

Florida Education Fund
“The Ph.D. Experience: Expectations and Realities”

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- I recognize the worth and value of your efforts.
- Thank Florida Education Fund for invitation and for continuing commitment to our graduate students in the State University System.
- Three challenges for graduate students as they prepare for professional life:
 - Environmental
 - Individual
 - Institutional



Environmental Challenges

- Globalization

- Process that has contradictory impacts:
 - It fosters both coherence and fragmentation
 - While it brings us closer together, it also pulverizes communities by fostering greater income inequality
 - Opens global economy to global skill sets



Environmental Challenges

- Technology

- Ray Kurzweil: technological change is exponential:

- The Age of the Spiritual Machine – amount of change in first two decades of this century

- The Singularity is Near – information technology and human knowledge will merge – human and machine cognition will be one

- Francis Fukuyama – “posthuman” stage of history



BIONIC ATHLETES

IS BASEBALL READY FOR THIS GUY? ARE YOU?
THE DEBATE STARTS ON PAGE 52.

PLUS: PAU GASOL
FEUDING SHORTSTOPS
KENNY MAYNE'S POP QUIZ
FREE EXPN MAGAZINE INSIDE!

122 PRO TEAMS
ULTRA STAN



Environmental Challenges

- Micro- and Macro-Trends

- We see a variety of new developments

- Internet marrieds, working retirees, extreme commuters, 30 wingers, pet parents, pampering parents, helicopter parents, mildly disordered, young knitters, high school moguls, aspiring snipers, social geeks, new luddites, tech fatales, gamers, home-schooled



At the Individual Level

- Individual

- Literature is rich with self-reflection and an earnest desire to be more responsive and student-centered.
- It focuses more on student success and integrative learning.
- It addresses challenges to the learning process and student engagement.



At the Individual Level

- I can agree with these initiatives, BUT...
 - I am particularly concerned with other facets of your work.
 - I would ask you to evaluate your communication style.
 - There are two critical components to this:
 - Do you listen well?
 - Do you focus on the what people are saying and NOT saying?
 - Do you integrate their body language with their words?
 - Are you patient enough to listen well?



At the Individual Level

- Second component of this:
 - You speak but are you understood?
 - Stated another way – do you take responsibility for being understood?
- Many of us are poor listeners – particularly as we garner more responsibility.
- Many of us are too lazy to take responsibility for being understood.



At the Institutional Level

- Possible Action Steps

- Be sensitive to institutional culture.
- Understand personality dynamics of your department.
- Find a mentor who is positive and wise.
- Stay in your lane – do not become distracted.
- Respect students and staff.



At the Institutional Level

- Universities are complex enterprises
 - Merge some of the most diverse skill sets in the country.
 - Now playing a key role in 21st century well-being given the pivotal role of knowledge as a driver of the economy.
 - Rapid growth in knowledge sharpens this challenge.



Summary

- Your work is critical value added for universities.
- There are challenges at the environmental, individual and institutional levels.
- These challenges can be transcended as long as the values and strategies are there to support this effort.

