

Statement of Consulting Approach  
Departmental Resources Group  
American Sociological Association

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I am happy this year to join the American Sociological Association's Departmental Resources Group. As an external reviewer, I have enjoyed the opportunity to help departments celebrate their strengths and build better programs that foster faculty scholarship and student learning. My approach to academic consulting has been shaped by my two decades in a merged sociology/anthropology department at Denison University, a highly selective liberal arts college in Granville, Ohio. I am committed to helping develop and implement policies that foster innovative pedagogies and active student learning.

As department chair in 2000, I saw my department through its decennial review. It was a very satisfying process, and we emerged a stronger department with clearer goals and a new sense of purpose. I have served as Denison's "internal" representative on two departmental reviews at Denison for the Departments of Communication and of Educational Studies.

During my last term as department chair (2009-2012), among the department's accomplishments were: major revisions in the senior capstone project, recruitment of three new full-time faculty and two part-time faculty, resulting in a substantially more diverse faculty, establishment of a newsletter to connect current majors and minors with recent alumni of the department, and revision of the annual assessment process to add qualitative assessments of student learning as well as quantitative. I have also served one year as director of an interdisciplinary program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and helped design and implement a concentration curriculum in that program.

My departmental leadership successes are based on the foundation of college-level experiences. These include a three-year term on the President's Advisory Board (the promotion and tenure committee), one year as Chair of the Faculty, and three years on the Academic Affairs Board, which has responsibility for curricular issues at the college. I have had several opportunities to mentor young faculty members from other departments as well as my own junior colleagues, either through the Preparing Future Faculty program or my own college's program that matches confidential mentors with tenure-track faculty in other departments.

I teach in a merged sociology/anthropology department, and have a special interest in and experience with the area of interdisciplinarity. In liberal arts settings, transcending disciplinary boundaries can generate innovative and exciting research and learning opportunities. The challenge lies in retaining the integrity of each discipline while finding points of dialogue between them.

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