



## Breakout Groups: Scenarios of Climate Issues



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## What's Going on Here?

**Maria:** I think we need a mentoring program for our grad students; it's been demonstrated to reduce time to degree.

**Paul:** We tried that a few years ago and it was a big waste of time.

**Peter:** I've been grad director for 12 years, so our last effort must have been before my time, but I agree these things can consume a lot of time with little reward.

**John:** While I wasn't directly involved, we did that in my last department and it worked really well. We saw retention rates go through the roof.

**Paul:** John raises some good points. And Peter, we've been discussing the fact that our student retention rates are too low. Maybe we should listen to John because he brings expertise to the table.

**John:** I'd be happy to work up a plan if you'd like.

**Peter:** It seems to me that you're busy enough so why don't you give the details of what you did at Penn to Maria and let her write it up. Can you get it to me in 2 weeks? If it looks good, I'll present it during our next department meeting.



As a department head, in what ways might this conversation cause you concern?



What could you do?  
*When life intrudes on work*

- Cliff, an associate professor, typically teaches the required course for undergraduate majors from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Monday nights. His ailing mother has recently moved in with him. He must be home by 6:00 p.m. when the nurse leaves. Cliff is spending 10-15 hours a week managing his mom's health care issues.



What can you as department head do to facilitate maintaining Cliff's productivity and commitment while still attending to his family obligations?



What could you do?

*The Power of Inclusion, Collaboration & Fairness*

- Janet, an assistant professor, has been asked by Mark and Tom to join a team submitting a grant proposal that has a required component on faculty and/or student diversity. They tell her that they really need her to be part of the team to legitimate the proposal. When she asks when they will next meet, Mark replies that he just needs her cv and asks if she can work on the logistics of the site visit with the department admin, and that she won't need to attend any meetings. She asks about the budget and Mark replies that he is working that out with Tom. Janet is feeling that something is amiss.



If Janet came to you for advice about her possible involvement, how might you respond? Reflect on what you might do.