

Presenter Information-Primary presenter CV/resume or biographical sketch:

Laura Trujillo-Jenks, Ph.D.

Laura Trujillo-Jenks is the Interim Chair for the Department of Teacher Education at Texas Woman's University and an Associate Professor in the Educational Leadership Program. Books Laura has authored and co-authored are *Survival Guide for New Teachers: How to become a Professional, Effective, and Successful Teacher*; *The Survival Guide for New Campus Administrators: How to Become a Professional, Effective, and Successful Administrator* with Minerva Trujillo; *Case studies: Working through current school issues* with Rebecca R. Fredrickson; and *Case Studies on Safety, Bullying, and Social Media in Schools* with Kenneth Jenks.

Gina Anderson, Ed.D.

Gina Anderson is the Associate Dean for Educator Preparation & Partnerships in the College of Professional Education at Texas Woman's University. She has served educational settings for more than 30 years in a number of additional roles, including elementary and middle school teacher, student teacher supervisor, university professor, program coordinator, and department chair. Anderson has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in curriculum, pedagogy, educational foundations, and diversity. Her early research focused on multicultural and discussion pedagogies, and she currently is investigating issues of recruitment, preparation, and retention of teacher candidates. Anderson's honors and awards include the Academic Exchange Quarterly Journal Editor's Choice Award, College of Professional Education Outstanding Teacher Award, College of Professional Education Outstanding Faculty Award for Academic Mentor/Advisor, Dr. G. Ann Uhler Fellowship in Higher Education Administration, Academic Affairs Faculty Fellowship, and the Innovation in Academia Award.

Proposal 1

Presentation Title: Building and Sustaining a Healthy and Thriving Department

Disciplines: Teacher Education; Educational Leadership; Higher Education Administration

Presentation Theme: Operating the Department and/or Leadership and Management

Presentation Type: Best Practice

Abstract: Learning to delegate and build leaders among the faculty and staff, and mentoring and modeling how to manage difficult situations are integral to building and sustaining capacity

within a department. Building a department culture that is healthy and thriving, while also creating a climate for faculty and staff to safely develop their own leadership potential are important characteristics of a healthy department. Also, helping faculty and staff learn to mitigate difficult situations is a powerful form of leadership development. Building a culture of success, a climate that nurtures respect, honesty, and loyalty, and engaging in Crucial Conversations© are the foci for this presentation. Activities and recommendations will be shared and discussed.

Keywords: Faculty and staff, healthy organization, difficult situations

Presentation Documents: Description of the Session (300-500 words)

Faculty and staff in a Department of Teacher Education at a mid-sized, regional university in the southwest United States have primarily come from the public education arena where they may have taught, led, and learned what it means to be a part of an organization that has either thrived or died. They may have learned what it means to be a part of a team and how to help create and sustain a climate that breeds success for each person on a campus. Similarly, in higher education, the departmental workplace culture is dependent upon elements to help it survive or thrive. Building a successful climate and culture along with helping faculty and staff develop skills to engage in conversations that are difficult and complex go a long way in sustaining a healthy and thriving department. Culture, Climate, and Crucial Conversations© can be known as C to the 4th power, as they are four powerful elements and tools to implement in the workplace; specifically in a university department setting.

The C to the 4th power is most relevant when it comes to a department needing to increase enrollment numbers while also ensuring that faculty and staff are supported and have successes in the three areas that motivate them to be promoted and tenured: Teaching, scholarship, and service. The culture and climate, then must be healthy, motivating, that challenges the faculty and staff, and which promotes a friendly, cooperative, and positive environment (Garrett, 2019). Additionally, considering the different impacts that affect the culture and climate, such as external and internal forces should be considered and recognized as possible deterrents to a positive environment (Trujillo-Jenks & Fredrickson, 2020).

In this seminar, Chairs will be asked to think about the most dire items that are impacting their department culture and climate. They will have the opportunity to dissect those items to see how deep they run and what they may be able to do to increase the positive environment within their department. Discussions will be encouraged on what can be addressed and through what steps. Crucial Conversations © will be introduced and pointers on how to conduct difficult conversations about difficult topics will be given. Chairs will leave with tools to help them increase the positive culture and climate of their departments.

References:

Garret, J. (2019). Climate and culture in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Theory and Practice*(19) 1. pp. 67-72.

Patterson, K., Grenny, J., McMillan, R., & Switzler, A. (2012). *Crucial conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high* (2nd ed). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Trujillo-Jenks, L. & Fredrickson, R. R. (May 4, 2020). The five anchors of impact: Teaching in challenging times. Faculty Focus.
<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/academic-leadership/five-anchors-of-impact-teaching-in-challenging-times/>