# FSLI Encore Pre-Conference Leadership Seminar
## Hyatt Regency Seattle, Seattle, WA
### November 11, 2023

The pre-conference seminar of the FSLI Encore was held on November 11, 2023, at the Hyatt Regency Seattle, Seattle, WA, preceding the APLU Annual Meeting.  The seminar, "Leading Change in Higher Education: Evolving Through Dynamic Programming," began at 8:30 am with a welcome and introductions from Cohort 17 team, who helped plan the event. Members of the planning team included:

- David Anderson, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Tennessee,
- Shana Forster, Center Director / North Central Research Extension Center District Director/NDSU Extension, North Dakota State University,
- Tracy Rutherford, Department Head, Professor, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Agricultural, Leadership and Community Education, Virginia Tech, and
- Manpreet Singh, Head and Professor, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Georgia.

There were twenty-two FSLI Fellows in attendance, representing eight different FSLI cohorts.

David Anderson began the meeting by introducing the "Keynote Speaker" panel.  The speakers included:

- Leslie Edgar, Associate Dean and Director, Agricultural Experiment Station Professor of Agricultural and Science Communication - New Mexico State University,
- Allen Wysocki, Associate Dean, Distance Education, International Programs, Statewide Programs, Honors Program, Faculty Development, Student Petitions – University of Florida, and
- Charlie Stoltenow, Dean of Extension, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Each presenter spoke on "Leading Change in Higher Education: Evolving Through Dynamic Programming."  Each spoke through a different lens: Research (Edgar), Academics (Wysocki), and Extension (Stoltenow).



Dr. Edgar started the session by sharing how to create a "so what" research agenda. She spoke about how she had addressed this opportunity through her career path and brought others in her organization to think strategically to build capacity.

Dr. Wysocki shared innovations in academic programming.  In his presentation, he shared perspectives regarding micro-credentials, life-long learning, and workforce development, including what works and how to navigate system challenges.

Dr. Stoltenow focused on the extension perspective and shared how to move from grand challenges to grand opportunities.  He shared approaches for how he has built extension programs around the Nebraska Extension Big 3 and gave examples of the effectiveness of these programs.

After the presentations, the presenters returned for a speakers panel discussion where participants could ask questions and interact to discuss specific aspects of these topics in greater detail.

After a networking lunch, the group was led through a "World Café" activity facilitated by Tracy Rutherford. The groups were challenged through 3 timed sessions, each with questions to stimulate discussion. In this session, the speakers joined the participants to connect perspectives, identify patterns, and share collective themes based on the knowledge gained during the presentations and their own experiences.  The summaries for each group follow this session report.

The workshop adjourned at 3:30 pm.

# Roundtable Report Outs

## Round 1: Questions to Focus Collective Attention

- What's important to you about this situation, and why do you care?
  - Sustainability of our organization.
    - The foundation is shifting.
    - Embedding a culture to be able to shift or be nimble.
  - We are about change.
  - Otherwise, we're dead.
  - Want to be relevant.
  - Want to make a difference.
  - Help co-create a better tomorrow.
  - Serving others / not ourselves.
  - Break down barriers.
  - Create partnerships.
  - Passion for land grant system – sustainability and justify its existence.
  - Food is a fundamental part of human existence – intertwined with culture, supply chain, etc.

- What opportunities can we see in this situation?
  - New faculty.
  - Think strategically about culture change.
    - Need structural change.
      - Tenure revisited
      - Breaking out of the box.
  - More exciting and innovative graduate education.
  - Benefit: Colleges of ag understand and do the tripartite mission in an integrated way
  - Leading universities for writing impact statements, value to community engagement
  - Educating university & public
  - Building partnerships
  - Extension partnering with rural health centers
  - Rethink academic systems.
  - Turn fire hose into sprinkler.
  - Co-creating leadership.
  - Developing leaders better than ourselves.
  - Diversify funding streams.
  - Change the narrative about the value of higher ed.
  - Go back to the original roots for land-grant institutions.
  - To change our teaching model.

- What assumptions do we need to test or challenge in thinking about this situation?
    - Tenure will protect people.
    - Tenure is the best motivator.
    - What success looks like.
    - Journal publications.
    - What makes a position attractive to new faculty and employees?
    - University is the premier disseminator of knowledge.
    - Test assumptions that we are be-all/end-all.
    - We think that we have to solve everything, i.e., be responsible.
    - That we can control any of this
    - If faced with fire hoses, open mouth.
    - Are we sufficiently nimble to respond or proactively act?
    - System evaluation – whatever that evaluation needs to occur.
    - Challenge risk-averse notions
    - Is upper administration supportive of / empowering unity leaders?
    - Org chart – silos and layers.

## Round 2: Questions to Connect Ideas for Deeper Insight

- What's emerging that is new for you? What connections are you making?
    - Social media / digital impacts/communication.
    - Intention in everything.
    - Value in the system.
    - Employees values.
    - Not being afraid to fail.
        - Dream and Think Big.
    - What role can I play – seeing where my voice can be effective.
    - Inward versus outward facing and the meaning of agriculture – who is the audience, and how is ag perceived?
    - Bringing voices together collectively
    - Incorporating qualitative in addition to quantitative.
    - Changing messaging
    - Listening to connect messaging.
    - Frankness and discussion
    - Not in control of our destiny
    - The role of educators with AI (CHAT-GPT) - human connection
    - AI in research programs
    - Still have the human connection - faculty, staff, and students are part of something bigger than themselves.

- What is missing from the picture so far? What are we not seeing? Where do we need more clarity?
    - Reward systems for the new culture.
        - Five languages of appreciation in the workplace.
    - What's the new role of the University?
    - Not seeing the COMPETITION yet.
        - Industry, community college, private, non-profits
    - Is four years still needed?
    - Paths from industry to IHE or from off-campus work to on-campus
    - Leadership paths from all directions – all on & off-ramps
    - What has changed since the Morrill Act?
        - How do we evolve?
    - What might we learn from the history of Higher Ed?
    - Are we comfortable with our "entitlement" as an IHE?
    - Outside fresh perspective
    - Engaging the opposition in a meaningful, healthy way
    - Discussion of how this new model of thinking can work
    - Flip from critical assessment to possible opportunities
    - Cognitive dissonance

- What's the next level of thinking we need to address?
    - AI impact on everything.
    - What should the university "do" in this time of change?
    - Emotional intelligence a transition of mindset
    - shake things up
    - Can take risks - we have fallbacks (many perhaps)
    - New business models
    - Think like the new generation.
    - Additive thinking instead of deficit thinking "We" versus "me."
    - Team thinking

## Round 3: Questions to Create Forward Momentum

- What needs our immediate attention going forward? What challenges are evident, and how do we meet them?
    - Not sure how many people outside of a few thought leaders understand and/or thinking about these topics in this way.
    - Increase awareness throughout the entire university.
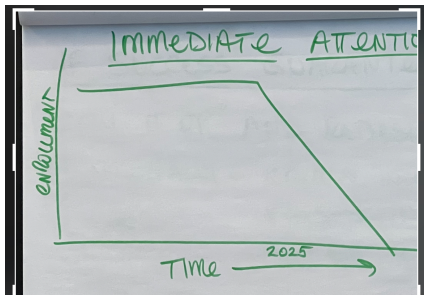
    

    - Is tenure still needed?
    - $$ - Funding model overall
    - $$ - Infrastructure
    - Coordinated across universities
        - Credit hour transfer
        - Engagement
        - Consolidation of programs to be more focused
    - Consumer / public confidence
    - Infrastructure investment
    - Better priority setting
    - Identifying essential expertise
    - Expand/work on relationships (internal and external)

- If our success was completely guaranteed, what bold steps might we choose?
    - National Framework for Ag Research
    - Trash credit system and go skills-based
    - Stop begging for matches and give more equally
    - Fund facilities
    - "Blow it up" and redesign intentionally
        - Critical in our region
        - Ecosystems
        - Win-Win-Win Approach
    - Lang Grant Ecosystem – multistate extension programming, multistate research
    - Reevaluate tenure
    - Get rid of grades
    - Get rid of annual evaluations

- - Make everyone 12-month appointments

- What seed might we plant together today that could make the most difference to the future of our institutions?
  - Create an environment to be more entrepreneurial and take risks.