

Affirming and Regaining Authority

A Leadership Training Program for Academic Professionals



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The Idea

What do colleges need to sustain themselves?

Additional and stable funding? Yes.

More students, grads and certifications? Yes.

Better Faculty, Staff and Administrators? Oh Yes!

And one more thing: Better governance? Hell Yes.

The later is what Louisiana Leadership Academy is all about.

A Bit of LCTCS History

Act 151 and 170 of the 1998 session established LCTCS and the LCTCS Board of Supervisors. In 2001, they hired Walter Bumphus as the system president.

Walter had the idea of forming a college Leadership Development program called the LCTCS Leadership System Institute (LSI). It was for administrators only.

Joe May continued with this program until the deep cuts came in 2007-2008. LSI was killed due to budget cuts.

Stage Two of LSI

In 2014, Michael Murphy, the LCTCS Board of Supervisors Chair, encouraged his successor, Woody Oge to re-establish the LSI.

Woody instructed Monte Sullivan, System President, to find the funding for this program to be established once again.

But some things changed in Dr. Sullivan's mind that impacted what LCTCS is doing today.

The New Louisiana Leadership Academy

Monte reached out to his Chancellors and asked a simple question: How can we be more inclusive in the future of our System Leadership? Yes, we have administrators and staff who are experienced. We can hire more.

But we also have faculty and staff serving on advisory and compliance committees. These folks are also part of the governance of our System. And we have Faculty Senates. They should be in the leadership development process as well.

LSI is Reinvented as LLA

SOWELA's Chancellor Neil Aspinwall responded to Sullivan's call for inclusion of non-administrative leadership in the LCTCS System. Aspinwall was the only one to reach out to faculty to join LLA.

By the way, there are wonderful programs in Louisiana that teach college leadership: LSU, SLU, UL Monroe, LTU, UNO and more. These academic programs do a great job. LCTCS's LLA program though, is a very hands-on, short term and focused program to develop college leadership.

What Does LLA Do?

The first process was to find out about the people joining this program. Each cohort did an evaluation from Emergenics that looks at the personalities and thinking processes of each cohort.

This is to simply allow the individuals to assess where they are in terms of how they think.

Turns out I'm very analytical and very creative with some social skills. But I should not be an accountant! Most of my cohorts were rather well more balanced.

What was Next with LLA?

The cohorts needed to read books about leadership, write reviews of these and report what they learned. Next there were presenters at each of the conference meetings.

This included Joseph Rollo at two sessions, Monte Sullivan at all five sessions, Randy Roach (Lake Charles Mayor), Tommy Williams, Charles Moniotte, Quinton Taylor, Sen. Ben Nevers as well as Louisiana Workforce Commission's Curt Eysink for two sessions. We also heard from the college leaders as well including Neil Aspinwall and Will Wrainwrite.

We had to write reviews of the presentations in detail and report back to the presenters our findings.

Mentors and Internships

Early in the program, each participant had to choose a mentor. They could be from the executive staff of our college or a different one. They could also be outside the college system, but had to be in a senior leadership position in their organization. I chose the Executive Director of Planning and Analysis both as my mentor and with whom to do an internship (sneaky because his department was going to pay for the research I planned!).

Basically, the cohorts shadowed their mentors and internship folks as needed.

What we did

Each of the five meetings of the cohort were at different colleges including SOWELA, BRCC, Delgado, Nunez and River Parishes.

At each college we met with the local Chancellor to learn how they lead their college, understand their process of leadership with their faculty, staff and administrators and then report back within our cohort to evaluate.

Each of the Chancellors got a report about how the cohorts understood what they do and how they do what they do. More importantly, we asked Why they do what they do. This likely improved them as well.

Even more

With the presentations, the cohorts had to write reviews of the presenters, comment and suggest what could be better at the institutions we visited. This included what the LCTCS Board of Supervisors had to say as well as well as the Louisiana Legislature. This raised a few eyebrows.

Of course there were very interesting discussions among the cohorts going back and forth just like great graduate seminars should be.

Still more

Each of the cohorts were required to do one of two things: take a college leadership course at UNO (or other program leadership graduate course at one of our wonderful four year colleges) or do original research (which was what I did).

My research was about the effectiveness of transitional courses at SOWELA and the results were distributed to the cohorts as a research paper.

What Should You Do?

The LSU, UL and SU Systems should do the same as LCTCS. Create an internal leadership program that trains faculty, staff and administrators about how to lead their organizations.

The cost is low and the benefits are great in terms of developing leadership for faculty and staff. So set up your own program for development.

Should you want to know more, contact Dr. Jennifer Daly at LCTCS about how we did this: daly.jennifer.lynn@gmail.com

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

The Good – This is a low cost project for faculty and staff development. You need to find one or more folks to lead this at your organization.

The Bad – you may have to find some funding for travel should you need to do this as a group. However, this could be done as individual institutions as needed.

The Ugly – Someone is going to have to sell this idea at your institution and make it stick.

The solution is to be the leader in this project. College leadership cannot take place without development and continual improvement. That is what we must do.

One More Thing

“The purpose of the university is to provide more sex for the students, more sports for the alumni and parking for the faculty” – Dr. Clark Kerr, Chancellor, Univ. of California, 1957.

Dr. Kerr needed to add Faculty Development to that list. Of course LCTCS is about to replace my great parking lot with a new building. Has that happened to you?

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Further Reading:

Sinek, Simon: “Start With Why” and “Leaders Eat Last”

Marquet, L. David: “Turn the Ship Around: A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders”

Scouller, James: “The Three Levels of Leadership”

Covey, Stephen: “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People”

Questions?