Leadership in Higher Education: What does it take?
Keynote Speaker: Allyson Skene, Learning Specialist, Centre for Teaching and Learning, U. Windsor

A “leader” is typically considered to be a person who holds a position of authority, or who has the charisma and dynamism to develop a vision and inspire others to follow it. This perception is reinforced by much of the research on leadership where the focus is on heroic narratives (Lumby, 2012).

Such views of leadership, however, tend to privilege certain personality types, particularly those who are extroverted. Indeed, significant research shows that those who most frequently take on (or are given) leadership roles are extroverts because they are much more likely to be perceived as effective by both superiors and subordinates (Judge et al, 2002; Bono & Judge, 2004). At the same time, within higher education, much of what could be considered as ‘academic leadership’ is not actually provided by those in positions of institutional authority (Lumby 2012), and is instead exercised by those who would be much more likely to identify as introverts, and much less likely to perceive themselves as effective leaders or to seek leadership roles in the first place (Hautala, 2006), despite the significant and documented advantages of leadership by introverts in certain contexts (Grant, Gino & Hoffman, 2011; Atamani, 2013).

In this workshop, we will explore effective leadership in higher education. Through a series of activities, we will examine characteristics of effective leaders, identify barriers that introverts in particular often face to obtaining and maintaining leadership roles in the classroom and beyond, and explore methods that can be used to nurture leadership capacity in oneself and others.

References Cited


