

ED NAGELHOUT ADMINISTRATIVE PHILOSOPHY

The role of the administrator in any academic program should be that of steward and designer. While these two terms on the surface may appear somewhat contrary, I define them from a communitarian perspective: ownership of the program belongs to all stakeholders. As steward, the administrator should manage the program as another stakeholder, with an understanding that all administrative duties serve the greater good. As designer, the administrator should cultivate and employ effective and efficient programmatic practices. This, of course, is never done alone, but in collaboration with all stakeholders in the program.

In my mind then, the successful administrator, as both steward and designer, should enable and enhance certain attributes for the program to develop successfully in the future:

- *Transparency*: All aspects of the program should be carried out as openly as possible for all stakeholders. The administrator is primarily responsible for sharing decision-making and articulating the process for making decisions with stakeholders.
- *Standards*: The administrator must maintain the high standards of the program and articulate the definitions of quality for the program. All participants should clearly understand the expectations for success in the program.
- *Equality*: Every action of the administrator should ensure equal treatment for all participants. Likewise, every procedure should be designed and implemented with equity in mind first and foremost.
- *Community*: The administrator should seek opportunities to create a greater sense of community whenever possible. The academic program should be a shared sense of purpose. Conversations and collaborations – among faculty, among students, and between/with faculty and students – should occur on a regular basis. In fact, all participants in the program should engage with issues of the program as a part of their regular routine.
- *Procedures*: Procedures for successfully fulfilling their responsibilities should be clearly stated in writing and distributed regularly to all participants. The administrator holds primary responsibility for assembling and distributing all of the necessary materials for all participants.
- *Support Structures*: Support structures for success, for both students and faculty, are imperative for achieving high standards and for developing any academic program over the long-term.

Each of these attributes represents an invaluable component for long-term success of the program. The administrator must enable and enhance each as fully as possible.