Why Academic Leadership?
Jeanne Ferrante, UC San Diego

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." - John F. Kennedy
Obstacles to Leadership

- May not be positive career move
  - Research, students suffer as service plays a larger role
- Paths to leadership not clear
- Very little academic leadership training
- Socialization: Fear, lack of confidence about qualifications, “women don’t ask”
- Gender stereotypes in leadership styles
Experimental Data: Leadership

In the head of table experiment (Porter & Geis, 1981), college students were shown slides displaying 5 people seated around a table and asked to identify the leader.

In mixed sex groups, the man at the head of the table was always identified as the leader... 

... but if a woman was at the head, a man seated elsewhere was labeled as the leader about equally often.

In same sex groups, the man or woman sitting at the head of the table was always identified as the leader.

In addition, the sex of the observer made no difference. Men and women made the same judgments.

Virginia Valian,
http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/gendertutorial/nogt02.htm
Dangers of Leadership

• Viewed differently by your peers
  – “the dark side”
• Independence of faculty governance makes it hard to get things done
• Campus politics can be nasty (both staff and faculty)
• Token figurehead?
Rewards of Leadership

• Have a LARGER impact
  – In an area you care about, with more resources
• Help to make your world a better place
• Change can be good
• New kinds of learning
  – Negotiation, communication, collaboration, grant writing, mentoring, time and project management, finance, people management,…
  – Much of these better us as research faculty
Leadership Without Easy Answers

- Adaptive Work: not purely technical
  - Examples: Global Warming, Drug Abuse
- Bring attention to problems, difficulties
- Develop shared vision with the community/team
- Overcome resistance
  - Denial, Decoys, Scapegoats, Reorganize,....
- Manage conflicts
  - Hold steady so tension can be managed
- Take risks and learn from failures
- Difference between self and role
  - When to join the dance, get on the balcony
The Changing Nature of Leadership

- **Challenges becoming more complex**
  - Greater reliance on interdependent work

- **Leadership is changing**
  - From heroic individual to collective activity

- **Top skills**
  - Flexibility: collaboration across boundaries
  - Teamwork: Building and mending relationships
  - Innovation: managing change

- **Preparing for the future**
  - Develop right-brain skills
  - Take on new and broad challenges
  - Find a mentor who practices this style

Andre Martin, Center for Creative Leadership, Research Report, 2006
Paths to Leadership? My own….

- IBM T.J. Watson Research Center 1979-04 and Never a Manager….
  - Great mentor: Fran Allen

- UCSD Professor, 1994 – present
  - Department Chair, 1996-99
    - Developed Industrial Liaison Program
  - Associate Dean, 2002 – present
    - Teams In Engineering Service (TIES), part of EPICS
  - Acting Dean, Fall 2007
  - And next?
If You are Interested.....

- **Try it out without making a total change**
  - Once you get tenure, expectation of greater leadership
  - Pick areas you care about, and see how they fit
- **Find a leadership mentor**
- **Pick up the skills you need**
- **Make a difference!**

“*If it's a good idea, go ahead and do it. It's much easier to apologize than it is to get permission.*”

Grace Murray Hopper, computer pioneer