

Full Length Research Paper

Building Leadership from Within the Ranks: Leadership Fellow Initiative

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Creative approaches in the field of leadership often yield positive results. This article highlights an example of how out of the box thinking with regard to building a strong leadership foundation in the area of higher education benefits a community of learners. Within the field of education and human services, a new administrator facilitates innovative approaches to provide opportunities of empowerment for team members. The sustainable and abundant positive results are outlined in detail.

Keywords: higher education, mentorship, leadership, leadership fellow

Introduction

“Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.”

Warren G. Bennis

Nestled in the northern edge of mid-Michigan’s lower peninsula stands one of Michigan’s lesser known but great universities: Central Michigan University (CMU). Michigan is renowned for its excellent universities, particularly its public flagship institution—the University of Michigan—and the first land grant college—Michigan State University. However, CMU, founded in 1892 as a normal school, holds a long, proud tradition of educating outstanding teachers. Today, CMU houses eight colleges that offer over 200 degree programs at the Bachelor’s, Master’s, Specialist’s and Doctoral levels, and a new medical college. The former normal school has morphed into a doctoral research university. CMU remains true to its original mission, and invests heavily in the quality of its students, faculty, and facilities, and because of this, one college is making great gains, the College of Education and Human Services.

In this article, the authors examine the leadership development program initiated by the new Dean of the College of Education and Human Services at CMU wherein she mentors one tenured faculty member each year as a leadership fellow. They discuss the leadership fellow initiative within the context of the educational leadership and mentoring literature, explains the conception of and motivation for the leadership fellow position,

explicates its goals, and details the experiences of the first two fellows who participated in the program.

Leadership Literature

Leadership is a process wherein leaders influence others through persuasion and inducements to follow them. To be successful, leaders offer a clear vision of the goals of the organization, espouse a set of core values to support the vision to guide the organization’s choices and actions, provide a vision and implement a plan to make things happen (Locke, 2003). Successful leaders capitalize on their social influence within their organization to win supporters, build coalitions, stir emotions, negotiate deals, and mend fences (Brehm & Kassin, 1996; Collins, Chrisler, & Quina, 1998).

Generative leadership conceptualizes leadership as a collaborative effort in which leaders empower others to accomplish their goals. In it, leaders focus on establishing caring relationships with others in order to enhance their protégé’s self-esteem and leadership capabilities (Sagaria, 1988). This type of leadership can be realized through mentoring relationships. This is also consistent with feminist leadership styles, which typically contain a strong ethic of caring and connection and use voice and influence to inspire others to work towards common goals or the mission of the organization (Colflesh, 2000; Isaac, 2009).

Mentorship

Although many formal faculty mentorship programs exist, mentorship for leadership positions in academe is typically conducted in an informal manner (Moore, 1982). In mentoring relationships, experienced higher education administrators serve as mentors who guide and support less experienced administrators or faculty members (aka mentees) by providing career and psychosocial support (Cullen & Luna, 1993). Career functions typically include the practical aspects of doing the work and learning the culture of the organization, so mentees can advance within the organization while psychosocial support focuses on the individual efficacy and sense of identity of mentees (Kram, 1988). Mentors support mentees' learning of new skills by providing feedback and by offering opportunities for career development through greater involvement within the academic community (Cullen & Luna, 1993; Hill & Ragland, 1995; Moore, 1982).

Mentoring is particularly important for the development of women leaders. Until recent decades, there were few women in influential positions within institutions of higher education (Cullen & Luna, 1993; Earnst, 1982; Sagaria, 1988), and often women had not actively planned their careers (Hill & Ragland, 1995). Even today, although women earn over 50 percent of the Ph.D.s awarded in the U.S., they represent only 38 percent of all college faculty and only 33 percent at the more prestigious doctoral granting institutions (Mason, 2011). At Central Michigan University, the institution where the authors of this article work, 28.9 percent of full professors are female (Razenberger, 2014), and there are only three females out of the eight academic deans who lead the colleges on campus.

Many barriers to female advancement persist. Common barriers against female educational leaders include historical myths expressed as stereotypical and negative images of women and cultural expectations. These myths and images have a limiting impact on women's access to leadership roles. Males dominate key leadership positions. Women lack knowledge of male ways of being and their political savvy. This can promote weaker career positioning, limit their mentoring opportunities, stymie their mobility, and accelerate bias against women (Hill & Ragland, 1995). Chrisler, Herr, and Murstein (1998) explain that "lingering stereotypes that portray men as leaders and women as followers still affect women's opportunities to become faculty leaders ..." (p. 197).

Despite these challenges, mentoring remains essential because where present, it has made a difference in the careers of women leaders. Some researchers have noted that same gender mentoring can be particularly impactful (Cullen & Luna 1993; Earnst, 1982; Kelly & Marin, 1998).

Mentoring provides support as faculty members transition into administrative roles, such as department chairpersons, associate deans, or deans. These transitions can be difficult because successful administrators utilize different skills from those skills employed by successful faculty members. Successful professors engage in extensive research activities, make quick decisions about student issues, passionately pursue causes of

interest and service, speak to limited audiences such as students and colleagues, and have the ability to limit their exposure to individuals with whom they prefer to work. Perlutter (2009) asserts that when moving from professor to dean a faculty member must navigate complex and often-time consuming organizational protocols in decision-making, develop the ability to work with a broad range of individuals, and learn to target their messages to a variety of audiences. They also begin to limit their research agendas, Deans as chief executive offices display three domains of competence to perform successfully: "analytical competence, to recognize and formulate problems to be worked on; interpersonal competence, to build and maintain various kinds of relationships and groups; and emotional competence, to handle the emotional demands of the managerial role itself" (Schein, 1985, p. 171, as cited in Wolverson, et al., 2001, p. 101). Moreover, new deans are typically underprepared to handle the complex challenges of their roles. These roles involve managing limited financial resources, dealing with external accountability pressures, disciplining ineffective faculty, and an understanding the changing educational environment that requires constant updating of curricula and programs and an integration of technology in order to meet the demands of the job market and the needs of the students (Wolverson, et al., 2001).

Senior leadership within institutions of higher learning should play a crucial role in supporting the leadership development of faculty. Bennet and Shayner (1988) argue that the most important thing senior leaders can do is to develop a learning environment on campuses where leadership development can take place as individuals question, form values, and develop intellectual strengths. This will provide faculty members with the opportunity to use their knowledge to make foundational decisions, form commitments, and learn to trust their own judgments. Next, senior administrators must articulate and follow their institutional vision and mission. They set the example for effective leadership; this example goes across and beyond the boundaries of campus. Finally, when promoting female leadership, effective leaders promote a culture that rewards risk-taking, provides structured learning experiences, and appoints women to significant visible roles throughout the institution. Designating women for committees and assigning them special roles and opportunities helps them to develop leadership skills and broadens their exposure to critical issues influencing the campus at large (Earnst, 1982). Campus committee work provides faculty members with insight into institutional operations from a legal, fiscal, and policy standpoint. This provides faculty members with experience completing large-scale group tasks that require working with a variety of people and producing reports. They also promote networking opportunities (Chrisler, Herr, & Murstein, 1998).

In addition, senior leadership should model mentoring and explicitly discuss its importance in establishing institutional norms (Cullen & Luna, 1993).

Early mid-career mentoring is particularly important because tenured professors have typically established their competence in their profession and developed their academic identity. They often use this time to reassess, reflect and expand career paths. Support at this stage promotes a faculty member's sense of well-being and continued professional growth (Kram, 1988). Overall, women benefit from workplace cultures that consider "individual fit" over organizational fit (Cullen & Luna, 1993).

The New Dean's Perspective: An Idea is Born and a Program Begins

In the summer of 2012, I arrived to begin my post as the new Dean for the College of Education and Human Services at Central Michigan University. After meeting with the Provost, other deans, senior leaders and the department chairs in my college, I learned about an assumption on campus that there was a leadership vacuum in my college.

I knew this was untrue, for during my first few weeks at CMU I had met with many individuals from my college. I was impressed. What I gleaned from these many meetings and conversations was this: there were actually many faculty and professional staff members who were willing to serve in leadership roles; indeed, they were already doing so. What I also observed was the past three years had taken a leadership toll. Because of the sudden death of the permanent Dean, the interim status of the former Dean and the three years of "grieving" and "waiting" for the next Dean to be selected, many things were put on hold within the College until the next permanent Dean arrived. As a result, that there had been very little investment in faculty, staff and leadership development. There were no programs offered. Investment in leadership development and enhancement both by internal means and external trainings were limited. So, there was no vacuum of willing individuals, but instead, a dearth of support, resources, and training.

So, as a new Dean I asked, why not create a college Dean's Office Leadership Fellow program? This program might promote the study and advancement of individuals who could refine leadership with their own particular focus, a focus that might enhance their programs, departments, the college or CMU in general. I did not want management or administration to be the only focus. What I thought was this... there are so many ways to be a leader, faculty could study administration for sure, but they could also focus on innovative program development, bolstering scholarly recognition, promoting social justice, refining curriculum and enhancing programming, entering the national leadership arena even more, and jumpstarting external funding development. I saw many faculty members who were leaders over my career in the academy. And as I look back, I was a leader as a faculty member and at that time I had no interest in higher education administration, yet I brought back richness to my department, programs and students at my former universities and I helped advance the reputation of my universities. So I thought with resources to support the efforts of our college, faculty who are emerging

leaders in this college could craft something that would be very successful and enhance our college reputation across the campus and nationwide.

After discussing this with the financial officer of my college (to secure funding) and the provost (to secure support), we developed the first Leadership Fellow program in summer of 2012. So far, we have interned two fellows and as a result, a new department chair was born, and a new Scholarship Support Office is being launched... a very good investment, indeed. We have now installed two new fellows for the next academic year.

Overall, there are costs, but the investments have not been exorbitant. The Dean's office provides funding for a course release for half time for two consecutive semesters. We invest in materials, books, supplies and graduate assistantship help. We also target intensive trainings that fellows attend (American Council on Education, Harvard, HERS, etc.) and fund those. These are investments in the future of our college and CMU. Thus far, we have leaders who have connected across the CMU campus, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the nation. Leaders have made multiple local, university, regional and national presentations related to our leadership projects. More importantly, our college is valuing leadership in new ways and "leadership" is part of our everyday vocabulary, thinking and planning. We are seeing a culture shift. I think the message is clear: College leadership invests in faculty and staff leadership development. And as a result we expect thought and action leaders to emerge and mentor others along this path.

An Inaugural Fellow Steps Forth: Opportunity Knocks in Year One

There was a buzz in my office that our newly hired Dean of Education and Human Services wanted to see me. I have to admit, I was a little nervous at the thought. She just got here... why does she need to talk to me? What did I do?

I was pleasantly surprised when I was greeted, "So what would you think about being our inaugural Leadership Fellow starting in the fall?" our new Dean asked. I wasn't able to hide my thoughts of confusion and panic as I replied politely, "What is that?"

Although honored by her question, I thought clearly this new leader has been misinformed! She was asking me to become a leader? My fears were quickly calmed as I learned the details of her vision for this new and exciting opportunity. Throughout that conversation, we discussed the importance of building leadership capacity within academic environments. Highlights of this exchange included the following: (a) Current challenges faced with regard to building leadership capacity; (b) Potential within our environments to create new knowledge and opportunities through the fellowship; (c) Components of a successful fellow opportunity and goal setting; (d) Value of creative thinking and unique approaches to leadership development; and (e) Outcomes and necessary resources for the Leadership Fellow Program.

As we walked through the possibilities of this opportunity and determined our course of action, I looked ahead to this year-long adventure. The agreed upon set of goals included the following tasks: (a) Develop a leadership network of support for faculty and staff (related to teaching/advising, scholarship, and service); (b) Examine the leadership needs of faculty and staff members; (c) Seek out and highlights exemplary leadership efforts within the college with regard to service, teaching, scholarship; (d) Identify opportunities to support faculty and staff in multiple areas of leadership at program, departmental, college, university and professional levels; (e) Support mentorship efforts of junior (pre-tenure) faculty members; (f) Support mentorship efforts of staff and teaching faculty members; (g) Bridge and communicate leadership development within the college and university, as well as within state, national, and international endeavors; (h) Participate in college-wide meetings and events while under the mentorship of existing leaders; (i) Assist with and develops sustainable programs related to leadership initiatives; (j) Work in concert with current leadership regarding college leadership endeavors; (k) Assist with encouraging, promoting, screening and recommending future Leadership Fellows; (l) Identify, plan, develop and evaluate progress of personal leadership goals; (m) Collaborate with leaders, faculty and staff on scholarship related to leadership; and (n) Recommend leadership initiatives for future strategic planning.

Soon the adventure began. As the inaugural Leadership Fellow, I was fortunate to have the unique opportunity to gain insight regarding many of the tasks facing leaders. These evolved into unique experiences in the areas of task force and committee involvement, building processes and infrastructure for sustainable efforts within the college, professional development, building of partnerships, and support of Dean's office initiatives. For example, attendance at regular meetings of the Dean's Leadership Council where personnel, budgetary, strategic planning, and student issues were discussed on a regular basis were exceptional learning opportunities. In addition, having active roles in various task forces, committees, and college wide initiatives have provided new perspectives and a more broad view of issues facing our college's students, staff, and faculty, and the university in its entirety.

Task Force and Committee Involvement

Increased involvement with various college task forces as well as university and college committee work opened new opportunities for exchanges and collaboration across the campus and college. I was able to examine issues and operations in a new light as various discussions centered on initiatives to optimally support CMU students and efficiently reach a multitude of goals.

For example, three college task forces including the Scholarship Support Task Force, Human Services Task Force, and Clinical Partnership and Practice Committee were convened during my position as Leadership Fellow. These three focused initiatives addressed a variety of topics – all

leading to one result centered on the best preparation of our students, faculty, and staff for ideal education and employment supports. The Scholarship Support Task Force brought together individuals to address the growing needs of faculty as they strive to conduct research within their disciplines. The Human Services Task Force was comprised of representatives of each of the college's Human Services programs such as Apparel Merchandising and Design, Child Development, Counseling, Dietetics, Early Childhood Development and Learning, Family Studies, Gerontology, Interior Design, Interdisciplinary Leadership, Nutrition, Outdoor and Environmental Recreation, Recreation and Event Management, and Therapeutic Recreation. These representatives worked together to conduct a Human Services Summit to gather vital data about the changing human services fields as we prepare to educate learners in the year 2023. Finally, the Clinical Partnership and Practice Committee is made up of representatives that are involved with extensive field experiences in teacher education coursework. Leaders in the field such as teachers, clinicians, faculty, staff, and students work together within this group to determine optimal relationships, agreements, and program components of top-notch clinical experiences.

Involvement with several committees within the college also resulted in extensive exchanges and increase of knowledge level and awareness. As a participant in the Dean's Advisory Council, I was able to interact with department chairpersons and program directors as we engaged in strategic planning and decision-making. Other committees such as the college Academic Technologies Group, Nash Family Professional Development Endowment Committee, Website Design Committee, and the Associate Dean Search Committee combined to provide a well-rounded view of the not only the college resources, but initiatives to best meet the needs of our existing student, faculty, and staff population.

Other committee work at the University level due to my position as the Leadership Fellow included a place at the table in committee work such as CMU Enrollment Management and Recruitment subcommittee, Summer Enrollment, Leadership Council, and Leadership Caucus. Each of these committees was charged with university wide initiatives such as determining issues related to a decline in summer enrollment, factors impacting the interdisciplinary leadership programs, and optimal recruitment and outreach opportunities throughout the state of Michigan and beyond.

Building Sustainable Efforts

One of the conversations with our new Dean revolved around building sustainable efforts within that would positively highlight and support the activities and needs of the students, faculty, and staff. As the inaugural Leadership Fellow, I was given the unique opportunity to help shape these efforts with the goal of an infrastructure that would be sustainable throughout time, while simultaneously being flexible enough to remain resilient with the changing goals and needs within the college. Several different projects were a result of the initial

planning. Many of them remain today, and others have adapted to best needs the existing needs while being mindful of the future demands.

A Review of Feedback

For example, feedback gathered from college's team members provided momentum to begin an initiative to construct a Leadership Library within the new Leadership Fellow office. This library boasts over 300 titles centered on the theme of effective leadership. Faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to both borrow and contribute to the resources available in this venue. Since the inaugural Leadership Fellow was an appointment position, it quickly became apparent that a recruitment and application process needed to be constructed to sustain this year-long position within the Dean's office. This opportunity allowed me to educate others about the positive experiences I had been exposed to, as well as share the benefits to not only individual faculty in the position, but to the current and future students, staff, and faculty of the college and university wide.

Funding sources for both research and teaching initiatives of the college faculty members was consistently shared as a concern and need across the five academic departments within it. In response to these requests and in planning for the future, College Faculty Scholarship Grants and Best Practices in Pedagogy Awards were initiated through requirement, an application, and a review process. Many tenured/tenure line faculty members within the college applied for one course release and \$1000 through the scholarship grants, and \$2000 through the teaching support award. This funding proved to be successful as faculty shared the outreach through professional venues such as conferences, workshops, and publications. Innovative teaching practices took place in college classrooms across the university as faculty celebrated the availability of these new endeavors.

In addition, another sustainable event that was initiated during this inaugural year is the Chippewa Camp project. Our university has a proud tradition of working with the Saginaw-Chippewa nation and being a Chippewa has a long history for our students and alum. We wanted to build on our outreach and summer camp programs. What began as a conversation about the importance of reaching out to more middle level students about the benefits of a college education and increased accessibility to college for all students resulted in an exciting hands on opportunity for potential future Chippewas. Working collaboratively across the university, a proposal has been funded to support this week long science and math camp for middle schoolers in underserved and higher-risk areas of the state.

Multiple conversations about flexible usage of space within our main college building have occurred in the last two years. One of those changes in space allowed me to participate with a team regarding converting the Kromer Instructional Materials Center into the new college Learning Commons. Within this team, we were able to gather data, engage in community outreach, and

dialogue about the possibilities within a learning space for utmost efficiency and productivity for all involved with the college team. The results include a higher level of accessibility to technology for our students and increased sharing of knowledge for our faculty, staff, and students.

The Learning and Leading Award is another beneficial experience that began with my role in the Dean's office. This began with a Teacher Education and Professional Development faculty member with an interest in highlighting CMU undergraduate students that excelled in the field placement components of their course work and volunteer endeavors. The result is a college wide award to not only honor our students and the positive contributions they make to their communities and professions, but to build a sustainable cohort of graduates to assist with mentoring and connections between alumni and current students.

Other shorter-term activities that were included in the fellow opportunity included the opportunity to collect and disseminate professional development and funding opportunities to our faculty, promoting the Veteran's Resource Center activities to support all students within our college, and fulfilling the role as a college representative at many different events including new faculty orientation, scholarship award venues, and multiple campus proceedings.

Building of Partnerships

Building positive and mutually beneficial partnerships was a consistent opportunity as the Leadership Fellow. I was asked to represent the Dean's office in several different discussions that centered on reaching shared goals and possible collaboration opportunities. For example, I was able to attend several meetings between potential funders and community representatives. Woven together with the shared goal of increased opportunities for the community at large as well as CMU students, staff, and faculty, many important and groundbreaking discussions took place. From education administrators, CEOs, and philanthropists, as well as the Michigan's Deans Alliance, all conversations were dedicated to building a more collaborative future between these individuals or entities with reciprocally valuable results.

Professional Development

Another area of enhancement for me in this role was increased accessibility and funding for professional development. For example, I traveled to the Academic Chairperson's Conference and was able to participate in the New Chair Alliance. This opportunity allowed me to discover more insight about the roles and responsibilities that face department chairs, as well as network with chairs from all over the world. Initially I was not open to applying for a chairperson position within the college, however after this conference and completing the year as a Leadership Fellow, I was ready for the excitement and challenges ahead.

Within my college, I was able to participate in a weekly writing group that greatly assisted with goal setting and writing

productivity, as well as increasing my personal knowledge base about quality writing components and available supports. Within the state, I was privileged to attend the NBC News Education Nation Detroit Summit. This opportunity brought together educators, political stakeholders, parents, and students to discuss the current challenges and successes of our educational systems.

The most life and career changing professional development opportunity I was honored to attend was the exemplary two week Harvard Graduate School of Education Management Development Program. This intensive program was filled with a wide variety of sessions including presentations by higher education leaders throughout the country, small group work, networking, and resource sharing.

Support of the Dean's Office Initiatives

Lastly, holding the position of Leadership Fellow allowed me to take part in a multitude of events hosted by the Dean's office. I was able to organize and assist with the implementation of a special presentation by the Dean, *Navigating Leadership in Higher Education: Things They Don't Tell Women*. This event was well attended and reached capacity quickly. I was able to complete a needs assessment, plan, and co-present at the first college Pre-Tenure Luncheon with the goal of mentoring new faculty through the reappointment, tenure, and promotion process.

Another college event I had the pleasure of presenting was the Retirees Appreciation Luncheon. I assisted in the planning of this event full of diverse leaders that built the rich history of programs in the college. I was also invited to represent the Leadership Fellow position in a Higher Education course and present information about my current Leadership Fellow role.

Other events I was able to attend include the Staff Appreciation Breakfast, the Student Organization Luncheon, Homecoming representation and festivities, and the college's TR Johnson Speaker Series.

Summary

A review of the activities I was able to participate in reveals a busy and meaningful year full of new and exciting opportunities. I am honored to be the Inaugural Leadership Fellow in the College of Education and Human Services. This experience, without hesitation, provided with incredibly valuable experiences I would not trade for a moment.

After the experience, I was confident that I could meet the high level of challenges and standards as a department chair. The Counseling and Special Education department set a goal of selecting a leader to join the team with strong teaching, research, service, and administrative experiences as a new Chairperson. While I was originally reluctant to consider this opportunity when first approached, after completing an inaugural Leadership Fellow experience, I was ready.

New to this role as Chairperson, I am challenged by learning many new things, as well as increasing my knowledge level of

budgetary and the other administrative tasks at hand. A posting in the On Hiring blog from the Chronicle of Higher Education highlighted that many individuals who serve as department chairpersons have limited to non-existent training to prepare them for the responsibilities required for this role (Evans, 2012). The Leadership Fellow experience assisted me in reaching this goal.

Following the Leadership Path: a Fellow takes on Year Two

I was immediately intrigued by the possibility of becoming a Leadership Fellow when our new Dean introduced our first Leadership Fellow during our fall "All college" meeting prior to the 2012-2013 academic year. I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to learn about how the college operates and what it takes to lead it while contributing to the success of various initiatives during the year. At the end of the first year of the Dean's tenure, my opportunity came when I responded to the invitation for applications to serve as the second Leadership Fellow.

As the second Leadership Fellow, I was chosen based on my application to provide leadership for the development of the college Scholarship Support Office. During the fall of 2012, the Dean had assembled a Scholarship Support Office Task Force with membership from across the college to identify the needs of faculty members regarding scholarly and creative activity. The Task Force was asked to comprehensively review the culture and climate of scholarship and creative activity within our college and to offer recommendations based on their assessment. They gave their recommendations to the Dean in February 2013. Although the report contained many recommendations, two key initiatives were to (1) encourage department chairs to make scholarship and creative activity a priority; (2) increase internal and external marketing of scholarship and creative activities within our college. I had been a member of this Task Force, so I was familiar with the recommendations.

In coordination with our Dean, I set goals for her year based on position description and the recommendations of the Scholarship Support Office Task Force. My primary goals for the year were as follows: (a) gain college level leadership experience; (b) develop the Scholarship Support Office; (c) complete a scholarship project relating to leadership; and (d) attend a leadership development conference. These goals were to be accomplished in a variety of ways.

My arrangement with the Dean was flexible, and I was able to work with several staff members within the office. For the position, I committed to be on campus and work out of the Dean's office two days a week. With so many scheduled activities, however, many weeks three or four days were necessary to fulfill the responsibilities. I had bi-weekly meetings with the Dean and informal meetings with the Associate Dean to support the initiatives I was leading and to receive mentorship. I was also able to work with the two graduate assistants in the office. One assisted with the design of

the faculty development website and the other organized the writing retreat.

Leadership Experience

Serving as Leadership Fellow provided me with the opportunity to gain an understanding of college level leadership responsibilities and develop a broader perspective into the work of the faculty and students within the college. Our college consists of five departments which cluster many program areas, the departments include: Counseling and Special Education, Educational Leadership, Human Environmental Studies, Teacher Education and Professional Development, and Recreation, Parks, and Leisure. These encompass the full range of educational experiences from early child development through higher education, and span from undergraduate through doctoral study. It also addresses a variety of other majors such as dietetics, gerontology, interior design, and therapeutic recreation. Each department has its own unique culture, mission, and values.

To gain an understanding of college level leadership, I attended the weekly Dean's Leadership Council/Dean's Advisory Council (DAC) meetings. This experience gave me a sense of the important initiatives taking place on campus and within the college. I was able to contribute to discussions about how to capitalize on opportunities and handle problems. I also gained a broader perspective of how to better service students by participating in meetings across campus such as the interviews for the assistant directors for the Office of Student Success, statewide meetings of the Directors and Representatives of Teacher Education Programs, and the Michigan Public Deans Council.

After the director of CMU's Honor's College approached the DAC to host a night of the 200+ member Honors 100 class, I was able to practice my leadership skills by organizing the event. For our college-wide Honors 100 night, I coordinated the participation of all five departments in the conceptualization, planning, and execution of the experience for first year students. This occurred within my first six weeks of assuming the position, so I had to learn quickly how to work with the department chairs to develop an idea for the night, negotiate the schedule of events, and handle the logistics of the event. It tested my ability to facilitate using consensus, provide departments with the leeway to develop their own segment of the program, and handle the logistics for the 200+ students and 50 faculty and staff volunteers. The process proved challenging and successful.

Scholarship and Scholarship Support

I spent the majority of my time as Leadership Fellow developing of the Office of Scholarship Support. A major part of this responsibility was managing the college's grants that had been put in place by the Leadership Fellow the previous year. The three grants—Scholarship, Pedagogy, and a Nash Awards—required the processing of new applications and follow-up on the awardees from the previous years. I tracked the progress of previous award winners, revised and sent out

new calls for applications, set up review panels to assess the quality of the 2013-2014 applicants, assisted with the decision process, and communicated with all applicants about the results. I also expanded the earlier established Leadership Library.

Year two initiatives included the creation of a research roundtable series where college faculty members share their scholarly and creative projects with other faculty members, inviting guest speakers to educate faculty regarding scholarly writing and grant writing, as well as facilitating a day long writing retreat. A new faculty development section was added to the college website to provide faculty members with a place to easily find the resources available to them at CMU to advance their scholarship agenda. These web pages have information about scholarship, instructional and professional development, mentorship, external resources for research software training, recommended professional conferences, and suggested readings and websites regarding writing.

In addition, I attended the HERS Bryn Mawr Institute lead during the summer to extend my learning about leadership in higher education institutions. Through that experience I honed key leadership skills such as negotiation, budgeting, and gained insight into my own leadership style and strengths. I also developed a national network of aspiring female leaders within academe.

Connection to the Leadership Literature. One of my significant ongoing experiences during my year as Leadership Fellow was serving on the yearlong Mentorship Task Force. The Task Force consisted of faculty members from each department within the college, me as Leadership Fellow, and a graduate student from the Dean's office. This experience provided me with the opportunity to delve into the mentorship literature. We identified the need for mentorship in the specific areas of teaching, scholarship, and service because they relate to tenure and promotion but also to general career management. My time as Leadership Fellow provided me with great career mentoring. During my interview for the position, I explained to the Dean, Associate Dean, and then Leadership Fellow that I am a first generation faculty member. Now I haven't read any literature on this phenomenon, but I have noticed that my colleagues who have family members in academe or who study higher education as their field know a great deal more about the structures of and opportunities within the academy. They understand the significance of bodies such as the academic senate and the graduate council and positions such as provost and ombud. They can identify a clear career path that will take them from where they currently are to where they eventually want to be within the institution. Working as Leadership Fellow allowed me to interact with the head of our Research and Sponsored Programs, our President, other Deans from colleges of education around the state, and to hear the concerns of our institution's Provost and Registrar. Although I haven't identified which leadership step I will take next, I am aware of more options within the institution. I plan to follow my

mentors' advice that I earn my promotion to full professor before assuming a university-wide leadership role.

One thing that is intriguing about our college's Leadership Fellow initiative thus far is that it has only involved female faculty members. I know that our Dean began the program with the intention of developing leadership within the college, not specific to gender. It has simply worked out the fellows and the Dean have all been women. Yet, this is not a bad thing because the mentorship literature validates that mentorship relationships are particularly important for women.

For me personally, I grew in my understanding of how the college and the Dean's Office operates, and I broadened my view of what I might be able to accomplish as a faculty member. I saw faculty advocate for themselves and their programs in constructive ways and the Dean get behind their efforts. I learned that the Dean is eager to support faculty ideas and initiatives. I witnessed how she supported faculty who were in difficult situations by employing creative solutions where available and how she held others accountable for dysfunctional behavior when needed.

I feel more connected to Central Michigan University and more comfortable building my network within the institution and asking the Dean for help with what I want to accomplish. I plan to adopt the mantra of nothing ventured; nothing gained as I leave for my sabbatical and return to the faculty ranks in a year. During my sabbatical I will continue my study of leadership, but within a K-12 context, as I travel across the country to join the efforts of a network of charter schools. In particular, I would like to focus on leading in light of an organization's culture and the need for change.

Although I've noticed immediate changes in myself as a result of this experience such as my confidence in my ability to lead an organization, my knowledge of the workings of and key positions in a higher education institution, and an acknowledgement of my need to be more vocal about my opinions and ideas, I believe that the long term benefits of serving as Leadership Fellow will be extensive both for myself and for Central Michigan University. It is fitting that it is the College of Education and Human Services that is taking the lead in this leadership development initiative because our college is dedicated to the service of others and the betterment of their lives. This can best be accomplished by investing in the lives of our faculty who in turn pour into the lives of our students. This program sets a high bar and sends a clear signal that effective leadership matters. It also provides an opportunity for hands on learning for future leaders.

Conclusion

When she arrived on campus for the 2012-2013 academic year, our new dean established a Leadership Fellow position where one tenured faculty member would receive a one-year half-time appointment in the Dean's Office to work on college-wide leadership initiatives. To date, two college faculty members

have served in this role and have led several leadership initiatives within the college.

During year one, the first Leadership Fellow learned about the detailed responsibilities of a department chairperson by participating in various committees and task forces across campus. Additionally, she built sustainable programs such as the leadership library, two faculty grant programs and a sustainable student leadership award. Her leadership capabilities were advanced through the participation in professional development such as new department chairperson training. Near the end of the experience, she was elected chairperson for her department and now serves in that role.

In year two, the succeeding Leadership Fellow assumed the position with an eye to develop the resources supporting faculty scholarship within the College. To this end, she created a faculty development webpage that consolidates available resources in one easy to access location, managed the college-wide faculty Pedagogy, Scholarship and Nash Awards. She established research roundtables where faculty members share their scholarship and creative endeavors. She also participated in several college-wide initiatives such as the Dean's Leadership Council, the Mentorship Taskforce, and college Honors 100 night. At the university level she helped select assistant directors for the new Office of Student Support, and state-wide she participated in meetings relating to the future of teacher education. In the position she grew in her understanding of the administrative functions and structures within the university and in her own confidence and skills as a leader. In the end she decided to adopt a nothing ventured, nothing gained attitude to motivate her to share her opinions and ideas and to undertake new initiatives. She took a sabbatical the next year and plans to earn a promotion to full professor when she returns.

The Leadership Fellow position will continue in future years. Currently, two new Leadership Fellows are working in the Dean's office. They are focusing on bringing the Mentorship and Taskforce initiatives to fruition by working to implement the faculty recommendations, thus building upon gains made in the areas of leadership development and scholarship support during the first two years.

The future looks bright within our college at CMU.

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