June, 2012

Words of Wisdom Gleaned From Howey

Jaap Vos
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Jaap Vos
Associate Professor and Director
School of Urban and Regional Planning
Florida Atlantic University
Becoming a Chair can be a great professional and personal choice

It can also destroy both your professional career and your personal life
A good Chair can build a strong Department, even in times of severe budget restraints.

A bad Chair can destroy a Department, even in flush budget years.
BEING A GOOD CHAIR REQUIRES:

• A thorough understanding of your unit
• Understanding and sensitivity to external factors
• Leadership skills
The best advice I ever got from anywhere about being Chair

UNDERSTANDING OF YOUR UNIT
Never be clueless about any aspect of your Department

“I love a clueless chair, you can take their money and they do not even know it.”
Jaap’s main tools:

• General departmental data and budget
• Detailed trends in course offerings
• Students tracking sheets
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Efficiency</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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<td>Sections taught by tenure track faculty</td>
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<td>% of graduate sections taught by faculty</td>
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<td>76%</td>
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<td>% of undergraduate sections taught</td>
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Summary of Fall 2010

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<th>Core</th>
<th>Spec.</th>
<th>Elect Lecture</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>Intern</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cap</th>
<th>Actual</th>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>459</td>
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<td>Average size</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>27.1</td>
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<td>21.0</td>
<td>19.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjuncts</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Average Number of Courses per Faculty</td>
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</table>
Your are now responsible for the wellbeing of many others, this is not the time to be idealistic

UNDERSTANDING OF EXTERNAL FACTORS
An academic institution is about learning, research and service

But also about things that you do to pay the bills
The state has not increased our funding as long as I can remember

You need to be entrepreneurial and find other funding sources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Model</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Funding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Endowment</td>
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<td>Scholar Endowment</td>
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<td>Named Professor Endowment</td>
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<td>Courses externally paid for</td>
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<td>Dean’s Office</td>
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<td>Solar Roof</td>
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<td>Lab Fees</td>
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<td><strong>Real Funding</strong></td>
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OTHER TRENDS:

• Assessment of learning outcomes
• Accountability
• Retention and graduation rates
• E-learning
• Are you relevant?
Sorry guys but right now it is all about how successful your students are in graduating on time and consequently find meaningful employment!

And by the way you better make sure to be tracking their success.
Good researchers do not always make for good leaders

LEADERSHIP SKILLS
“You have no powers, except for the power of allocation”

If you exercise that power well and earn respect and trust, you will have more power than you will ever need.
Fair
Firm
Friendly
Consistent
Supportive
 Transparent
You set the tone for the Department

Not only within the Department but also with regard to how the Department is perceived by the rest of the world.
Jaap’s things to remember:

- Did you ask Maria how her kids are doing?
- When was the last time you smiled?
- When was the last time you walked into a faculty office?
- Did you follow up on your meetings?
- When did you last attend commencement?
- Are your spreadsheets up to date?
- When was the last time you talked with the Dean?
- When was the last time you talked with Jerry?
- Do you know who is graduating this semester?
- Did you read the minutes of the last BOT meeting?
- When was the last time the university heard something positive from SURP?
- Have you talked with the adjuncts lately?
- When was the last time you checked the budget/enrollments?
- How many meetings did you reschedule this week?
- What is the progress on your research?
- What is your story?
Realizations and quotes that have served me well

With sincere thanks to all who have come to Howey and shared their knowledge with me.
As an academic your success is determined by publication of your research in your discipline.

As a Chair your success is determined by your effectiveness in facilitating the faculty in your Department to be successful.
“No” is a perfectly good answer!
Never lower the bar!
Mistakes can be fixed

It is hard to restore trust
“They will know everything that you do, who you have lunch with, who you talked with at a conference and how long you talked with who.”

They won’t know what you talked about but they will make it up!
Make sure to distinguish between yourself and the Department

Make sure that everybody else does the same
Words really matter!

STORAGE

or

Instructional Support Services
Don’t get caught fixing everybody’s emergencies

Really, how many emergencies can there be in the Department of Philosophy?
You do not have to spend hours with everybody that wants to see you

But the time that you do spend with them, they deserve your full attention
What can go wrong?

“Anything you can possibly imagine”
You are dealing with very smart people .... most of them are probably smarter than you are.

Even though they do not always act like it!