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This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant Number 1760577. (ADVANCE Adaptation)



**Faculty and Department Head Annual “Leading Creative Experts”**

**Professional Development Conversation**

**Department Head CONVERSATION DISCUSSION Guide**

***A Part of the Initiative to Transform Annual Review Conversations to***

***Foster Innovation and Equity among Creative, Expert Faculty***

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Please check in with us to learn more about best practices and department head training that

undergird this approach.

**Faculty and Department Head “Leading Creative Experts”**

**Professional Development Conversation**

**DISCUSSION GUIDE**

*The goal? To transform these conversations*

*from a purely evaluative to a professional development model.*



**Creative Expert Professional Development Conversation Model**

The model involves four key facets:

**Facet 1: *Reflect and Situate***

**Facet 2: *Inquire and Validate***

**Facet 3: *Co-create within constraints***

**Facet 4: *Commit* *and Follow Up***

**Prompt 1: Fostering Pride, Purpose, and Belonging**

**INQUIRE and VALIDATE**

*Ask your Faculty:*

* + *Reflecting on the past year, what three things are you most proud of in your work?*
  + *Why is this kind of work important to you? To the department?*

*AFTER listening, validate and share:*

* *Reflecting on the past year, share what three things* ***you*** *are most proud of in this person’s work.*
* *Share why is this kind of work important to the department. To your institution.*

**Prompt 2: Dream Projects**

**INQUIRE AND VALIDATE**

*Ask your Faculty:*

* + *If resources were not an issue, what 1 or 2 goals/projects would you love to set in motion/advance professionally?*

* + *Why those goals/projects?  What do you see as the unique opportunity—for yourself and the field and/or your institution?*
  + *What initial steps could you take towards achieving those dream projects?  What resources might you need? How might the department or our institution help catalyze your efforts?*

*AFTER listening, validate and situate:*

* *Share how their work and dream projects “fit” with your department’s/ your institution’s strategic priorities and why.*

**PROMPT 3: INQUIRE, VALIDATE, CO-CREATE WITHIN CONSTRAINTS:**

**I. Eliciting current portfolio of work**

*Ask your Faculty:*

* *What is your current portfolio of activities (teaching, research, service)? Where do your strengths lie? Where are opportunities for improvement?*
* *What do you see your role as in the department? In what ways do you support students, colleagues, or your institution that does not show up in the annual report?*

*AFTER listening, validate and situate:*

* *Share how their work fits within the department’s strategic vision and demands.*

**II. Trade-offs and Priorities**

*Ask your Faculty:*

* + *What trade-offs are you wrestling with as you work towards your goals? Why?*
  + *How might you prioritize across your activities given your goals?*

*After listening, co-create within constraints:*

* + *What is the highest-impact use of this faculty’s time? Why?*
  + *How might this faculty member prioritize across these demands? Why?*

**III: Resources and Support**

*Ask your Faculty:*

* + *What specific COVID-related challenges are you experiencing? What would be of help to you?*
  + *What will make you feel valued? What type of recognition means the most to you? What will most help you achieve your goals?*

*After listening, co-create within constraints:*

* + *Brainstorm resources or support that might help catalyze their efforts, given departmental constraints and collective goals.*
  + *Brainstorm specific COVID-related resources they might need.*
  + *Brainstorm other non-monetary rewards or validation that might make them feel valued*

**COMMIT and FOLLOW UP**

* Commit to what you can at this point--recognizing need to situate within full department.
* Share process you will use to follow up going forward.
* Reflect on this conversation together:
  + How do you each feel? Have you related positively to each other?
  + Have you each gotten what you wanted?
  + Is there anything you could do next time to make the conversation even better?

**Sample Resources that Department Heads Can Provide**

**Time and assistance**

* Course release or re-scheduling teaching load
* Graduates and Undergraduates to help in labs or with research
* TA and PLA allocation
* Summer graduate or undergraduate student support
* Committee relief
* Staff assistance
* Developmental or editorial writing support

**Status tokens and other benefits**

* Office space improvements or new desk
* Support for professional/leadership development
* Other…

**Enable on-campus recognition and connections**

* Collaborators
* Mentors
* Award nominations

**Make connections outside WPI/in the field**

* Connect faculty member with invited talks at other institutions or specialized conferences
* Introduce faculty member to grant program directors
* Support travel to conferences, research, trainings, or federal agencies
* Nominate faculty member for awards
* Introduce to potential mentors

**Possible COVID-related support ideas to spur your thinking**

**Harness virtual networking**

* Help with virtual networking—Connect to offer virtual seminars for greater strategic visibility - take advantage of no travel.
* Provide stipends for virtual conference participation

**Foster a culture of Humanity**

* Help especially Junior faculty make meaningful connections.
* Foster cultural shift toward wellness, not just "get your stuff done"
* Culture shift away from meetings—Harness technology to share information differently.

**Provide expertise, research and admin support**

* Support for undergrad researchers in summer
* TA lines to support graduate assistants
* Developmental and technical writers to help turn work into publications/grants
* Copy editors
* Shared administrative support

**Provide time-related support**

* Relief from teaching activities
* Targeted and expert child education support (e.g., support for ADHD children)
* Relief from service committee work
* Uninterrupted blocks for creative work/scholarship
  + Creative Scholarship Fridays
  + Extended writing retreats