GENERAL PRINCIPLES

By education and experience, most faculty members have developed some level of leadership skills that benefit the institution and its primary missions in teaching, research and service. Promotion of the professional goals and objectives of the faculty is important at all stages of a career and at all faculty ranks. Further enhancement of leadership skills, effective collaborative team-based efforts, and opportunities to make important departmental and college decisions in the long run benefits the institution as well as the individual faculty member.

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Importance of leadership:

- As a faculty member acquires experience, opportunities to pursue leadership roles within the college and department must emerge

- Acquiring leadership skills for advancing faculty can be an important retention issue and critical for faculty perception of individual value and empowerment

- Leadership and management skills and abilities are critical to the success of a chair, dean or other senior administrator

- The university and college benefits from developing its own leadership pipeline

Position faculty for advancement and leadership:

- Annually review and discuss readjustment of teaching and service loads to afford faculty members more opportunities to guide program development within the department and college

- Actively encourage faculty to apply for leadership positions within the institution

- Actively encourage faculty to apply for leadership positions within their own discipline (chair academic symposia or assume leadership roles in professional and/or academic associations)

- Encourage and support faculty enrollment in academic leadership programs.

- Nominate faculty to serve on university-wide committees, including those that develop policies governing teaching, research and practice

- Treat all faculty members equitably in assigning leadership positions; rotate frequently unless disadvantageous to program continuity

- Be especially cognizant of the assignments of women faculty so that they are not overwhelmed by service assignments that do not advance their career goals

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Benefits and Characteristics of Teams

- Multidisciplinary programs in teaching and research are currently expanding, requiring faculty with team-based skills

- Unified teams can foster creativity, connection and motivation

- Effective teams play a vital role in solving complex problems

- Effective teams require: diversity of experience, expertise to solve complex problems, trust that each member contributes valuable talents and knowledge, commitment to success, and dedication to effective conflict resolution should the need arise.

- Team leaders must evoke confidence in their ability to guide the group, keep individuals focused on task, and draw out the talents and contributions of individual team members while maintaining group cohesion

Encourage team building:

- Form research and/or teaching subgroups to encourage collaboration and networking; make the topical areas plastic to encourage innovation and varied membership

- Foster interactions among faculty who have diverse experiences and methods of teaching and research that might enrich and expand one another's work

  o Create opportunities for professional and social interactions across and within departments

  o Aid faculty in taking advantage of internal and external funding opportunities that require collaborative approaches

  o Use approaches designed to increase trust and transparency within a team

- Foster open, respectful and non-judgmental communication among all ranks of faculty

- Explore practices to resolve team conflict utilizing constructive feedback and respectful dialogue

COLLEGIALITY AND COMMUNITY

A congenial academic environment matters:

- A sense of community within a department is a key component of faculty satisfaction and retention (Trower and Gallagher, 2008)[1]

- Hostility and rudeness by one or more faculty members within a department detracts from faculty satisfaction at work (Fine and Sheridan, 2008)[2] The target of rude behavior should be supported by the rest of the faculty.

- An organization's climate is reflected in its structures, policies and practices; the demographics of its members and leaders; and the quality of personal interactions (Fine and Sheridan, 2008[3])

- A positive, supportive academic milieu provides a model for students to be successful in their future occupational fields

Promote Collegiality:

- Create a welcoming environment by personally introducing new faculty and staff to department members

- Make an effort to reach out to new colleagues by visiting their offices or inviting them to informal lunch/coffee gatherings

- Create a communal space to encourage informal interaction and exchange, such as a coffee room or lounge

- Assist faculty in establishing visibility by forming a network of senior colleagues in their field who have achieved professional prominence and are committed to supporting and facilitating the advancement of others in the field. Assist early career faculty in hosting senior professionals in their field for department seminars.

- Hold regular departmental meetings and ensure that faculty voice their opinions on major policy issues

- Encourage respect for varied research methodologies, interdisciplinary research, and mainstream and 'non-mainstream' research

- Make an effort to include faculty members with partial or irregular appointments in making departmental decisions that are relevant to their expertise and interests

- Recognize and value the work of departmental members. Publically recognize and praise faculty, staff and students who perform work on behalf of the department

- Ensure that the isolation and alienation that many women and minority faculty members experiences is not mistaken or criticized as "not being collegial" or not being a team player", particularly when they are evaluated for tenure by departmental colleagues. Encourage cross-disciplinary informal relationships to build a sense of community among under-represented groups

- If faculty, as a group, appear isolated, unusually quiet or abrasive, it may signal that lack of collegiality within the department or center is a problem and needs attention

- If individual faculty appear isolated, unusually quiet or abrasive, it may signal that lack of collegiality is a problem and needs attention. Encourage contact with helping resources such as UNL's Employee Assistance Program

- Establish a process or mechanism by which senior faculty members that are most often tapped as team leaders may seek advice and guidance as needed in fulfilling that role

Recognize and resolve conflicts at the earliest opportunity:

- Waiting until it "gets that bad" is rarely an effective strategy to address interpersonal conflicts. The most useful tool in conflict resolution is listening, ensuring that all parties are heard.

- If possible, encourage those in conflict to attempt to talk directly with each other. In some cases an impartial trusted third party may help informally guide the discussion

- Establish and publicize methods to resolve conflicts within the department among faculty, staff and /or students

- Listen respectfully to complaints and concerns about treatment or policies in the department. If the complaint regards possible harassment or other illegal behavior, be familiar with UNL policies and procedures on unlawful discrimination, including sexual and other prohibited harassment.

[see: http: www.unl.edu/equity/NonDiscrimination.htm]

- Encourage the complainant to consider available informal or formal options. Be aware of the legal responsibility of the chair or administrator to act promptly in cases of harassment or discrimination.

- Maintain confidentiality to protect those involved

[1] Trower, C. and Gallagher, A. (2008). *Why collegiality matters.* Chronicle of Higher Education 55(11): A50-A51.

[2] Fine, E. and Sheridan, J.(2008) *Enhancing Department Climate: A Guide for Department Chairs.* Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Available for download at http://wiseli/engr.wisc.edu/subject.php

[3] Fine, E. and Sheridan, J. (2008) Enhancing Department Climate; A Guide for Department Chairs. Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison. Available for download at http://wiseli/engr.wisc.edu/subject.php