

ABSTRACT: 2015 ELAM Institutional Action Project Poster Symposium

Project Title: Interim Leadership and the Role of Acting Dean

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Collaborators: John F. Williams, MD, EdD, MPH

Background and Challenge: In late 2012, the Board of Trustees of a state university system recruited a new President for a health science center after an ill-fated merger with a struggling community hospital threatened the institution's survival. The incoming President brought in a consultant firm to restructure the clinical enterprise and a new top leadership to evaluate and restructure the institution's research and financial infrastructure. Nearly two years later, in September of 2014, the Dean of the College of Medicine took a planned retirement and an Acting Dean was appointed while a search was begun for a new Dean. The challenge was to fill the Acting Dean role in a way that supported the institution through a difficult period of transitions and which laid the groundwork for a new Dean.

Purpose/Objectives: The project was to craft short and medium term plans to stabilize the school, prepare for a limited LCME site visit on a new curriculum, and manage emerging institutional issues and an anxious faculty. It was important to decide which major issues to address and which to leave for the new Dean.

Methods/Approach: A 30-60-90-180 day plan was developed to stabilize each of the core missions of the school as well as build relationships across different parts of the organization. The work needed to be adjusted as urgent problems emerged and as fuller understanding of the environment emerged. As unanticipated issues arose, the decision had to be made as to what level to address the issues; temporizing and stabilizing, or beginning work on deeper change.

Outcomes and Evaluation Strategy:

The 30-60-90-180 day plans were tied to measureable outcomes in undergraduate and graduate medical education mission areas. Because significant clinical restructuring was led by a consultant team and newly hired hospital CFO, the primary task in the clinical enterprise was to develop a working and collaborative relationship with this leadership. The previous Dean had not been intimately involved in the clinical enterprise. Many issues arose over the months which required an analysis of the level at which the issues should be addressed given that a new Dean would be arriving within several months.

Interim Leadership and the Role of Acting Dean

Pamela Sass, MD Acting Dean, College of Medicine, SUNY Downstate

John F. Williams, MD, EdD, MPH President-SUNY Downstate



Interview with key stakeholders, identify priorities, discuss with President; stabilize Ed Office for transition

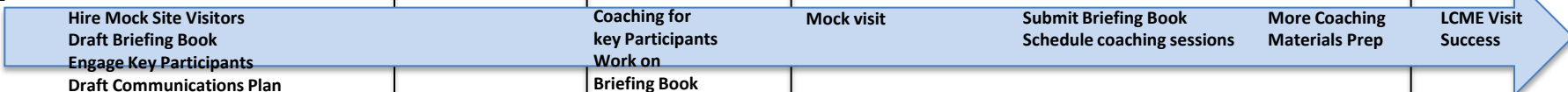
30 Day

60 Day

90 Day

180 Day

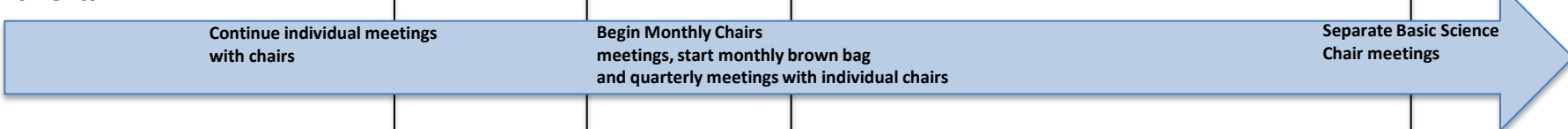
LCME



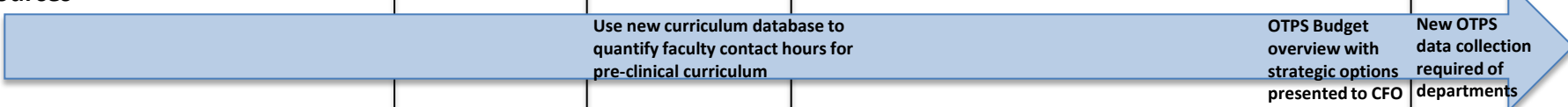
GME



Departments



Resources



The Unexpected

Find interim Chair for Radiation Oncology

Stabilize Surgery Chair

Stabilize PMR Chair

High level meetings with major affiliates to stabilize relationships

Regular meetings with hospital CFO, CMO, and CEO to coordinate hiring

Bridge funding negotiations to stabilize labs

Planned but not completed

Draft performance dashboards for chairs and departments
Meetings with minor affiliates

Unexpected not pursued in-depth

Tenure and promotion changes
COM Research Strategy

Presented at ELAM 2015 Leadership Forum

