

Empowering Relationships Workshop Shared Governance Scenario

With the collective push by accrediting bodies for colleges to improve student-learning outcomes, institutions are exploring multiple ways to begin the process. After discussing potential initiatives with faculty and staff, Lazzo Community College decided to refocus on developing a competency based curriculum. Under the leadership of the academic vice president (Dr. Young), an interdisciplinary team developed a grant proposal to the USDE Title III program to develop competencies for both its college transfer and vocational curricula. The grant was awarded and a coordinator of curriculum development (CoCD) was employed to work with faculty on the initiative. When Dr. Dian, the new coordinator of curriculum development, arrived on campus, she was introduced to the campus community by vice president Young. VP Young stated that Dr. Dian would be collaborating with department chairs and faculty in implementing the initiative. CoCD Dian worked with the VP, Deans and Department Chairs to establish a steering committee of representatives from each academic department to participate in designing the process and guiding the work of the faculty. Within the week, Dr. Whitson, the Faculty Senate President (FSP) informed CoCD Dian that the faculty would not be participating in the project because they had not been engaged in the development of the grant proposal. Based on the proposal development briefing by VP Young and review of the grant background materials, some faculty were involved in development of the project, and commitment to implementing the grant. The CoCD knew that there was a communication disconnect. She stated that she was willing to listen in order to find common ground. The Faculty Senate president stressed that they needed to discuss the funded grant and that he was willing to meet in the CoCD's office later that day. Dr. Dian suggested that they meet in Dr. Whitson's office on Monday of the following week. He agreed. During the meeting, they shared their individual understanding of the grant development process. Whitson stressed that as Faculty Senate President he would not support faculty engagement in the project. Dian asked Whitson to walk through the process and rationale for the project. After listening intently, the CoCD asked for suggestions on mitigating the conflict. The FSP had no suggestions. The CoCD asked him to serve on the curriculum steering committee. The FSP declined. At the end of the meeting, Dr. Dian emphasized that she was committed to working with faculty to accomplish the overall goal of developing competency-based curricula and improving student-learning outcomes. They shook hands upon parting.