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Development for Department Chairs: Why Fundraising is Now Part of the Job

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Title: Development for Department Chairs: Why Fundraising is Now Part of the Job

Abstract: Development in higher education is often used synonymously with fundraising – and many believe both are relegated to the Office of Institutional Advancement and perhaps the Deans. However, the work of development in the contemporary university is quickly becoming everyone’s responsibility – including Department Chairs. While many chairs may have experience in writing grants to bring in revenue, the skills required to work with prospective donors are quite different. This session will provide all chairs with tools and resources focused on fundraising for the academic department. Donor relations, building a relationship with Institutional Advancement, and developing a department-based advisory board will all be discussed.

Keywords: Development, Fundraising, Institutional Advancement, Leadership

Presentation Topic Theme: Leadership and Management

Target Audience: All Department Chairs and Deans

Type of Presentation: Interactive Workshop

Objectives: Attendees of this session will:

- Learn how to initiate and build an effective relationship with Institutional Advancement
- Understand what fundraising activities chairpersons should be engaged with, and which should be left to Institutional Advancement or senior leadership
- Learn how to formulate a department or discipline-based advisory board
- Analyze and understand different types of new donor documents, such as MOU’s, MOA’s, Pledge Agreements, Letters of Intent, etc.
- Learn how to develop metrics to measure the impact of newly-acquired funds
- Understand when to ask for help when dealing with a donor
- Discuss various to effectively communicate fundraising successes to the community

Session Description:

In response to dwindling financial resources generally relied upon by colleges and universities, many academics are being called upon to find new revenue streams to support new initiatives. While the need for outside resources to support the operation of the university is not new, faculty and department chairs have not traditionally engaged with donors or industry contacts – instead leaving these responsibilities to members of the Institutional Advancement staff. However, chairpersons are now being asked (along with their deans) to work collaboratively with their colleagues in the Development Office to do some of the work required to raise outside funding. Unfortunately, most chairpersons are ill-prepared for these new responsibilities. This session will provide attendees with tools and strategies to begin department-based fundraising activities. Donor relations, building an effective relationship with Institutional Advancement, and developing a department-based advisory board will all be discussed.

Specifically, the session will be divided into the following sections:

Part 1 (20 minutes): The session will begin with an overview of why chairs benefit from building their capacity for fundraising. The various roles and responsibilities of common fundraising activities will be presented, and attendees will have several opportunities to comment and dialogue with both the presenter and one another.

Part 2 (35 minutes): The session will focus on practical methods for:

- Building an effective relationship with Institutional Advancement
- Understanding what fundraising activities chairpersons should be engaged with, and which should be left to Institutional Advancement or senior leadership
- Formulating a department or discipline-based advisory board
- Codifying new donor agreements

- Developing metrics to measure the impact of newly-acquired funds
- Understanding when to ask for help when dealing with a donor
- Communicating fundraising successes to the community

Networking Break (5-7 minutes)

Part 3 (35 minutes): The session will continue by dividing participants into several small groups. Each group will be given a unique scenario outlining a specific situation in which a chairperson is required to begin a new fundraising initiative. Attendees will collaboratively develop a strategy to address each individual scenario. Such activities are frequently helpful for chairs to think through similar issues in their own individual situations.

Question and Answer (10 minutes): Participants will have the opportunity to inquire of the presenter or of any of their colleagues regarding session topics.

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