

Chairs Update February 2018

Message from Chair Fellow

I don't know.

Three little words – hard to hear and even harder to say. Yet, it's a phrase I uttered more than any other when I was acting Chairperson (with the possible exceptions: “thank you” and “oops”). Serving as Chairperson or Program Director is an exercise in humility. It is about learning what you don't know...and how much there is left to learn. Our terms as departmental leaders embody Socrates' famous lines: *“The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.”*

Thankfully, there are wonderful resources available to assist in those moments. Confucius has suggested, *“By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is the noblest; Second, by imitation, which is the easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.”* In my own version of Confucius' words, I would like to suggest a few ways to increase our understanding and build wisdom.

- **Wisdom via reflection (or read some things and think about them):**

Time is fleeting, especially for departmental leaders. Fortunately, there are some helpful resources which offer quick answers and connections to common departmental challenges. One helpful tool is the [Chair and Program Director Resource Guide](#).

This manual is a living document, searchable by topic, available 24/7 for fast answers to some of the most common (and not so common) hurdles jumped in daily department life:

- What to do if a faculty member gets hurt at work?
- What's conflict of interest (and when does it matter for departments)?
- Can I buy a cake for a tenure celebration (see the policies)?

In addition to the Resource Manual, the Chairs' Corner of the CETL website contains notes from the annual retreats, articles mentioned in past emails and forums, and lists of opportunities available to Chairs, Program Directors, and faculty this year.

- **Wisdom via imitation (or networking):**

There is abundant research that points toward the benefits of networking with one's peers and mentoring relationships. The support, guidance, and information shared in both formal and informal conversations can be vital even among academic networks – particularly for women, junior academics, and minorities (e.g., Gorman et al, 2010; Quinlan, 1999). Gathering with fellow Chairs and Program Directors offers an opportunity to gain support, perspective, and ideas. In fact, networking among faculty can have positive impacts on changing university culture (Thomas, 2015) January's Chair Forum provided an opportunity to discuss strategies for dealing with conflict and difficult people; our next forum addresses diversity issues (beyond hiring) within departments. Registration is included below. Join us for an opportunity to build wisdom through imitation and networking during March.

- **Wisdom via experience (or what's next?):**

CETL is now soliciting applications for all Fellow positions: Chair and Faculty. The Chair Fellow is a one-year term beginning in June. Primary responsibilities include working with departmental leaders across the university as needed. Traditional responsibilities have included oversight of professional development (such as Chair Forums and the annual retreat), creation and update of

resources housed in the Chairs' Corner, and engagement with the OU community regarding leadership needs and issues. If you are completing your Chairperson term this year, please consider this opportunity to expand your wisdom through experience. I would be happy to talk with anyone who is interested.

Until next month – wishing you wisdom!
Jenn Heisler, CETL Chair Fellow

Chair Events and Resources

[Chair Forums](#) will continue in the winter semester. Please join us for lunch and discussion from 12:00-1:30pm. Upcoming topics will include:

- **Monday March 5th: Diversity Mindset**
Diversity is more than just a recruitment strategy; a diversity mindset offers the ability to think and see the value of diversity in different situations, understand different points of view, and actively pursue stories from a variety of voices. This forum engages the role of chairs in supporting diversity and the characteristic opportunities and challenges. Join us to discuss what a diversity mindset means for our departments, college, and classrooms.
- **Friday, April 6th: Looking Back; Looking Ahead**
This session will encourage new and seasoned chairs to reflect on their past year and plan for their future. New chairs will reflect on their first year(s) and identify areas for future planning. Seasoned chairs will discuss their reentry into faculty life.

[Register at the Chairs' Corner Website.](#)

Other Events and Resources for Chairs and Faculty

1. [Full List of CETL Winter Workshops and Events.](#)
2. **Learning Accessibility and ADA Compliance Training for Faculty.** CETL and e-LIS are facilitating training sessions for faculty on how to make their course materials (instructional videos, web resources, slide presentations, and documents) accessible.
The same session is being offered three times this semester. We particularly encourage chairs to attend, as they can consider measures to help their faculty make their material accessible to all students. Like CETL workshops, all sessions are 12:00-1:30 p.m. and include lunch
 - [Register for Session on Thursday, March 15](#)
 - [Register for Session on Wednesday, March 21](#)
 - [Register for Session on Tuesday, March 27](#)
3. **Instructional Fair: Call for Proposals.** Due February 26, event on Wednesday, April 4.
Each OU faculty and staff create a display (print poster, digital presentation or interactive demonstration) along with a one-page handout of an effective strategy in order to discuss and share ideas with colleagues across the disciplines. [Visit the website to register.](#)
4. **Teaching Grant.** This grant funds the development, implementation and evaluation of evidence-based teaching practices that will improve teaching and student learning. [View full grant details.](#)

Chair Reminders

1. **New Faculty Hires**

- a. When you finalize a new faculty hire, please remember to send the applicant's contact information to CETL (Candace Campbell- ccampbell2@oakland.edu) so that we can reach out to them with a welcome packet, link them to New Faculty Resources, and invite them to New Faculty Orientations.
- b. During interviews with faculty applicants, feel free to bring them over to CETL when giving them a tour and share our website with them (oakland.edu/cetl)

2. **Chair Fellow.** We will be appointing a Chair Fellow for the 2018-2019 academic year. The role involves organizing and running the Chair Retreat, next year's Forums and mentoring Chairs. If you are stepping down as Chair, and are interested in serving as a Chair Fellow next year, or know of an individual who has served as a Chair in the past 5 years and may be interested, please contact Judy at CETL (ableser@oakland.edu) to discuss this opportunity.

Respectfully,

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