



## Provost: Experiences, Reflections and Advice From a Former "Number Two" on Campus

*Larry A. Nielsen*

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A guide to the inner workings of our universities, and the roles and responsibilities of the Provost position

"Nielsen's years on the faculty and in positions of Department Head, Director, Dean, and Provost provide him a depth of knowledge and special insights about the inner workings of the academy across several institutions. His uncanny capacity for reflection upon and synthesis of those experiences, including the unfortunate circumstances that led to his resignation, and translation of them into meaningful analysis and prose lend credence to his advice and make this a book worth reading – not only for aspiring Provosts, but also for faculty, Deans, and Presidents.

Read this book and learn about the inner workings of our universities, the roles and responsibilities of the Provost position, the subtle dimensions of effective leadership, and, equally as interesting, the experiences and reflections of an individual who loves the academy."?D.H. DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, The University of Rhode Island

What is a Provost—and what does a Provost do?

Don't look for the answers on the bookshelf. There is scant literature devoted to the Provost-ship – for which the author advances a number of hypotheses – so, until this informal and autobiographical account, there has been little for aspirants or new appointees to draw on for guidance or to provide a feel for what the role entails.

Larry Nielsen offers a highly personal account of his tenure as Provost of North Carolina State University, from his unexpected invitation by the Chancellor to act as interim Provost, to the events that forced his resignation four years later, and brought him unwanted notoriety.

In a fast-paced, self-deprecating style he invites the reader to share the activities that crowded his schedule, the symbolic character of the role, its opportunities to shape policy, and its limitations, as well as the joy and satisfaction he derived from making a difference in people's lives and the institution. We see him in action, and get a sense of the role, as he addresses problems large and small. He shares insights on the governance of a large public institution, on how monies are allocated, and funds made available for strategic initiatives. By the end of the book, we gain an understanding of the myriad roles of the "number two" position of the institution, responsible for the direction and functioning of all its academic and curricular affairs, that Larry Nielsen characterized for himself as "the University's stay-at-home Dad."

For those interested in taking on the highest administrative positions in higher education Nielsen offers a window into that world.



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