Leadership Progression: Pathways into the Deanship

William R. Graves
Dean of the Graduate College, Iowa State University

Scott Herness
Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, Montclair State University

Sarah C. Larsen
Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, University of Houston
• Land-grant university
• Students: 34,992 (5,371 graduate and professional)
• Graduate College plus seven academic colleges
Non-deliberate pathway

Faculty member since 1988

✓ drawn to graduate education from the start
✓ aligned with strategy for tenure and promotion

Advisor of departmental graduate-student association

Member, then chair, of departmental graduate committee

Director of graduate program for 12 years

✓ led revision of recruitment and applicant review
✓ developed advocacy skills
Elected member of university’s Graduate Council
✓ exposure to the heterogeneity of graduate education
✓ policy development
✓ committee leadership

2010: offered half-time position as Associate Dean of the Graduate College
✓ budget management
✓ faculty, staff, and student interactions
✓ office operations and employee relations

2017: offered position as Dean of Graduate College
Keys to being the chosen candidate

✓ Trustworthiness
✓ Temperament
✓ Change agent vs. stability
✓ Team-player
✓ Knowledge, experience, and vision
Sarah Larsen
University of Houston

- Public, Carnegie Tier 1 research university
- Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)
- 46,000 students with ~9000 graduate and professional students

- Doctoral education has grown over the past 10 years
  - Doctoral enrollment (1500→2300)
  - Doctoral degrees granted have increased (235→381)

- Graduate School created in 2014
Pathways to Deanship

• University of Iowa- faculty member in Chemistry, Department Chair, Associate Dean

• Leadership opportunities on campus and beyond
  • Faculty governance
  • University wide committees (comprehensive graduate program review, 2010 and 2015)
  • Leadership program (BTAA Academic Leadership Program)
Executive Search Firms

Phase 1
• Phone call with search firm
• Information gathering
• Application/cover letter

Phase 2
• Airport/skype interview

Phase 3
• Campus visit(s)
Transitioning to Dean

- University of Iowa → University of Houston

- Public to public
- University town to urban (4th largest city in the US)
- PWI to HSI
- Different governing board/state requirements
- Institutional cultural/organizational differences
Journey

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
• 65,000 total students
• 10,000 graduate students
• Diversity challenges
• Carnegie Highest Research (R1)
• Int. VP/Dean Graduate Education

MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY
• 21,000 total students
• 4,000 graduate students
• Hispanic-serving Institution
• Carnegie Moderate Research (R3)
• VP Research and Dean Graduate Education
Direction

• Making the decision

• Incrementally Intentional
• Training Opportunities (Univ. leadership workshops; Academic Leaders Prog.)
• Self reflection
Progression

• Gaining credentials

• Assessment Project
• Building Diversity
• The Campus Conversation
Transition

• Present your leadership skills

• Listen & Learn
• Find your Champions
• Bring your Experience
Questions