoler, Referee,
Supervisor, Motivator, Partner,
Advocate, Negotiator, Colleague*

Some of the people skills that chairs exercise, include:

- Managing conflict
 - Negotiating personalities
 - Advocating for “your people”
 - Handling formal complaints
 - Supervising staff
 - Evaluating your peers
 - Mentoring and encouraging
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People Skills

*Listener, Cajoler, Referee,
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Resources to consult...

- Personal experience
 - Actual experts and management literature
 - Human Resources professionals
 - Confidential confidants and sounding boards
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Taking the Best of the Past and Making the Future Better

Balancing continuity and change

Position yourself to identify the policies, practices, and traditions that best serve your department right now:

*What will you **keep** doing?*

*What will you **stop** doing?*

*What will you **start** doing?*

Taking the Best of the Past and Making the Future Better

Balancing continuity and change

Some questions to guide your thinking:

- *What are our strengths as a department? What are the shared values we should never compromise?*
- *How do we make decisions (consensus, consent, majority rules, chair decides)?*
- *How do we allocate resources (e.g., travel, staff support)?*
- *Are we offering the right mix of classes? Do we need to make changes in what or how we teach? How diverse are the topics/authors we teach?*
- *What have we learned from the Covid experiment that we want to carry forward?*
- *How do we interact with students, majors, and alumni as a department?*
- *Is there any low-hanging fruit? What do we collectively agree isn't working?*

Personal Stock Taking

Discussing and Debriefing the Case Studies

Small Groups

Group 1 (Case Study 1)

Dania (Trinity)

Lamia (BSC)

Caroline (Davidson)

Matthew (Richmond)

Eric (Rollins)

Group 2 (Case Study 1)

Megan (BSC)

Cabral (Trinity)

Randy (Davidson)

Betsy (Sewanee)

Group 3 (Case Study 1)

Ben (Trinity)

Melissa (Centre)

Kenye (Davidson)

Mark (BSC)

Jessica (Sewanee)

Group 4 (Case Study 2)

Tiffany (BSC)

Tim (Davidson)

Antonia (JSCU)

Aaron (Trinity)

Group 5 (Case Study 2)

Elise (Sewanee)

Jeremy (BSC)

Amy (Adrian)

MacKenzie Moon (Rollins)

Jie (Trinity)

Discussing and Debriefing the Case Studies

Winding Down and Next Steps

Reconnecting on October 22 at 4 pm East / 3 pm Central Happy Hour / Non-Compulsory / Agenda-Lite

Come prepared to:

1. Share a **success** you have had as a chair
2. Ask a **question** or raise a topic to discuss with this group

Building an ACS Resource Repository

After today's session, we'll share a Google Folder with all participants. We will pre-populate some items from today's workshop (and our campuses) and invite you to add:

- Materials from your campus (manuals, resources)
- Helpful articles