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Building and Developing the Academic Leadership Pipeline

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Building and Developing the Academic Leadership Pipeline (Interactive Workshop)

While many of us in higher education focus on developing our students into future leaders in their disciplines, industries, and community, we often put far less attention on leadership development within our own universities. Several national associations for higher education professionals, including American Council on Education and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities have organized and published best practices for leadership development programs to help develop a robust pipeline of college and university leaders. Yet, despite the availability of these resources, leadership challenges persist within higher education institutions. A 2015 article published in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* noted that of all the threats facing higher education--decreased funding, diminished legislative support, shifting demographics, and more--the most challenging is the lack of attention to talent development and succession management to lead universities through uncharted and shifting terrain (Bennett, 2015). A separate *Chronicle* article notes that for leadership development to be most successful, it needs to begin with midlevel leaders like academic chairs (Lovett, 2017). Universities that lack an infrastructure dedicated to leadership development may face challenges as the landscape of higher education changes and external pressures threaten institutional stability.

Over the past five years, the University of West Georgia developed and implemented a scaffolded approach to leadership development through four key programs, including one specifically for current and aspiring academic chairpersons. During his term as Provost, Dr. Micheal Crafton developed and implemented the first Chairs' Academy in 2017-2018, Dr. Amber Smallwood was an inaugural participant and Dr. Elroi Windsor joined Charis' Academy as an external chair hire. Smallwood was also selected for the inaugural class of the cross-division Engage West Fellows program and Windsor is currently participating in the cross-divisional Engage West Emerging Leaders program. Crafton leads a now bi-annual leadership development institute that brings the university's 250+ leaders and managers together to discuss important issues in higher education.

Session participants will explore the leadership and management skills and knowledge needed at different levels of academic administration. We will identify opportunities and barriers in developing and implementing leadership development programs at participants' home institutions, with specific attention to developing leadership within academic affairs. Together we will brainstorm appropriate curricula and activities to develop these programs. Participants will be encouraged to draft a plan for academic leadership at their home institutions with tips and suggestions offered by the workshop leaders.

Bennett, N. (2015, July 22). Our leader left. Who's left to lead? *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Our-Leader-Left-Who-s-Left/231159>

Lovett, C. M. (2017, September 3). Succession planning: Colleges should practice what they teach. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Succession-Planning-Colleges/241074>