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Tackling the Bullies in Academe

Jorg Waltje PhD

Texas Woman's University, jwaltje@twu.edu

Laura Trujillo-Jenks PhD

ltrujillojenks@twu.edu

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34TH ACADEMIC CHAIRPERSONS CONFERENCE - Proposal

Title of presentation: Tackling the Bullies in Academe

Primary presenter information and curriculum vitae or short biographical sketch:

Jörg Waltje, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Center for Faculty Excellence
Texas Woman's University.
jwaltje@twu.edu

Jörg Waltje is the Executive Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence at Texas Woman's University. He leads and directs the Center's programs and services focusing on faculty development and academic excellence. He works closely with faculty and institutional leaders to collaboratively assess needs, develop programming, and evaluate strategies to enhance the knowledge and skills of faculty in achieving their goals related to teaching, scholarship, service, and leadership.

Additional presenter information:

Laura Trujillo-Jenks, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Educational Administration
Teacher Education
Texas Woman's University
ltruillojenks@twu.edu

Laura Trujillo-Jenks is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education at TWU with a specialization in Educational Leadership. Her research focuses on both campus leadership and campus safety through effective student discipline. She is also interested in educational law, moral responsibility, and healthy human organizations. She is co-author of the acclaimed *Survival Guide for New Campus Administrators: How to Become a Professional, Effective, and Successful Administrator (2013)* and the recently published *Case Studies on Safety, Bullying, and Social Media in Schools* (Routledge 2016).

Interactive workshop (105 mins)

Learning objective(s) of the presentation:

Participants will learn about incivility and bullying in academe by analyzing a set of case studies and by devising a plan of action that will help them create an atmosphere that will reign in existing bullies and/or prevent occurrences of bullying and harassing behavior in their own

departments.

Our participants will not only be able to identify the different types of bullying in academe but also familiarize themselves with strategies to tackle this important issue on their college/university campus and within their respective departments.

Abstract for program and website:

Severely hurtful and undermining behavior is on the increase at university campuses, partly due to the widespread jealousy and competition that is naturally prevalent in higher education. This interactive workshop will provide strategies for chairs who have to deal with difficult faculty, but it will also point out ways to create a departmental atmosphere of civility and collegiality in which bullies cannot thrive. We will use case studies to analyze realistic scenarios that can later be used by chairpersons to encourage discussions on plans of action and solutions in their home departments.

Keywords:

Bullying, case studies, collaboration, leadership, solutions

Description of the session (300-500 words):

Bullying in higher education?! -- Although we live and work in an environment in which frank discussions, open debate, and constructive criticism are encouraged and expected, we see that severely hurtful and undermining behavior is on the increase at university campuses. The term "bullying" has become more and more applicable to work-related personal hostility or professional jealousy, and some researchers have indicated that although bullying actions often originate from just one person, once started they begin to emanate from many. There is indeed growing awareness that higher education may be a predestined breeding ground for a "mobbing" environment in which targets are selected and bullied (mobbed) by a group of people rather than by one individual. Bullying or mobbing can become a major problem with both intangible and very real costs (loss of productivity, psychological damage, health issues and sick leaves, possible liability in litigation), and departmental leaders need to learn to step forward and positively influence the behavior of rogue scholars.

This interactive workshop will help chairpersons identify, understand, and both prevent and combat bullying through the use of case studies. Case studies are an excellent way of promoting collaboration among faculty and staff in a non-threatening manner while also encouraging honest and open engagement with topics that are often considered sensitive. We will look at realistic scenarios and then expand those with supporting information such as a brief literature review and/or excerpts from exemplary college/university policies and state

laws. Participants will learn about incivility and bullying in academe and start devising a plan of action that will help them create an atmosphere that will reign in existing bullies and/or prevent occurrences of bullying and harassing behavior in their own departments. This workshop will also furnish them with materials to take back to campus, and it will inaugurate an “Academic Civility Network” that will provide on-going advice and guidance.

Selected Resources:

Burgman, R. 2016. “Bullying in Academe.” *Inside Higher Ed*.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/06/15/advice-dealing-bullying-behavior-essay>

Farley, S. and Sprigg, C. 2014, “Culture of cruelty: Why bullying thrives in higher education.”

<http://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/blog/2014/nov/03/why-bullying-thrives-higher-education>

Flaherty, C. 2014. “The problem with civility.” *Inside Higher Ed*.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/09/09/berkeley-chancellor-angers-faculty-members-remarks-civility-and-free-speech>

Gill, J. 2013. “Does rudeness have a place in academia?” *The Times Higher Education*.

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/comment/leader/does-rudeness-have-a-place-in-academia/2008803.article>

Hollis, Leah P. 2012. *Bully in the Ivory Tower: How Aggression and Incivility Erode American Higher Education*. PatriciaBerkly LLC.

Johnson-Bailey, J. 2015. “Academic incivility and bullying as a gendered and racialized phenomena [sic].” *Adult Learning*, 26 (1), 42-47.

Stokes, S. M. and Klein, S. R. 2015. “Academic mobbing: Is gender a factor?” *Women in Higher Education*, 17 (5), 24-25.

Tim Field Foundation, n.d. “What is mobbing? The difference between bullying and mobbing.”

<http://bullyonline.org/old/workbully/mobbing.htm>

Tucker, R. 2006. “Academic mobbing: Definitions and more.” <http://academicmobbing.blogspot.com>

Waltje, J. and Trujillo-Jenks, L. 2016, “Trouble and Strife: The Increase of Bullying and Mobbing in Academe” (submitted)