Managing Uncertainty through Values-Centric Leadership

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Relevance for Chairpersons
Values-centric leadership has proven to be an effective way to lead and to maximize organizational efficiency. Leading from a set of core values reinforces purpose and meaning for stakeholders, and leaders to improved organizational outcomes. In higher education, it allows for increased faculty and staff engagement.

Values-centric leadership is of particular relevance for chairpersons in communicating with faculty, students, and other leaders during a crisis and will outline the role of organizational values in creating this messaging. Reinforcing meaning and purpose through values in speaking engagements and in digital and written correspondence is reaffirming for stakeholders, which is paramount in managing crises.

Budget constraints are a constant in higher education, and financial capital is even more constrained as a result of COVID-19. Chairpersons across the country are being asked to reduce already minimal budget can be demoralizing for them and for the faculty and staff they serve. Relying on component values and purpose allows chairpersons to prioritize mission critical initiatives and programs when targeting areas for reductions.

Because crises force chairpersons to think short-term to address immediate needs, long-term impacts are often not considered. A clear focus on values allows for short-term decision making that recognizing long-term viability and future strategic plans. Values-centric decisions preserve organizational and program sustainability.

Presentation Focus
Crises force leaders to think in the short-term to address immediate needs. In navigating emergencies like COVID-19, it is vital that leaders remain values-focused, especially when considering short-term solutions that inevitably have long-term impact. This presentation examines values-centric leadership in the context of crisis communication, budget reductions, and strategic planning.

Recommendations for Chairpersons
The presentation will include a set of key questions and recommendations for chairpersons to consider when making difficult decisions during a crisis specifically in regards to communications with stakeholders, budget reductions, and planning for the future. This will include best practices and guidance for making short-term decisions in consideration of long-term impact as well as managing the emotions involved in crisis situations.

Audience Involvement
Even in the virtual environment, we plan to engage our participants by utilizing polls, question and answers via chat, and even small group breakout sessions. The presenters are well-versed in various webinar technologies to incorporate the aforementioned engagement tactics. Additionally, the presenters will incorporate pause points throughout the 30 minute discussion to allow participants to reflect on various points. The presenters will allocate 20 minutes for robust discussion and questions, and will also have a set of questions prepared in participants seem hesitant to ask questions.