Transnational Education: Developing Leadership Capability

Module C – Component 2 narrative:

Walter was a unit coordinator who ensured that his team was prepared (with the unit outline and teaching materials) at least a month before each semester. He had regular meetings with his team and he distributed a weekly email newsletter. He distributed marking keys and exemplars immediately after each assignment was due and he held moderation meetings. Walter was also organised in terms of the students, making sure that the unit outline and subject information was available in the student Learning Management System (LMS) at the start of each semester’s orientation week.

Nayeem, the course coordinator of the large course for which Walter’s unit was a core first year unit, had forgotten to inform Walter that the course was now offered off shore. The deal was done by the previous course coordinator, and though Nayeem had taken on the role of course coordinator at the end of the previous year, he had missed the details when conducting the annual course review process.

During orientation week, Walter received an email from Jeya, the unit coordinator on the offshore campus, introducing herself and requesting unit information and teaching materials. This was the first time Walter had heard about the unit being offered elsewhere and though he was unclear about his responsibilities to Jeya and to the offshore students, Walter sends Jeya everything he has. The ensuing correspondence takes some time and Walter is resentful about the unexpected increased workload at an already hectic time of the year.

Jeya, unable to access copies of the textbook, sets another text for her students and though her students have access to the same LMS as the Australian students, she modifies one of the online assessments. She also changes another assessment that her students feel is ‘too Australian’ in context. She later grants her students an extension on the assignment submission date because there were availability issues with a key resource. Walter’s students discover this via their online communication with their offshore peers, and complain. Walter informs Jeya, that in the future as he is the unit coordinator, only he can grant extensions to assessment deadlines. Jeya accepts this though she sees herself as a unit coordinator as well.

Walter includes Jeya in his moderation in meetings after each assessment, but apart from being given the final marks for each assessment, there is little other correspondence.

At the end of the semester, the Board of Examiners meeting (for the whole year group of that course) ends awkwardly, when the final marks are revealed and
the offshore campus students have generally higher marks than the Australian campus students. Nayeem decides to scale the offshore students’ marks for that unit to match the Australian campus results. Jeya indicates that though she has not revealed the final marks to her students, the scaled marks will raise questions. Though this concern is dismissed by Nayeem, Walter is uncomfortable and resolves to discuss the assessments with Jeya at the beginning of the following semester.

**Discussion:**

* What responsibilities do coordinators of courses/programs on Australian campuses have to ensure that their unit/subject coordinators fulfil their responsibilities to those operating on other locations?

* Which university policies are key for a unit coordinator to use when managing the assessment and moderation process?

* Using the ICVF identify leadership behaviours of Nayeem, Walter and Jeya.

* What leadership behaviour/s might Walter and Jeya use to ensure both they, and their students, have a more satisfactory experience in future semesters?