

# Virtuous Leadership: Using Spiritual Principles to Guide Department Chair Work

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34<sup>th</sup> Academic Chairpersons Conference  
February 8 – 10, 2017  
New Orleans, LA

Conference Proposal

1. **Title of presentation:** Maximum of 10 words.

Virtuous Leadership: Using Spiritual Principles to Guide Department Chair Work

2. **Presenter Information:** Primary presenter curriculum vitae/resume or biographical sketch is required here, or upload as an "Additional File" at the bottom of the Submission Form. The primary presenter is the designated point of contact and will receive all correspondence about the conference. This person is responsible for communicating with the conference coordinators and co-presenters.

Rev. Dr. Kathy A. Gainor  
Chair and Associate Professor  
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Montclair, NJ 07043

Rev. Dr. Kathy A. Gainor is an Associate Professor and the Chair in the Department of Counseling and Educational Leadership and a licensed psychologist in New Jersey. A counseling psychologist, counselor educator, and ordained interfaith minister, she received a M.A. in Counseling Psychology from Boston College and a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Michigan State University. She is also an ordained interfaith minister, and has served on the faculty of the Ministerial Training and Ordination Program at the Inner Visions Institute for Spiritual Development where she was ordained. Dr. Gainor's research and teaching interests are in multiculturalism and culturally responsive counseling practice, spirituality and counseling practice, career counseling and development, and counselor training and andragogy.

3. **Additional presenter information (if applicable):** Click the green + box to add more presenters

N/A

4. **Presentation Theme:** Choose one of the following: Issues and Trends in Higher Education, Working with Faculty and Administration, Operating the Department, and Leadership and Management. Compelling proposals that fall outside of these themes are also welcome, which can be included as 'Other.'

Leadership and Management

5. **Presentation Type:** Choose from the following: Interactive Workshop (105 mins), Best Practice Presentation (45 mins), or Brown Bag Lunch Discussion (30 mins).

Interactive Workshop (105 mins)

6. **Abstract:** 25-50 words. If selected, the abstract you submit will become the basis for the session description in the conference program and on the website; therefore we recommend that you use a direct and active writing style that explains clearly what participants will learn during your session.

In this workshop, participants will explore 12 universal spiritual principles that can be useful in guiding one's work as a department chair in a way that upholds that mission of the department and facilitates stress reduction and mental health of the chairperson.

7. **Keywords:** Five (5) keywords about your presentation. These are used to help participants search for sessions in the conference proceedings.

Leadership, Spiritual principles, Virtues, Mental health, Stress reduction

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9. **Presentation Documents:** For the purpose of your proposal, we suggest you upload a description of the session (300-500 words). You might also consider uploading a proceedings paper, a PowerPoint presentation, and/or workshop handouts if you have them. Include the relevance of the session to chairpersons, presentation focus, recommendations that will be made for chairpersons, and how the audience will be involved. Keep in mind that your proposal may be edited until approximately 2 months prior to the conference. You may choose to refine and expand on your proposal after you submit and are accepted to present. Be sure your proposal is compelling and includes adequate information to be selected, but it is not required to be a finished product at this point.

### **Description**

A critical analysis of the world's major religions reveals that there are a number of universal spiritual principles that underlie them all. In the secular world, these principles (e.g., honesty, integrity, compassion, responsibility, forgiveness) are known as virtues. Whether termed principles or virtues, such concepts guide how we view ourselves and interact with others. Many authors (e.g., *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and *The 8<sup>th</sup> Habit* by Steven Covey, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* by John Maxwell, [thevirtuesproject.com](http://thevirtuesproject.com)) have proposed the benefits of principle- or virtue-based leadership in non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and educational settings. Such principles allow leaders to have a set of guidelines that can support them as they make challenging decisions that impact the lives of individuals, groups, and even families. They also serve to

support department chairs and other administrative leaders in managing the stress that often accompanies our work.

As a new department chair and interfaith minister, I have found several universal spiritual principles to be critical in supporting me to navigate the often stressful and conflicting terrain of academic leadership. For example, being honest with faculty and staff about the factors that influence unpopular decisions, coupling truth with compassion when holding performance conferences, and being self-reflective about my own efforts to lead with integrity and excellence have guided me through the unique challenges of being an academic chairperson.

In this workshop, participants will explore 12 such universal spiritual principles that can be useful in guiding one's work as a department chair in a way that upholds that mission of the department and facilitates stress reduction and mental health of the chairperson. Next, participants will complete a spiritual principles survey identifying their most salient personal virtues. I will offer some examples of how I have used the 12 principles in my own leadership work as well as share the pitfalls of doing so. Participants will leave the workshop with an action plan for how to put their principles into practice within their respective leadership roles.

### **Target Audience**

Academic leaders in various positions (department chairs/head, division chairs/heads, academic deans, etc.)

### **Objectives**

At the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- a. **List** a minimum of three (3) spiritual principles or virtues (e.g., truth, integrity, wisdom) that will guide their work as department chairs; and
- b. **Identify** no more than three (3) activities that they will do consistently that are in alignment with their spiritual principles.

### **Session Outline**

- I. Introductions and Overview of Workshop (15 minutes)
  - a. Presenter: Who I am and why this topic? (Overview of the workshop including goals and objectives)
  - b. Participants: Who are you and why are you here? (Identification of participants' goals)
- II. Lecture: Twelve Spiritual Principles (20 minutes)
  - a. Definitions
  - b. Research Support
- III. Activity: Spiritual Principles Survey (20 minutes)

- IV. Action Plan and Discussion (30 minutes)
- V. Questions and Answers (15 minutes)
- VI. Closing Comments (5 minutes)