

My leadership in administrative capacities is influenced in equal measures by my experiences in the classroom and my scholarly research in rhetoric, emotion, and pedagogy. As a result I prioritize the following: clarity in programmatic vision, critical listening in personal communication, robust assessment measures, and emotional aperture of the communities involved. I view these priorities not just as reminders or aspirations, but as commitments.

Clarity My work with the University Center for the Advancement of Teaching has impressed upon me the value of implementing “Backwards Design” as a methodology for more than just curriculum design. By beginning with explicit articulations of desired end results—whether for an individual lesson plan or a campus-wide technology support unit—one is able to work more effectively and efficiently. With each leadership role I assume, the first directive I assign myself is a clear, compelling statement of the goals and objectives. Knowing this allows me to choose apposite methods for success, whether it is instruction, delegation, or most commonly, an amalgamation of the two. Furthermore, having clarity of programmatic vision leads to more effective and robust assessment measures. I have discovered through personal experience that if all parties involved have a clear sense of what we are striving toward, morale stays higher and higher quality work is produced.

Critical Listening It is my firm belief that we develop more quickly, both intellectually and socially, by listening to multiple perspectives and logics. Effective administrators must not only excel themselves at critical listening, but also promote a culture of critical listening. I have been told that such an approach is inefficient; my experience, however, has indicated it’s ultimately more efficient to create cultures of critical listening, because it reduces miscommunication, defuses tension, and promotes a multiplicity of ideas through open sharing. Just as to be an effective instructor I must listen attentively to the needs and learning styles of my students, to be an effective leader I must listen to the motivations and reflections of the colleagues I have the privilege of leading.

Assessment Throughout my various administrative positions I have seen the deep value to quality feedback data. As a consultant and Writing Program Administrator to Ohio State’s First-Year Writing Program I helped complete a program assessment for the Provost’s Office, consequently implementing assessment structures for the longitudinal study of our program’s effectiveness. As Assistant Coordinator the Communication Technology Consultant program I led a year long survey and focus group effort to better determine the reach of our services and needs of our clients. As an instructor I have catalyzed student engagement through the extensive, experimental use of online surveys; at the request of the editors of the *Journal of Assessment*, I am currently revising an article on this pedagogical strategy to be submitted this spring. In each of these scenarios, prudent evaluation of how we were meeting established goals could only be made because the assessment structures were equally robust and ambitious.

Emotional Aperture Just as a camera lens aperture can be adjusted to increase the depth of field and bring more of the background into focus, so too can our perception of emotion be calibrated to bring into focus the affective dynamics and emotional diversity of collectives. My scholarly research has sensitized me to the role of affective management in effective, efficient leadership and given me the methodologies to engage it. Because I am aware that programs function best when there is confidence and trust—essentially states of affective faith—in the administration, I remain closely attuned to the overall morale of those I am fortunate enough to lead.