THURSDAY - February 8

10:15am - 11:00am

Best Practice Presentations - Session 1

Presentation/Workshop Title	Presenter(s)	Abstract
Keynote Continuing Conversation	Tia Brown McNair	Join Dr. Tia Brown McNair for additional conversation following her dynamic Keynote presentation.
Designing and Assessing Interdisciplinary Arts Graduate Programs: Best Practices from the University of Utah	Jared Rawlings Kelby McIntyre-Martinez	In today's evolving academic landscape, creating effective interdisciplinary graduate programs is crucial to prepare students for modern challenges. This session aims to explore promising practices in graduate arts program design and assessment and equipping academic chairpersons with practical tools to enhance their own program development and evaluation processes.
A dynamic approach to strategic planning to facilitate conversation and advocate for your program.	Jeffrey Ward	The presenter will examine the merits of strategic planning to facilitate conversation among stakeholders, provide opportunities to advocate for the department, and to make data-driven decisions. The presenter will share his experiences in developing a framework to achieve these goals.
Navigating Faculty Role Transitions into Leadership Through Self-Driven Development	Cheryl Thaxton Rachelle Campbell	The transition to faculty leadership roles involves the ability to adjust and adapt to change. Three key areas are vital to sustainability in academic leadership roles, emotional intelligence, mentorship, and proactive communication tracking methods. This presentation will explore strategies for cultivating and sustaining self-awareness in academic leadership.
Advocate not Adversary: Modeling Teamwork, Minimizing Toxicity	Kate Nooner	This interactive presentation delves into the dichotomy of advocacy versus adversarial leadership in high education. Case study discussions will equip chairpersons with the knowledge and skills needed to develop their leadership style, navigate the institutional landscape, and understand the politics inherent in their role.
Chair Support Programming - What it is, Why it's important, and How to do it	Janet Miller	This interactive session will outline an effective Chair Support Program launched in 2017. This small-budget, intentional intervention's successes include smoother succession planning and seeing chairs complete terms with their health, content expertise, and enthusiasm intact. Participants will be guided to consider how chair support may be enacted at their institutions.

11:15am-12:00pm

Best Practice Presentations - Session 2

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Re-thinking Academic Fundraising: Strategies for Engaging Small-Dollar Donors	Sally Robertson	This session discusses the significance of personal connections to academic departments and strategies for obtaining support from a large number of small-dollar donors. Attendees will gain insights into effective strategies for fostering meaningful relationships, engaging donors effectively, and securing buy-in from small-scale donors to drive successful grassroots fundraising initiatives.
Unexpected Benefits of a Hiring-Focused Diversity Project	Betsy Crawford Grady Dixon Todd Moore	Since 2021, FHSU has utilized JEDI Advisors (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion). Advisors serve as non-voting members on search committees. We have significantly improved faculty diversity, applicant pools have doubled in size, and search processes are widely seen as being more thoughtful, efficient, and effective.
Behavioral Mental Health Problems Rising Among College Students	Anita Hazelwood	This presentation will help the audience to identify the causes and the major types of mental/behavioral issues among college students. Certain populations are more vulnerable than others and these will be discussed. The presenter will give examples of ways that colleges are combating behavioral health issues in their student population.
Peer Mentoring for Department Chairs: Creating Critical Friends	Cindi Leverich	As issues confronting department chairs continue to become more complex, traditional topic-based workshops are not always enough. This session will explore the use of the Critical Friends process for peer mentoring and how one campus has used this to engage department chairs in community building and problem-solving.
Addressing Conflict: Becoming Comfortable with the Uncomfortable	Christopher Jochum	For leaders, conflict happens everyday and while it may never become easy, you can learn to address it effectively and efficiently. This session will share proven strategies, a pre-conflict checklist, negotiations tactics, and use role-playing to help participants become more comfortable with the uncomfortable yet unavoidable task of addressing conflict.
Mentoring New Chairpersons to Navigate the Political Climate of Higher Education	Shannon Clapsaddle Melissa Odegard	This best practice session presents a leadership development program where veteran department chairs discuss best practices and challenges with new chairs. This program facilitates the development of leadership skills through a supportive group process and includes a Toolkit for Department Chairs (Buller and Cipriano, 2015), monthly meetings, and leadership resources.

12:30pm - 1:15pm

Lunch Conversations

Presentation/Workshop Title	Presenter(s)	Abstract
Navigating the AI Conundrum: Promoting Academic Integrity in the Era of Machine Learning	Kevin Shaffer Melissa Hunsicker Walburn Angela Walters	Join our lunch discussion to explore the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on student learning and academic integrity. Share experiences and strategies for handling AI-related challenges, including detecting misconduct, mitigating the digital divide, and equipping faculty for this transformative era in higher education.
Strategies for Managing a Former Chair in Your Department	Stephen Pyle Jeff Youngquist	Integrating former chairs into the department creates leadership challenges for a new chair. This lunch discussion will address the difficulty of chair transition back to faculty upon conclusion of administrative service. Discussion will encourage participants to share issues and find ways to successfully reintegrate former chairs into their department.
Practice Nonviolent Communication as a Department Chair	Yuanbing Mao	Nonviolent communication will be discussed as a popular method of conflict resolution to facilitate compassion based on our choice of language and style of communication. This unique model helps make connections which enable everyone to share their needs and have them met.
Beyond the Pivot: Conversations on Preparing Faculty to Teach Online	Scott R. Smith	In the aftermath of the COVID pivot, chairs are now contending with faculty who may not be prepared or fully qualified to teach asynchronous online courses. Join this a conversation about strategies chairs can use to help improve faculty performance when teaching online.
Note: Additional tables will be assigned recommended discussion topics, but will not be facilitated. Discussion is optional.		

2:30pm - 4:00pm
Interactive Workshops - Session 1

Presentation/Workshop Title	Presenter(s)	Abstract
The Inevitability of Playing Politics as Chair: Advantages and Pitfalls	Domenick J Pinto	Politics is frowned upon as it pertains to leadership in academia. In my roles as chair and program director for 35 years it has become an essential but often unwanted aspect of the position. This workshop explores "playing politics" as a leader and allows interactivity among participants in various scenarios.
Transitions of Self: Assuming or Leaving a Chair Role	Denise Bullock	We experience multiple transitions throughout our lives. Transitioning from faculty to chair is one of those key transitional moments in which our sense of self shifts with the change in role. Participants will work through a series of exercises to discover, analyze, and plan for that transition of self.
Growing Our Leadership: Supporting Leadership Development and Leader Wellbeing	Tina Chasek Beth Leader Janssen Tami Williams	Consider your leadership identity and learn how your identity impacts your team's professional wellbeing. Join us in a session which focuses on your leadership growth through the lens of hope and wellbeing. Participants will leave with a personal leadership framework and knowledge of intentional wellbeing actions for self and team.
The Chair's Apocalypse Survival Guide: Strategies to Succeed as Chair in the Midst of Chaos!	Gian Pagnucci Alex Romagnoli	This session will share concrete strategies for helping department chairs navigate common problems more effectively and efficiently. With attention to managing email, handling complaints, constructing schedules, building relationships, and working with upper administration, the presenters will provide practical tips to help chairs succeed.
Fostering a Departmental Climate of Success: The Chairperson's Role in Guiding New Faculty Development	Toni Alexander Lesli K Pace	With the understanding that departmental success is rooted in careful investment in faculty development, this case study-based workshop will focus on guiding new faculty from being hired to submitting their application for promotion and tenure. Participants will work in small groups to strategize best practices for their unique departmental needs.
Positive Academic Leadership	Jeffrey Buller	Many of the tasks we perform as chairs make us feel as though we're just putting out one fire after another. But we don't just want to be problem-solvers. We also want to make a positive difference in our programs. Here's an alternative that leads to meaningful results.
Using Coaching Skills to Lead and Mentor Faculty Colleagues	Tammy Gocial	Higher education is facing significant demands from multiple stakeholders. Academic chairs must engage and lead faculty whose expectations for their time may be at odds with these demands. This interactive workshop offers, and gives chairs an opportunity to practice, coaching strategies for leading and mentoring faculty in this complex environment.

4:30pm - 5:15pm

Best Practice Presentations - Session 3

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A Titanic Mistake: Lacking a Leadership Philosophy Statement	Christopher Barrick	Good leadership is based on principles. Good leaders act in difficult situations according to the principles in their leadership philosophy. With an introduction set against the Titanic disaster, this presentation aims to discuss the importance of leadership philosophy statements, why academic leaders should have one, and share key examples.
Inclusion, Belonging, and Engagement: Promoting Retention Seamlessly Across Campus	Stephanie Boss Krystal Brue Jennifer Dennis Mary Dzindolet Lance Janda Melissa Thacker	This presentation integrates scholarship on creating a culture of inclusion, belonging, and engagement with practical applications for universities that include undergraduate research and mentoring, tutoring, engagement assignments, travel opportunities, distance learning inclusion models, internships and student organizations, and partnerships with secondary schools to improve concurrent (dual enrollment) experiences.
Fostering Student Success: Using Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to Guide Department Decision-Making	Julie Watts	I analyze my department's (ongoing) journey using EDI to guide decision-making and help foster student success. Specifically, I will use current EDI scholarship about visioning and leading in academia and my chairperson experiences to explore opportunities, goal-setting, models, and impact—ideas chairs will need to consider to operationalize this.
Saying "No" to say "Yes": Creating a Culture of Collaboration and Support	Betsy Crawford Chris Jochum	In this presentation, a faculty member and their department chair will share what they have collaboratively learned through creating a culture that positively affects faculty morale, well-being, and productivity by empowering people to set boundaries and pursue their passion by saying "No" to say "Yes".
Fundraising Essentials for Academic Chairpersons	Kristi Haik Craig Hlavac	Fundraising is quickly becoming a required skill for academic leaders. However, many are uncertain how to get started. This session will explore the skills and strategies needed for successful fundraising and will include developing a compelling message, cultivating relationships with alumni and prospective donors, forming an advisory board, and meaningful stewardship. Participants will also start to develop a fundraising plan of action.
Creating a Culture of Respect: Strategies for Navigating Academic Incivility	Leda Stawnychko	Join us for an engaging session that combines empirical insights from a recent study with the presenter's lived experience. Discover evidence-based strategies to effectively navigate workplace incivility, promote respect, and foster collaboration for a more inclusive and productive environment.

9:45am - 10:30am

Best Practice Presentations - Session 4

Presentation/Workshop Title	*Presenter(s)*	*Abstract*
Failing forward in faculty diversity: Lessons from non-retention	Amanda Bozack Darryl Corey	Presenters and participants will discuss a real case scenario of one department's trajectory from unconscious homogeneity to intentional faculty diversification. Retention challenges, insights, and lessons will be explored so that attending chairs can consider how their own departments can better support the successful retention of faculty of color.
Creating an atmosphere of inclusive excellence: A case example	Shauna Acquavita	While many institutions are requiring colleges/departments to infuse diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI), there is little guidance on specific steps that can be taken. This presentation will share some specific examples of how the presenter have worked to address DEI in their department/college for faculty, staff and students.
The chair's role in creating departmental policy and procedures.	Jeffrey Ward	When you become the chair, you will need to examine, revise, and create new policies and procedures for your department. The presentation will begin with differences between internal and external candidates as chair and when it is a good time to address current and create new departmental policy.
Advancement is for everyone: Demystifying the art and skill of department-level fundraising	Jared Rawlings	This session addresses the crucial role of fundraising and donor relationships in higher education. It offers practical insights and techniques for academic chairpersons to effectively engage donors, demystifying the process and empowering departments to secure vital funding for growth and success.
Combatting AI-Enabled Cheating: A New Role for Department Chairs	Paresh Mishra	This session addresses the challenges of AI-enabled cheating and its implications for educators and chairs. We discuss the role of AI in content creation, misuse detection, and evasion, and explore how department chairs can adapt their policies, training, and tools to maintain academic integrity.
Enhancing Academic Staff Success	Yojanna Cuenca-Carlino Susan Hildebrandt	Staff members are the backbone of universities, providing support for students, faculty, and other staff alike. Ensuring that staff are appreciated, supported, and recognized for advancing university goals is fundamental. Join us to learn of one institution's efforts to investigate, prioritize, and enhance staff success across divisions and over time.

11:00am - 12:30pm

Interactive Workshops - Session 2

Presentation/Workshop Title	Presenter(s)	Abstract
A Chairpersons Guide to Managing Time and Stress	Christian Hansen	In this workshop we discuss time and stress management from the perspective of a department chairperson responsible for leading an academic department through numerous internal and external challenges. The focus is on practical strategies for effective use of time, at the personal level as well as a department wide level.
The Importance of Trauma-Informed Leadership in Higher Education	Jill K. Walls	Drawing from past research and my personal and professional experiences as a department chair, I discuss connections between childhood trauma, adult development, and leadership in higher education. I advocate for self-awareness, healing, and a trauma-informed approach to leadership. Participants will have opportunities for individual reflection and group discussion.
Leading a Culture that Supports Faculty Engagement	Christopher Jochum	Faculty engagement affects morale, feelings of belonging, emotional health and job satisfaction. Furthermore, leaders account for 70% of an organization's engagement. This workshop will enable leaders to better understand how to define, develop and deliver a departmental culture that encourages faculty engagement based on professionalism, collaboration, and effective communication.
Making Data-Driven Decisions: A Workshop for Academic Department Chairpersons	Craig Hlavac	Chairpersons are expected to make data-driven decisions, but few are trained to do so. Admissions, enrollment, student retention, and other data must be considered. This session will provide a review of typical metrics and practical strategies for addressing trends. Attendees will have frequent opportunities to dialogue and work through scenarios.
Leadership doesn't have to be lonely: Co-writing to build community	Lisa Hanasono John Koolage Mary-Jon Ludy Elise Radina Jerry Schnepp Jolie Sheffer	This workshop focuses on the technique of simultaneous co-writing to help academic leaders overcome isolation, time constraints, and shifting priorities. In small groups, participants will practice strategies – such as interactive co-writing, group ideation, and iterative revision – that provide a framework for collaborative writing among administrative leaders across institutions.
Chairs' Roles in Navigating College Restructuring	Benjamin Gibbs Sean Lovelace John Millis Jennifer Rathbun Kristin Ritchey	Six Department Chairs spanning the Humanities, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences domains will guide participants through an interactive workshop based on their experiences leading nine of the seventeen academic departments during the bottom-up restructuring of the College of Sciences and Humanities at Ball State University.
Chair Exit Strategy: Planning Your Successful Return to Faculty	Stephen Pyle Jeffrey Youngquist	This workshop explores the difficulties of transitioning from department chair back to faculty. It provides attendees with guidance into preparation and planning for this important career transition. Small group activities focusing on pre, during and post transition planning stages will be facilitated by former chairs with experience in this phenomenon.

1:15pm - 2:00pm

Best Practice Presentations - Session 5

Presentation/Workshop Title	Presenter(s)	Abstract
Practical Strategies for Former Chairs in the Academic Department	Butler Cain	Former chairs who have transitioned out of the chair role or who have returned to the department after an extended absence must adjust to different leadership styles, navigate changed landscapes, and manage new expectations. These practical strategies can help former chairs re-establish themselves within their home departments.
It's Time to Talk: Having Direct Conversations to Avoid Festering Conflicts	Brigitte Vittrup	Department chairs inevitably have to deal with conflicts and challenging behaviors at various times. This session presents strategies for having direct conversations at the early stages of conflict, focusing on looking forward rather than backward. Session attendees will have the opportunity to discuss real scenarios and develop strategies for resolution.
Forgiveness as a Vital Leadership Skill	Patrick Mullen	Leadership is fraught with challenges and setbacks. Internal and external conflicts with people and systems can lead to feelings of wrongdoing. Forgiving oneself and others can address the emotional toll of facing conflicts. Session attendees will learn about models of forgiveness and strategies to use forgiveness as a leadership skill.
Accommodating and Inclusive Chair Leadership: A Faculty Member's Perspective	Betsy Crawford	In this presentation, a faculty member who has had six different chairs will candidly discuss their first-hand experiences. What can chairs do to support faculty to become passionate in their teaching, research, and service while recognizing each member's unique strengths, including those who are neurodivergent and have exceptionalities?
The Entrepreneurial Department Chair	Jeffrey Buller	Every college and university seems to want department chairs to become more "entrepreneurial." But what does that expression really mean? In this session, we'll explore not only the definition of entrepreneurship for department chairs but also how to develop your own entrepreneurial style.
Starting the Academic Year Strong: Developing and Running Effective Fall Faculty Retreats	Lesli K. Pace	This presentation will cover the key components of an effective fall faculty retreat that allows the chairperson to establish a positive climate, create action plans, build community, and problem solve for the coming academic year. Specific approaches, tasks, and examples will be provided.