

# Pathways to the Graduate Deanship

Tim Mack

Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Well, here's another fine  
mess you've gotten me into!



# The Beginning

- Faculty Member, Auburn University
  - Carnegie Research Intensive University.
  - Entomology is typically graduate-student only.
  - Taught undergraduate and graduate classes, had MS and PhD students.
  - Had research technicians and postdocs.
  - Published, had grants.
- LEARNING:
  - How to work with students, importance of good advising.
  - Saw how good and bad department heads could have a large influence on a department.

# Virginia Tech

- Carnegie Research Extensive University.
- Department Head (9 ½ years), Director, Assistant Dean, Associate Dean (3 years).
- Department Head:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> time I was responsible for a graduate program.
    - It was low enrollment and threatened. Had to fix this.
    - Faculty issues, support problems, lack of dept focus.
  - Learned how to run a good department.
  - Began to understand how to be a good manager.

# Virginia Tech, II

- Associate Dean
  - 13 departments.
    - 250-400 graduate students.
    - Characteristics of a Good Graduate Program.
  - Saw the College view of education, both undergraduate and graduate.
  - Saw good and bad ways to...
    - Stimulate grantsmanship and research.
    - Promote quality advising.
    - Attract and keep good faculty.
  - Management Training: Harvard High Potentials executive Leadership.

# Georgia Southern

- A Doctoral Research University.
- About 2300 graduate students, 40+ graduate programs including Ed.D, PsyD programs.
- 1<sup>st</sup> time I worked at the University level.
  - Like it! Big picture, vision.
  - Saw how a university operated.
- Graduate dean only.
  - Increased graduate enrollment by 14%.
  - 3 new online master's degree programs.
- Left due to wife's asthma.

# IUP

- Another DRU, yet it is completely different.
  - Cultures different.
  - Management approaches different.
  - Union versus non-unionized.
- Graduate dean and chief research officer.
  - Responsible for 61 graduate programs, 48 centers and institutes.
  - Interims for 7 years.
  - IP, Technology Transfer, the Research Agenda.
  - Ed.D., PsyD., and Ph.D. programs.
  - Creating strategic plan, new mission statement,
  - Heavily engaging the faculty, staff and students.

# What Have I learned?

- Experienced four different universities, and three different TYPES of universities.
  - Multiple ways of accomplishing a goal.
  - Importance of local culture.
  - Great respect for the faculty, staff, and students.
  - Quality workplace, remembering that you affect someone's life.
  - Change can be positive, if handled correctly.
  - Communicate, communicate, communicate.

# Learned, II

- I do not like dictators or tyrants.
  - Cannot work for them.
- Openness beats secretive.
- We is more powerful than me.
- First understand, then do.
- You get what you value.
- Never stifle input.
- Care as much about your people as you do their performance.
- If you risk nothing, you gain nothing.



# Downsides

- Moving has costs
  - Loss of contact with friends.
  - Never sure of culture you are jumping into.
  - Tough on the family.
  - May be difficult to sell a house.
- Changes your life plans
  - Professional plans versus personal ones.
    - Example: gardening.

# Upsides

- More knowledgeable and experienced.
- See issues as more complex than I used to.
  - A department is an organism. So is a college.
- Understand the great value of a good leader.
- Become more selfless and altruistic.
- Forces you to become a better person.