

DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS: CHAIRS EDITION

BILL DEGRAFFENREID, MARCH 17, 2023



CHALLENGING TIMES

- **ENROLLMENT DROP**
- **POST (?) COVID CHALLENGES**
- **SIGNIFICANTLY EVOLVED WORK**
- **ONGOING DEIBJ CHALLENGES**
- **GREATER COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS**

IT WAS HARD BEFORE THIS

- **BEING CHAIR IS A CHALLENGING JOB EVEN IN GOOD TIMES**
- **THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS TO ADDRESS**
 - **STUDENT NEEDS**
 - **FACULTY NEEDS**
 - **PROGRAM NEEDS**
 - **UNIVERSITY NEEDS**
- **SATISFYING THESE EVEN IN THE BEST OF TIMES IS NOT EASY**

FEWER STUDENTS = FEWER CLASSES

- **WE CANNOT OFFER THE SAME AMOUNT OF WORK THAT WE DID WITH HIGHER ENROLLMENT**
 - **STEWARDS OF STATE RESOURCES**
 - **B.O.T. REDISTRIBUTION OF RESOURCES PLAN WILL TAKE MONEY AWAY**
 - **FEWER STUDENTS MEANS LESS TUITION**
- **WE SAW IT THIS YEAR, NEXT YEAR WILL BE EVEN HARDER**

22-23 ACADEMIC YEAR

- **APPROXIMATELY 1/3 OF OUR LECTURERS THIS YEAR DID NOT HAVE THEIR ENTITLEMENT MET**
 - **RANGE OF SHORTFALL: 1 WTU – 14 WTU**
 - **AVERAGE SHORTFALL: 3+ WTU**
 - **ENTITLEMENTS WILL DROP FOR 23-24 FOR MANY, LOST FOR OTHERS (ONLY TAUGHT 1 TERM)**
 - **NO 3Y FT LECTURERS WERE IMPACTED IN 22-23**
- **CHAIRS DID A GREAT JOB OF REACHING OUT TO ME WITH QUESTIONS**

23-24 ACADEMIC YEAR

- **ALLOCATED WTU FOR PROGRAMS SHOWS MORE CHALLENGES AHEAD**
- **SCHEDULES BUILT, OFFERS BEING MADE**
- **CBA PROVIDES A FRAMEWORK FOR HOW THESE DIFFICULT DECISIONS ARE MADE (12.29)**
 - **IT DOES NOT GET RID OF HARD DECISIONS**
- **STILL VERY EARLY IN THE CYCLE. MANY THINGS AFFECT AVAILABLE WORK. NO PROMISES, BUT TYPICALLY WORK INCREASES FOR LECTURERS AS WE APPROACH START OF TERM**

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR LECTURERS

- **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM** – A BENEFIT TO ALL EMPLOYEES
- **BENEFITS OFFICE** – DISCUSS HOW CHANGES MIGHT AFFECT HEALTH AND OTHER BENEFITS
- **DEAN OR AVP** – DON'T FEAR THE WARM HANDOFF. LAST THING WE WANT IS INCORRECT INFO TO BE SHARED.

OTHER HINTS

- **DON'T WAIT FOR THEM TO COME TO YOU – TRY TO BE PROACTIVE AS POSSIBLE.**
- **MEET THEM IN A “COMFORTABLE” PLACE – THEIR OFFICE, VIA PHONE, ETC. BAD NEWS BY EMAIL SUCKS. MY GOAL WAS TO ALWAYS TRY TO GIVE BAD NEWS IN THEIR COMFORT ZONE**

IF THINGS GO BAD

- **WHILE IT IS EASY TO SAY LOSING WORK IS A CONSEQUENCE OF THEIR POSITION AND THE CBA – THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT THEIR LIVELIHOOD IS BEING AFFECTED**
- **APPROPRIATE EMOTIONS: SADNESS, FRUSTRATION, ANGER**
 - **NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THEM TO TAKE IT OUT ON YOU**
- **CONSIDER, IF NEEDED, “YOUR FEELINGS ARE APPROPRIATE – BUT REACTING TO ME IN THIS WAY IS NOT APPROPRIATE AND IS BECOMING NON-PRODUCTIVE. I DO NOT WANT TO HAVE TO END THIS MEETING IN SUCH A WAY. DO WE NEED TO TAKE A SHORT BREAK TO REGROUP?”**

IF THINGS GO BAD

- **IF IT CONTINUES, THE MEETING SHOULD BE ENDED.**
 - **“I AM SORRY THAT THE TONE OF THIS CONVERSATION HAS CONTINUED TO BE UNPROFESSIONAL AND NON-PRODUCTIVE. I AM ENDING THIS MEETING NOW. IF YOU NEED TO DISCUSS THIS FURTHER, I AM REFERRING YOU TO DEAN XXXX.”**
 - **NOTIFY DEAN AND AVP FOR FACULTY AFFAIRS VIA EMAIL WITH A SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION (A CALL HEAD’S UP IS ALSO GOOD TO HAVE)**

QUESTIONS?