

## **Administrative Narrative**

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My responsibilities as an administrator have included overseeing multiple programs with large budgets and supervising many faculty and staff. I have hired and promoted a number of faculty, recruited and hired staff, and successfully negotiated the many challenges that arise in personnel management. During my stints as chair and during my time directing archaeological field projects with a large staff and budget, I have established a reputation for open, collaborative decision-making, responsible use of resources and strong and decisive leadership. Below are the principles that guide my leadership.

*Strategic planning and data-driven decision-making.* I believe in having a strategic plan and I have been involved in creating plans as well as successfully carrying them out. As chair, I also continually assess the curricula and make changes when needed. I was the principle author of a new graduate program that met the needs of a changing student body and employment possibilities, and I have been involved in various undergraduate curricular changes. All changes were based on data-driven analysis and collaborative decision-making.

*Leading by example.* I know what it is like to be an effective teacher, researcher, and faculty member, which I think is important in a Dean's position. Although department chairs at my current university are fulltime administrators, I still think of myself as a faculty member and this perspective guides my leadership.

*Transparency and collaborative decision-making.* Fairness is a cornerstone of effective leadership coupled with transparency and collaboration with others when making decisions. This is not always the most efficient form of leadership, but it is one that leads to long-term success. In our department, to increase transparency and collaboration, I resurrected the Council, which consists of four elected faculty members. We meet weekly and this body serves as my executive advisory council.

*Creating a diverse and inclusive work and learning environment.* As an administrator and faculty member, I have long been supportive of on-campus multiculturalism and diversity. In fact, such a worldview is in part of my anthropological background. Some recent activities include taking the lead in getting an all-gender restroom in our building, and collaborating with the director of the Women's and Gender Study program to create a position that we would share jointly. We hired an individual last year who teaches anthropology and in the Women's and Gender Study Program.

*Hiring the best faculty and providing support for success.* One of the most important roles of a dean is being a strong advocate for the faculty and providing support so that they can be productive scholars and teachers. This begins with hiring the best and then supporting those who are here so that they can most effectively do their job.

*Liberal education advocacy.* There is growing pressure at our university at the undergraduate level to stay relevant and to keep the number of majors high. One of the questions that I have been receiving lately is "What will I do with that major?" This is a frustrating question because the latest information from employers is that they want graduates who communicate well (written and oral), work effectively in groups, are good problem solvers, and can function well in a diverse work environment. In fact, they want students trained in a liberal arts and sciences curriculum. Although there is no single answer to keeping liberal arts and science graduates relevant in the 21st century, the first thing we can do is to recapture the narrative about the importance of this type of education. To address this concern, I have written a series of newspaper columns (many co-written with Greg Simpson) on higher education issues and in particular liberal arts and science education (<https://about.illinoisstate.edu/jmskibo/Pages/oped.aspx>). These

monthly columns have focused on the value of liberal arts and science education, the dangers of anti-intellectualism, the importance of tenure, among other issues. I also wrote the script and selected the participants (students, faculty, and alumni) for a 3-minute video that promotes liberal arts and science: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tkiZB-i1k-U>.

*Action-based education.* On a personal level, my approach to teaching has integrated my research with graduate or undergraduate students. Over 100 students have joined me on archaeological projects, they routinely work in my labs, and I have published articles with present and former students. Integrating students into faculty research is an effective way to teach and I promote such activity whenever possible.

*Interdisciplinary research and community engagement.* It is important that scholars reach across disciplinary boundaries to focus on the issues of the day. As chair I have worked closely with the Women's and Gender Studies Program and joint hires, I have advocated for a Water Institute on our campus that cross-cuts departments and colleges, and I have encouraged scholars in my department to become engaged scholars at the local and national level.

*Making a Difference.* I believe I have made a difference in my discipline primarily through publishing, grant writing, and teaching both undergraduate and graduate students. I would argue that an effective dean should have an established research record. To that end, I have over ten authored and edited books, over four dozen referred articles and chapters, and I co-edit the *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, which has the highest impact factor among all archaeology journals. My goal now is to make a difference by focusing on administration and higher education policy.