10-27-2017

The Move to Clusters – Some Ideas on Structure and Evolution (Part 2)

Don Birx

Plymouth State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.plymouth.edu/plymouthclusters

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.plymouth.edu/plymouthclusters/415

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Plymouth State. It has been accepted for inclusion in Clusters by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Plymouth State. For more information, please contact ajpearman@plymouth.edu, chwixson@plymouth.edu.
The Move to Clusters – Some Ideas on Structure and Evolution (Part 2)

The Integrated Cluster models that are being developed today should be viewed as transitional with a focus on evolving to a true cluster-based structure over the next two years. The work being done right now is, in some significant ways, a hybrid and will likely need significant adjustments as we learn. The important point is to get started; forming leadership teams, and organizing operational structures. This is an evolving, interactive process that ultimately must result in a university structure that is flexible, fluid, flat, and lean.

*Some have suggested that Clusters, in theory, resemble big departments or colleges. This is not the case, although in a transitional form there are elements of a traditional organization. In practice, Clusters operate very differently than departments because as they evolve and the interactions between disciplines grows, they become more than just disciplines-inside-a-department. What will emerge are initiatives and cross-disciplinary strategies and new programs including “cluster majors”, 4+1 plans, integrative graduate programs, and introductory cluster courses.

As always, please understand these blog posts are mine and I present things as I see it. Others I am sure will see things differently, but I hope some of this provides clarification and resonates with you.

*I will speak more to this in a later blog but “cluster majors” refer to programs that combine certain classes, tracks or modules, from 2 or more majors to create an integrated program of study. One or more of original majors may/may not remain, but the goal is to broaden interest in the area of study.

October 27, 2017