“Expectations for Administrators and their Offices”

Academic Leadership Forum

November 9, 2015

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Basic Tenets

- The decisions that we make become (like it or not) our legacy; we lead in a context and a time and make the best decisions we can in that context and time
- Change is a constant; a little flexibility can go a long way
- Lead by example
- The academy runs on competing interests; no need to reconcile them; expect them and make win-win situations out of them
- Time is not a friend
Basic Tenets (continued)

Never...

– Lose site of the larger picture while attending to details
– Spend what you do not have-- an implied mandate
– Blindside your dean/vice president-- no quotas on giving a “heads-up”
– Bring your problems to the table without bringing solutions
– “Settle” where matters of quality/standards are concerned-- e.g., hiring, promotion and tenure, program review

Expectations of the Office

– Operate efficiently/effectively within our functional responsibilities; each office contributes to a greater whole
– Serve as a portal to the broader campus, college, University
– Navigate our complex University seamlessly
– Communicate timely information to internal and external communities
– Collaborate/partner with other offices across campus, regionally, university-wide
Expectations for Administrators

Academic administration requires...
– Serving multiple constituents
– Setting priorities and sticking to them; aligning budget planning and practices accordingly
– Managing risk and mitigating unintended consequences

Informed and timely decision-making requires...
– Engaging in mutual problem solving
– Owning the final decision
– Communicating decisions and reasons for them, including delivering bad news

Expectations for Administrators (continued)

– Recruit/retain the highest quality possible; support your faculty, staff and students to maximize their performance and realize their potential

– Listen, empathize and demonstrate a sense of urgency in response to the concerns of others

– Demand much (of others and yourself) to
  • advance quality in teaching, research and service
  • steward the Penn State brand/name
Leadership requires...

- Projecting internal competitive drive externally to work for the good of others; taking pleasure in the accomplishments of others
- Engaging and investing personal time
- Committing to and trusting in others-- which can and will make us vulnerable
- Realizing an occasional diet of public victories; a steady diet of quiet victories; and taking pleasure in them.

Wishing you countless victories to relish!

Questions? Comments?