SPEAKING THE SAME LANGUAGE: ONLINE ADMINISTRATION CONCERNS AND HOW FACULTY CAN EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE WITH LEADERS

Presentation Abstract: A panel will contrast executive online leaders’ concerns with those of faculty and instructional designers, offering practical examples of the types of information and questions to help faculty and Instructional Designers speak the language of leadership, in order to better effect change and gain support for online learning and projects.

Introduction: Faculty and instructional designers often have requests that they need to take to their online administrators. Yet their requests may be denied. Although the rationale was academically rigorous, it may not be the type of information that executives need to approve their new projects.

1. What are some important things that they should consider to frame a reasonable request?

   3-Step Framework

   a. Consider your needs

      i. Example: Develop a new online course or program
      ii. Needs of the department (faculty, curriculum, program outcomes)
      iii. Need for resources (e.g. training, help with course design, course develop stipends)

   b. Consider the Administrator’s needs/concerns

      i. Strategic goals
         1. Is it aligned with institution mission and plans for change?
         2. Demand for program: Does it meet a current need? What would be the ROI?
         3. What is the competition (who else offers this program?)
      ii. Systems view
         1. Impact on entire institution, other departments, staffing
         2. Budgetary impact

   c. Frame the ask to optimize the needs of both parties (the institution in general)
2. Let’s make this practical. Could you walk us through an example of how Faculty and IDs could apply the 3-step framework?

   ○ **Scenario** - Faculty need to develop BS Degree online program (that has been offered for several years on campus)
   ○ **ID/Faculty Request (without applying the 3-step framework)** - Could you help us put this program online for a certain community organization?

   ○ **Speak the language of the Administrator (Apply the 3-step framework):**

     i.  **Identify your needs:**
        1. Develop BS program online
        2. Instructional Design Help
        3. Innovative teaching methods for online delivery
        4. Faculty training and support for teaching online.

     ii. **Identify the administrator's needs:**
        1. Has a current goal to develop a quality assurance plan for online courses
        2. Need to update certain processes (e.g., withdrawal procedures for online students)
        3. Need to increase revenue from online courses and assess enrollment potential of the program
        4. Has a market analysis been done, showing the need for the program and who else is offering it?
        5. Other parts of the institution that are affected

     iii. **Example of how the ask could be made** (considering the needs of both parties)
        1. Explain the benefits of the program for the community that you would like to reach
           a. Share **authentic** stories
        2. Thinking about the needs of the administrator, offer your program to participate in a pilot group to help the administrator develop and test the quality assurance plan with the courses in your proposed program.
3. Explain how your online program’s participation in the pilot could benefit the university in general

4. Explain how your program could increase revenue
   a. Do some market analysis to get clear about the potential to make a profit for the department and the university in general
   b. Share authentic stories

3. The 3-step framework includes considering the needs of the ID/Faculty as well as the Administrator. Could you:

   a. compare and contrast some of the typical needs of the ID/Faculty with the needs of online administrators and
   b. provide examples of how these differences could result in faculty and instructional designers “speaking a different language”...etc.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Faculty Concerns</th>
<th>Administrator Concerns</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student focus</td>
<td>Individual/discipline students</td>
<td>Total potential student population or available market share</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td>Discipline/departmental</td>
<td>Institutional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course quality</td>
<td>Do my courses meet my standards?</td>
<td>Quality control and consistency across many courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional designers</td>
<td>Optional: I’ll call them if I want some ideas</td>
<td>IDs can provide some expertise in design, online delivery and assessment that many faculty do not possess. Aligning assessments to outcomes.</td>
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4. Faculty often make requests to online administrators at different universities with various types of online courses, programs models, and support structures? What are some factors that you should be aware of as you plan to make the ask?

Do some analysis. For example, consider the following:

- What are the advantages/challenges of different organizational models for instructional technology and distance education at colleges and universities?

- What are the advantages/challenges of different models of online course development (e.g. faculty putting his/her course online; faculty assisted by instructional designer; faculty as subject matter expert/instructional designer as project manager, etc.)?

- How does accreditation and new regulations affect administrators versus faculty members?

- Review 3-step framework