

Retaining Focus on Academic Excellence in a Challenging Economic Environment

The 96th Annual Meeting of the Association of
American Colleges and Universities

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Agenda

- ⦿ Framework
- ⦿ Thoughts on Role of the Chief Academic Officer
- ⦿ Some Historical Context
- ⦿ Input from all of you
- ⦿ School Deans
- ⦿ Today's Environment
- ⦿ The Future?
- ⦿ Continuing the Conversation

Framework for Today

- ⦿ Who We Are
- ⦿ Origin and Purpose of Session
 - CAO is a Position in Transition
 - 2009 CAO Census showed declining focus on academics
 - Economic conditions exacerbating this
- ⦿ Think about your
 - Time
 - Priorities
 - Messages you hear and send

Role of the Chief Academic Officer

- ◎ **Manages a Complex Organization**
 - Distinct Schools
 - Budgets
 - Technology
 - State and Regional Accreditation
Accountability
 - Faculty Governance coordination

Historical Context

- ◎ Evolution of the President's Responsibility
 - Leader of the Faculty and the School
 - Personal engagement
 - Now spokesperson, lobbyist, fundraiser
 - Supported by many Vice Presidents
- ◎ Evolution of the Academic Dean
 - From Dean to VPAA to Provost
- ◎ Evolution from College to University
 - Decentralization

School Deans

- ⦿ Decentralized Authority Evolved
 - Curriculum
 - Faculty Development
 - New Program Development
 - Fundraising
 - Student Support
 - Profit Center

**LET'S USE THE FOLLOWING
QUESTIONS TO GET STARTED:**

Some Observations

- ⦿ The Title of this Conference
- ⦿ Chronicle Ads for CAOs
- ⦿ Proportion of talks at this and other conferences on budget, finance, funding
- ⦿ 2009 CAO Report focus on preparing CAOs for Presidency

Today's Environment

- President 's Increasing Outside Focus
- Emphasis on Accountability
- Declining Percentage of Fulltime Faculty
- Increased Competition for “good” students
- Budget driven decisions
- Inadvertent creep/crowing out by non academic priorities
- More specialized programs
- Decline in perceived value of traditional disciplines

Future?

- ⦿ Even more complex organizations
- ⦿ Growth of ever increasing accountability
- ⦿ Alternate model of Chief Operating Officer
- ⦿ As more colleges become universities, establishment of more schools/colleges within

Who Should Become the Chief Operating Officer?

- ① Separate enterprise management from academic development?
- ① Difficult to maintain focus on academic quality with increasing emphasis on return on investment (short term)
- ① Analogy to Hospitals

How Can we Keep the
Focus Academic??

A Few Ideas

- ① Invest in sending Faculty to Professional Development that Focuses on Academic Excellence (e.g. Wye)
- ① Invest in teams if possible to Institutes such as AACU Greater Expectations.
- ① President's Back Porch, Think Groups with Faculty Leadership
- ① Support Faculty involvement in organizations such as CUR, Pericles

⦿ Questions/Answers

Continuing the Conversation

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