Aligning Disciplinary Activities with Institutional Priorities

Transcending Departmental Boundaries, Part I

Audio Options

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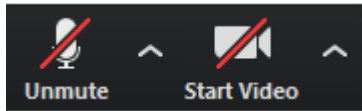| 📞 Phone Call | 💻 Computer Audio | 📞 Call Me |

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☐ Automatically join audio by computer when joining a meeting
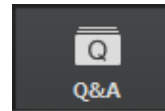
Mic and Video Controls

Click the mic and camera pictures until they have a red line indicating they are both off.

Asking a Question

To ask the presenters a question, type it into the Chat panel and press send.

**Part I: Aligning Disciplinary Activities
with Institutional Priorities**
Wednesday, April 24, 2019
12:00 PM ET - 1:00 PM ET

**Part II: Envisioning a Post-Departmental
Structure for the University**
Wednesday, May 1, 2019
1:00 PM ET - 2:00 PM ET

Headlines Indicate Organization May Be Getting in the Way of Mission

Hiram College Floats Interdisciplinary Redesign

-Inside Higher Ed, 2018

Albany State U. to be Restructured from Five Colleges to Three

-Albany Herald, 2018

Cornell U. Provost Sets Aside Proposed College Merger

-Cornell Sun, 2018

University Announces Committees for Academic Organizational Review

-Central Michigan Life, 2017

Southern Illinois U.-Carbondale Wants to Eliminate Departments. All of Them.

-Inside Higher Ed, 2017

MIT Reshapes Itself to Shape the Future

-MIT Press Release, 2018

"How many deans is too many for a small institution like us?"

-Provost, Small Private College

Should Behavioral and Health Sciences be one college or two?

-Provost, Access-Focused Public University

"How do we grow interdisciplinary programs without creating more silos?"

-Associate Provost, Elite Research University

Is Arts & Sciences too large to be managed by one dean?

-Provost, State Flagship University

How do you decide which department should oversee a multidisciplinary program?

-Dean, Canadian Research Institution

Changing Demands from Students, Funders, and Society

Rapidly Shifting Program Demand

- Declines in many traditional disciplines
- Rapid growth in pre-professional programs
- Strong interest in cross-disciplinary programs
- Growth in programs for working adults

Changing Student Needs and Priorities

- More first gen, low-income, and under-represented students
- Students balancing work and family obligations with study
- Incoming students bringing more transfer credits
- Increasing emphasis on career outcomes and relevance

Growing Focus on High Impact Research

- Increasing competition for traditional disciplinary grants
- Growth in large-scale multidisciplinary awards
- Desire to contribute to innovation and entrepreneurship
- Demands from funders to demonstrate impact of research

Increasing Pressure on Financial Subsidies

- Flat or declining enrollments in most regions
- Public funding failing to keep up with rising costs
- Growing institutional investment in research
- Wide variations in faculty workloads and output

After You've Tried Everything Else

Structural Solutions Held Off Until Most Recent Phase of Adjustment

Difficulty of Implementation

Restructure Academic Organization

Why isn't this working?

Review Academic Program Portfolio

Maybe if I cut low performing academic programs we will be financially sustainable

Implement New Budget Model

Maybe if I incentivize deans they will find ways to grow revenues and manage costs

Launch Revenue-Generating Programs

Maybe if I grow new programs I can generate enough to subsidize existing programs

Identify Administrative Cost Savings

Maybe if I cut admin costs I can protect my academic structure

Years Since Great Recession

The Limited Effectiveness of Carrots and Sticks

Typical Change Management Initiatives Necessary, but Insufficient

Typical Change Management Approach

Incentives	Data	Faculty Development
• Activity-based (RCM) and performance-based budgeting • Internal funding competitions	• Academic program metrics • Research productivity analytics	• Instructional design support • Leadership training

Structural Barriers

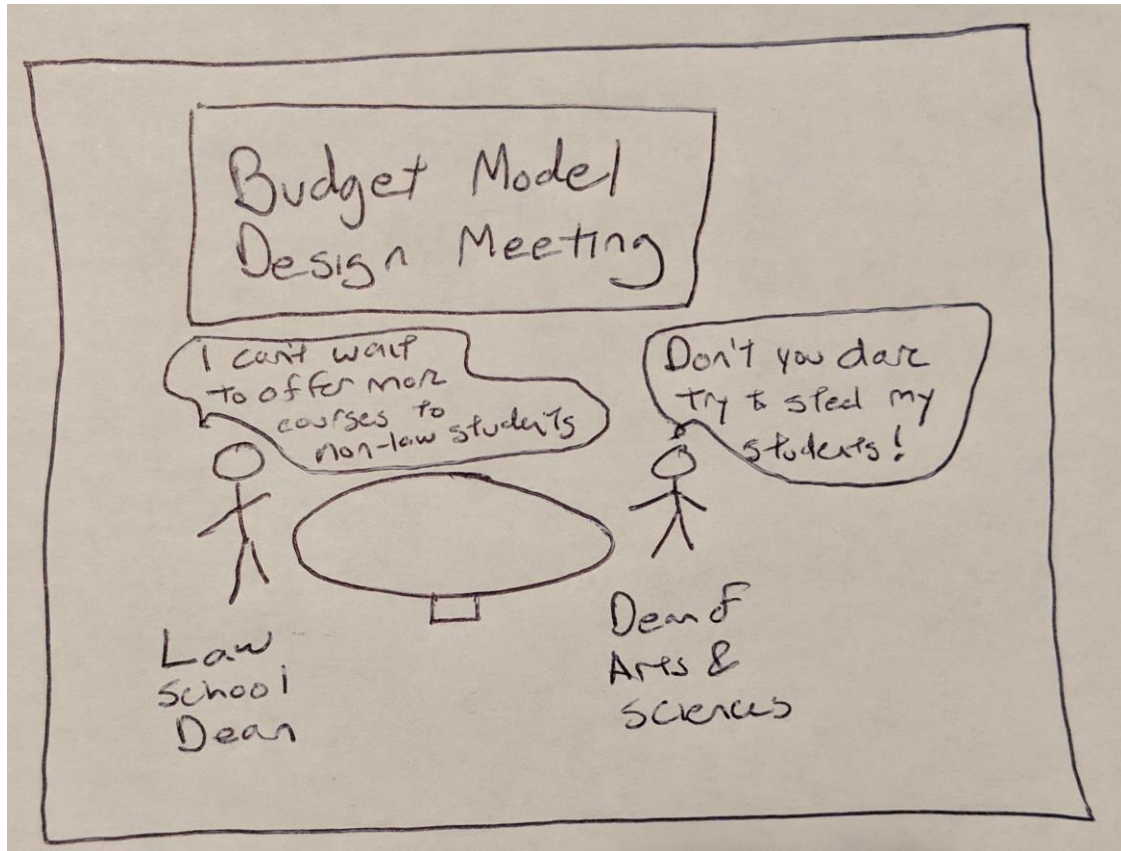| ✖	✖	✖
• Low-performing units demand ongoing subvention • Low-enrollment units unable to grow	• Faculty question validity of data • Departments too small for true resource flexibility	• Key faculty decline to participate • Individual improvements don't scale

Departments Are the Fulcrum for Every Major Change Initiative

Key Decisions Effectively Controlled by Departments:

- Hiring
- Tenure and Promotion
- Workload and releases

Faculty

Curriculum

- Major requirements
- Course offerings
- Gen ed component

- Majors
- New program launches

Program Offerings

Student Success

- Major advising
- Credit transfer into major

- Course redesign
- Online courses

Pedagogy

Space

- Course scheduling
- Faculty offices

Provosts and Deans

"I can't do anything if the faculty won't go along with it."

Academic Departments

Department Chairs

"I don't get to make any decisions."

Good People in a Bad System

Faculty's Career Paths Set Them Up to Preserve Disciplinary Silos

Graduate School Experiences

PhD Training and Preparation Assumes the R1 Experience as Universal to all Faculty

50%

or more of computer science faculty in the top 50 U.S. universities received their PhD from one of **10 top institutions**

50%

of political science faculty at research institutions in the U.S. received their PhD from one of **11 top institutions**

Tenure and Promotion

Narrow Definitions of Disciplinary Excellence Required for Advancement

370%

increase in likelihood of gaining tenure in economics from publishing three articles in top 5 journals (vs. all other journals)

9%

of research institutions[1] include **public impact** of research in P+T considerations, in a survey of 129 universities

Department Chair Leadership

Irresolvable Tension in the Chair Role: Shop Steward or Academic Manager?

67%

receive no formal training; two-thirds of those who did say it didn't prepare them for the job

3 yrs.

average length of chair term; faculty may simply "wait out" chairs and administration

1) And 11% of teaching-focused institutions.

Source: "Superpowers: The American Academic Elite." *Georgetown Public Policy Review*. August 10, 2014; Dataset of 2200 Faculty in 50 Top US Computer Science Graduate Programs. Book Review: 1215: The Year of Magna Carta. Brown University Department of Computer Science. Accessed October 05, 2018; Heckman, James, and Sidharth Moktan. "The Tyranny of the Top Five Journals." *Institute for New Economic Thinking*. October 2, 2018; Alperin, Juan Pablo, et al. "How significant are the public dimensions of faculty work in review, promotion, and tenure documents?" *Humanities Commons*, 2018; "Chair training data from survey of 336 department chairs by the University Council of Educational Administration's Center for the Study of Academic Leadership (2017); Chu, Don and Sally Veregge. "The California State University Department Chair Survey Report," 2002; EAB interviews and analysis.

Departments and Academic Freedom

"[Disciplines] create a zone of academic freedom that is essential to the vitality of critical inquiry, research, and scholarship… Faculty will likely be in a much weaker position to resist departmental reorganization in an interdisciplinary system because interdisciplinary decisions by their nature take place outside the confines of departmental expertise, and thus the playing field shifts markedly toward executive authority."

Jerry Jacobs, *In Defense of Disciplines*

Framing the Fundamental Structural Problem

Increasing Tensions Between University and Departmental Priorities

University Imperatives		*Disciplinary Priorities*
• Hire the faculty that you need to sustain your mission	**Hiring**	• Preserve and enhance disciplinary coverage
• Set tenure expectations to encourage faculty to pursue a wide range of mission-aligned activities	**Tenure**	• Emphasize disciplinary scholarship above all other factors
• Provide all students with the foundational skills they will need to be successful regardless of career	**Core Curriculum**	• Maintain student credit hour production in gen ed disciplinary surveys to preserve departmental faculty lines
• Ensure that all students have an opportunity to be successful	**Pedagogy**	• Discourage underperforming students from persisting in major
• Design major curricula to allow for timely degree completion	**Majors**	• Add requirements and electives to reflect growth of the discipline
• Launch financially sustainable new academic programs	**Program Innovation**	• Add new programs that align with scholarly developments
• Support high impact collaborative research initiatives	**Research**	• Support research that enhances the scholarly profile of the department

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.

Building the Right Team

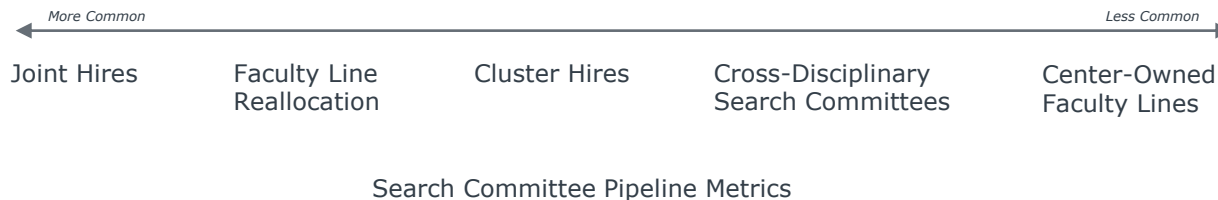## The Challenge of Hiring for University Priorities

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

- ✓ Hold on to "our" faculty lines
- ✓ Grow number of tenure-line faculty
- ✓ Maintain/ expand disciplinary coverage
- ✓ Hire faculty with the strongest disciplinary reputation

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Cannot afford to maintain lines in departments with declining enrollments
- Critical research and teaching needs cut across disciplines
- Narrow disciplinary searches yield fewer diverse candidates

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Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common ←————————————————————————————————————→ *Less Common*

Joint Hires	Faculty Line Reallocation	Cluster Hires	Cross-Disciplinary Search Committees	Center-Owned Faculty Lines

Search Committee Pipeline Metrics

Relevant EAB Research

A Playbook for Effective Cluster Hiring

Instilling Equity and Inclusion in Departmental Practices

Teacher/ Scholar and Mentor and Leader and...
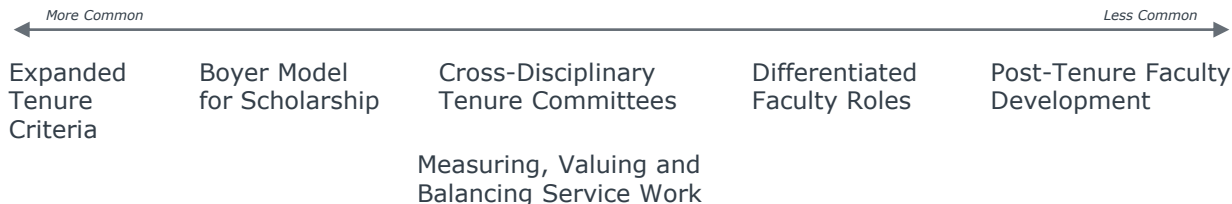
Rewarding a Broad Spectrum of Faculty Activity

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

✓ Prioritize scholarship in high profile disciplinary outlets
✓ Discourage activities that do not directly benefit the department
✓ See service as a 'necessary evil' to be minimized

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Institutional success depends on engaging faculty in cross-disciplinary research and teaching, mentoring, outreach, pedagogical innovation, commercialization, etc.
- Faculty making major service contributions often penalized at tenure

Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common   *Less Common*

Expanded Tenure Criteria	Boyer Model for Scholarship	Cross-Disciplinary Tenure Committees	Differentiated Faculty Roles	Post-Tenure Faculty Development
		Measuring, Valuing and Balancing Service Work		

Relevant EAB Research

 Supporting Faculty Productivity After Tenure

 A Playbook for Effective Cluster Hiring

Beyond the Disciplinary Menu
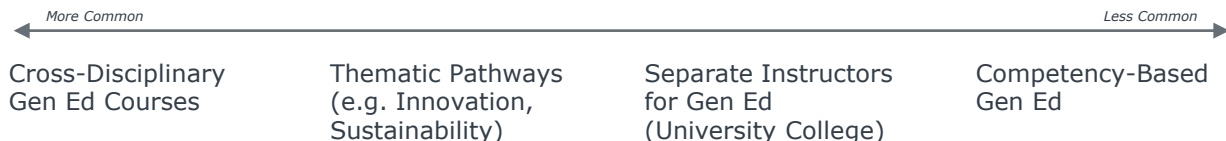
Building an Integrated Foundation for All Students

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

✓ Protect requirements that force non-majors to take courses in the department
✓ Present courses as an introduction to the discipline
✓ Staff introductory courses with graduate students, adjuncts or lecturers

Conflicts with University Priorities

• Students fail to see value in being forced to study disciplines in which they have no interest. Many try to transfer the credit in
• Core competencies (e.g. critical thinking, communication, teamwork) often ignored in favor of disciplinary priorities

Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common   *Less Common*

Cross-Disciplinary Gen Ed Courses

Thematic Pathways (e.g. Innovation, Sustainability)

Separate Instructors for Gen Ed (University College)

Competency-Based Gen Ed

Relevant EAB Research

Selected Tactics from Integrating Academic and Career Development

Teaching the Students That We Have

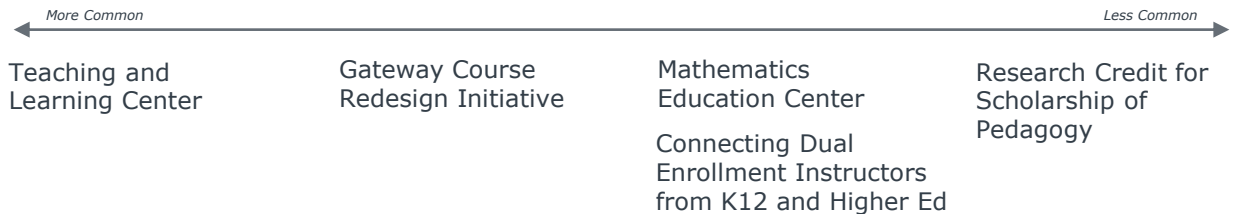## Embracing Classroom Practices That Work for Today's Students

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

- ✓ Maintain high failure rates in gateway courses to 'weed out' the unprepared
- ✓ Ignore evidence-based pedagogy because it takes time away from scholarship
- ✓ Keep weak instructors in gateway courses

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Students from under-represented groups often struggle in gateway courses
- High failure rates in gateway courses keep students out of desired majors, often leading to delays or stop outs

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Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common ⟵———————————————————————————⟶ *Less Common*

| Teaching and Learning Center | Gateway Course Redesign Initiative | Mathematics Education Center | Research Credit for Scholarship of Pedagogy |
| | | Connecting Dual Enrollment Instructors from K12 and Higher Ed | |

Relevant EAB Research

 Scaling Learning Innovation

 Course Completion Playbook

 Overcoming Barriers to Equity in Student Success

More Than Just Preparation for Graduate School

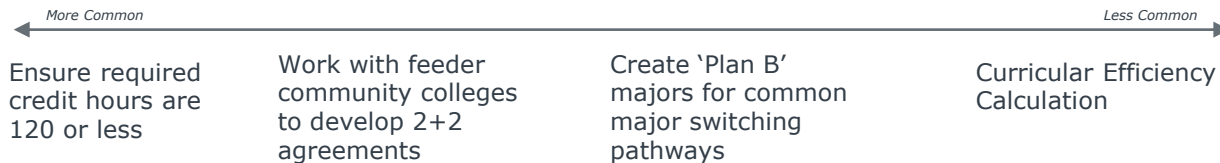## Designing Degree Programs to Prepare Students for a Range of Careers

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

- ✓ Add more requirements and more electives so faculty can teach their specialties
- ✓ Rigid prerequisites to ensure that students are prepared for each course
- ✓ Do not allow low value credits to transfer in

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Enable students graduate in four years even if they switch majors
- Reduce number of low enrollment courses
- Allow time for minors, second majors, experiential learning activities

Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common ⟵⟶ *Less Common*

Ensure required credit hours are 120 or less

Work with feeder community colleges to develop 2+2 agreements

Create 'Plan B' majors for common major switching pathways

Curricular Efficiency Calculation

Relevant EAB Research

EAB
Report

Academic Policy Audit

EAB
Report

Promoting Timely Degree Completion

Working Adults– Higher Ed's Growth Driver

Designing Programs Around Student Needs

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

- ✓ Launch and grow doctoral and thesis-based masters degrees
- ✓ Build new programs around faculty research interests
- ✓ Maintain comparable admissions standards across all graduate programs

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Launch revenue-generating programs serving working adults
- Align programs with industry needs by combining multiple disciplines
- Offer flexible delivery models (online, hybrid, accelerated, part-time)

Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common ←——————————————————————————→ *Less Common*

| Give departments share of incremental revenue from new programs | Cross-disciplinary programs supported by multiple departments | School of Professional Studies with ability to design and launch new degrees and certificates | Institutes that house academic programs with faculty from multiple disciplines |

Relevant EAB Research

EAB **Report**	Academic Program Innovation Center	EAB **Report**	Achieving Principled (Not Profitless) Growth	EAB **Report**	Multiple COE Forum Studies

The World's Problems Do Not Fit Into Disciplines

Enabling High Impact Multidisciplinary Research Collaborations

Typical Disciplinary Priorities

- ✓ Maintain/ enhance status in disciplinary rankings
- ✓ Win prestigious peer-reviewed funding from NSF, NIH, NEH
- ✓ Collaborate with disciplinary peers at other universities

Conflicts with University Priorities

- Diversify funding sources as NSF and NIH become more competitive
- Demonstrate the value of scientific research to a skeptical public
- Build collaborations with foundations, NGO's, corporations, and entrepreneurs

Approaches to Improving Alignment

More Common ← → *Less Common*

| Centers and institutes offer a 'second home' away from department | Tenure criteria include collaboration and broader research impact | Hiring and tenure involve multidisciplinary committees | Major endowed institutes become primary focus for faculty activity (with tenure still in depts) |

Relevant EAB Research

 Competing in the Era of Big Bets

 Grand Challenge Research

 Cluster Hires

Emerging Cross-Disciplinary Org Models

Shifting the Center of Gravity Away from Traditional Departments

Status Quo

Semi-permanent centers, institutes, studies programs or generic interdisciplinary studies units

Grand Challenge Initiatives

High-profile institution-wide collaborations organized around a major social problem

Cross-Disciplinary College

College or school that brings together faculty from multiple disciplines

Cross-Departmental Units

Large academic units that report to two or more departments or colleges/ faculties

University Institutes

Cross-disciplinary units with significant, permanent infrastructure that reports to provost

Division/ Cluster Model

Multidisciplinary clusters that replace disciplinary departments (and sometimes colleges)