

OPTIMIZING GRADUATE-LEVEL PROGRAMMING INITIATIVES DURING STAFFING TRANSITIONS

Parallel Sessions I: 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Room: White Oak 4

WHO AM I?

HOLLY VAUGHAN



Graduate School Employee: Western Carolina University
Director of Graduate Recruiting and Communications
10+ years working in Higher Education

Graduate Student: Appalachian State University
Educational Leadership, Ed.D. program
Second-year, Higher Education cohort



WHO ARE YOU?

By raise of hands . . .

Supervisor with a new staff member / potential new staff member.

Staff member in a new role / potential new role.

Someone generally interested in graduate programming.

Someone generally interested in succession planning.

SESSION OUTCOMES



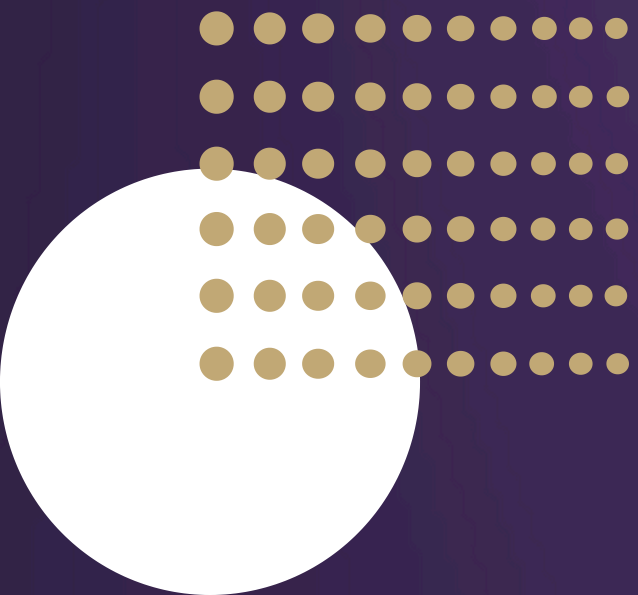
Equip supervisors to prioritize programming initiatives for their new staff members during onboarding.



Equip new staff members to re-imagine programming initiatives that propel the department forward.



Equip both supervisors and new staff members to participate in improved succession planning.



MID-SEMESTER TRANSITION?

The type of new staff member will impact your onboarding plan.

new to role
new to department
new to institution

highest level of overall campus orientation required
(including time for institutional-level new employee onboarding)

new to role
new to department
not new to institution

highest level of departmental culture consideration required
(especially if moving from academic affairs to student affairs, etc.)

new to role
not new to department
not new to institution

highest level of communication required
(both to internal department and external partners)

TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

Programming decisions that need to be made prior to new staff member's start date.



Stop.

- Wait till next year.
- Remove completely.



Slow down.

- Postpone later in the semester.
- Delay till next semester.



Go!

- Prioritize for the new staff member.
- Reassign to another staff member.

TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

Examples



Stop. Graduate Education Week

- Big lift for staff member / high amount of unique pre-planning needed.
- Cross-campus collaboration / relationships required.
- Additional programming that was not required for essential departmental functioning.



Slow down. 3MT Competition

- Needed to happen in the academic year, but final deadline was following semester.
- Big lift for multiple staff members, but fairly formulaic event.
- Event incorporated foundational role responsibilities (i.e. systems training, etc.).



Go! Open Houses and Graduate Ambassadors

- Essential for departmental functioning.
- Already scheduled/promoted.
- Involved supervision of educational-stipend employees.

LET'S PRACTICE!

Use your handout to start thinking through how you might prioritize your programming initiatives.



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- Remove completely.



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nccgs25

REUSE, RECYCLE, REDUCE

How to approach programming management.

Reuse: run program as directed based on previous iterations in the first round.

Recycle: make changes (after conversations) and turn into something new, something your own, in the second round.

Reduce: continue to make small edits and enhancements as part of continual improvement in the third+ rounds.

REUSE, RECYCLE, REDUCE

Examples

Graduate Education Week

Reuse: One week selected. Number of events for both prospects and current students.

Recycle: Spread events out across the semester. At least one event for both prospects and current students each month.

Reduce: Adjust timing, topics and campus partnerships based on attendance.

Graduate Ambassador Program

Reuse: Supervise based on the position description the group was hired under.

Recycle: Structural and positional changes based on exit interviews and personal recommendations.

Reduce: Adjust projects based on what worked or what staff resonated with.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Just do it!

- Consider creating a transition plan for each **INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE**, rather than the totality of a specific role.
- Does **NOT** need to be a lengthy word document.
- Create a **LIVING FOLDER** so that supervisor/staff member/future staff member all have easy access.
- Set aside time **AFTER** the initiative to invite partner feedback and update the transition plan.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

What can be included?

Emails: include important information, directions, automatically lists partners on the project and timing of the communication

Calendars/timelines: what needs to happen when in relation to the event/project

Digital files: graphics, photos, documents, anything created specifically for the event/project/program

Guides: how-to one-sheets for any technical features of the initiative (these can reside within multiple initiatives)

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Example

3MT Competition

📁 Emails

📁 Social Media Posts

📁 Watch Party Photos

📄 3MT 2025 Timeline

📄 3MT Judge Scores Fall 2025

📄 3MT Judging Rubric

📄 FINAL Fall 2025 3MT Script

📄 Judges Slide for UCM video

📄 Holly confirmation email for Ingles catering.msg
📄 Holly confirmation of UCM Asana project details.msg
📄 Holly email to Top 10 with People's Choice voting info.msg
📄 Holly email to UCM for video project creation.msg
📄 Holly final script share with UCM.msg
📄 Holly first email with full timeline.msg
📄 Holly Top 10 video share with UCM.msg
📄 Holly watch party calendar invite.msg
📄 Joy email to judges with video folder and rubric.msg
📄 Joy email to PDs about finalists .msg
📄 Joy email to potential judges.msg
📄 Joy initial video script.msg
📄 Joy reminder to judges to submit scores.msg
📄 Kate email to current students.msg
📄 Kate email to students who did not make Top 10.msg
📄 Kate email to Top 10.msg

📄 3MT Social Media Posts

📄 10.8 photo for IG

📄 10.8 photo for LI and FB

📄 10.24 watch party directions for LI

📄 10.28 filming combined

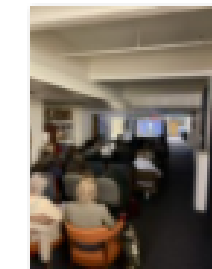
📄 11.3 3mt voting combined

📄 11.3 top 10 names

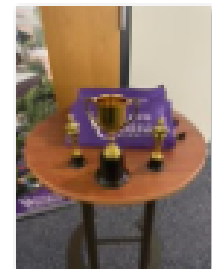
📄 11.3 voting announcement

📄 11.7 3mt group

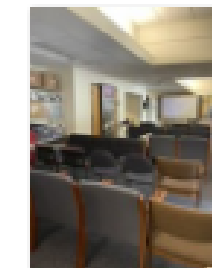
📄 11.7 3mt winners



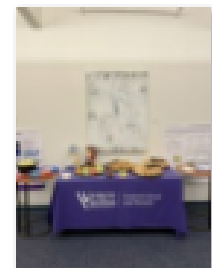
3mt attendance



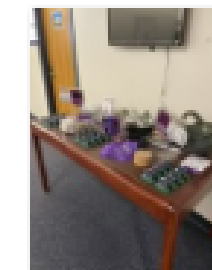
3mt awards



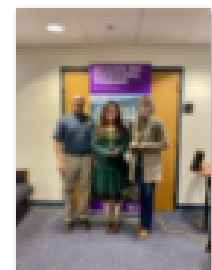
3mt camp setup



3mt food table



3mt swag table



3mt winners with Dean

RECAP

Prioritize
Initiatives

Re-imagine
Programs

Improve
Succession Planning



Stop.



Slow down.

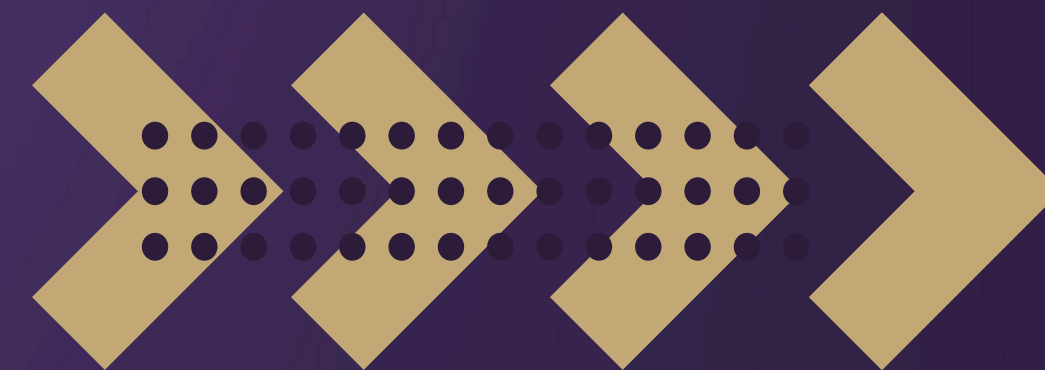
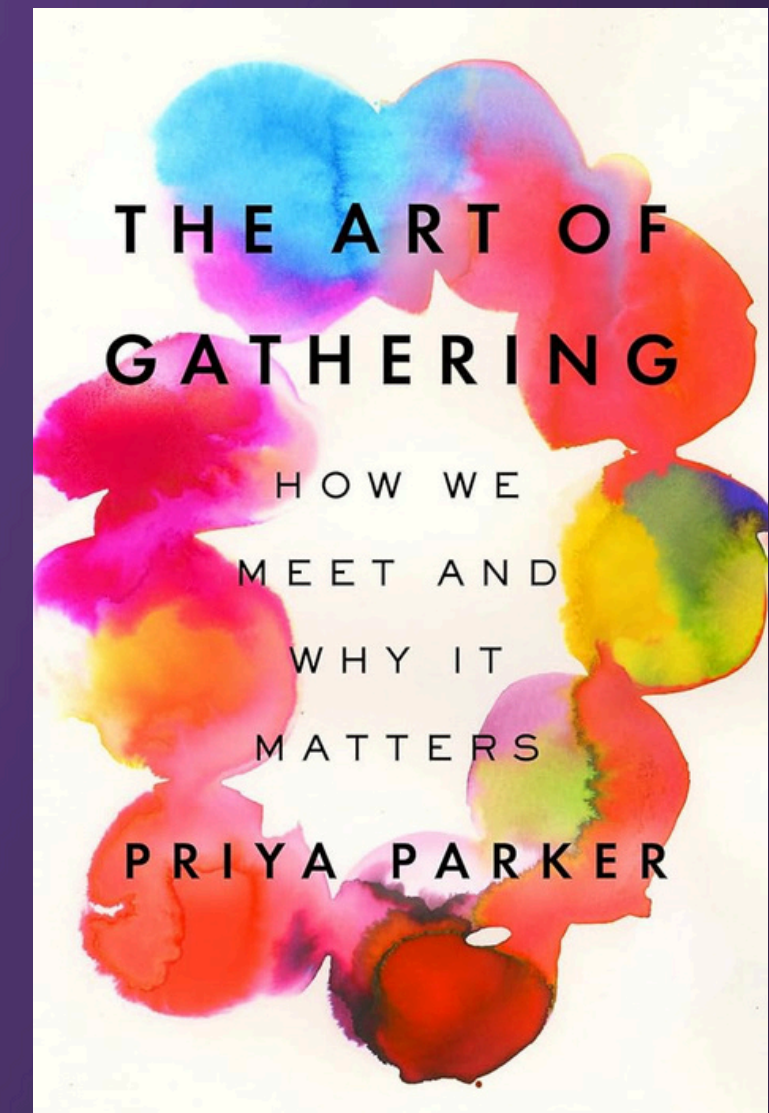
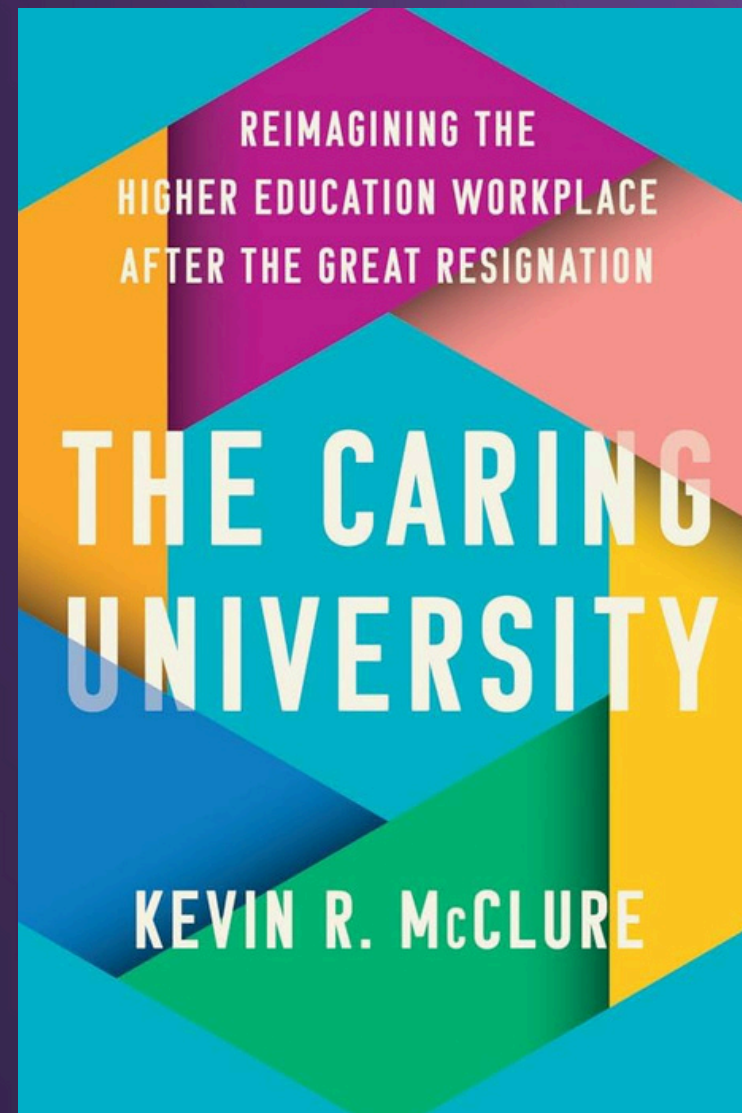


Go!

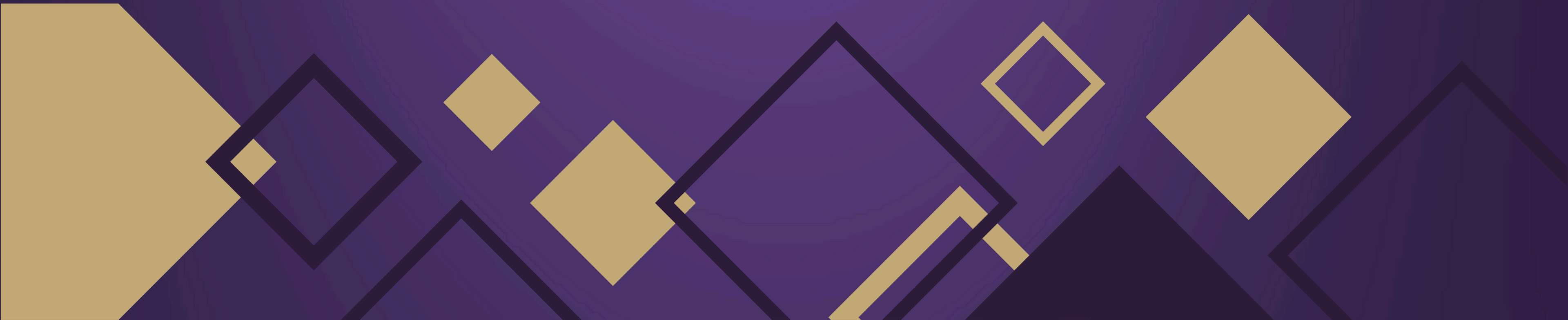


Just do it!

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATIONS



COMMENTS,
QUESTIONS,
INTERPRETIVE DANCES?



THANK YOU!



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