

Heart of Higher Education: Embracing Uncertainty, Facing Impermanence,
and Cultivating Resilience in Our Academic Community

The Heart of Higher Education (HOHE) is an opportunity to gather as a DU community to share the challenges and opportunities of transcending the institutional, professional and personal choices that tend to separate core identity/integrity from day to day actions. The meetings are open to all faculty (of any rank) and staff (of any title). The Conversations are facilitated by Dr. Paul Michalec, OTL Faculty Teaching Fellow, and Clinical Professor in the Morgridge College of Education. The Heart of Higher Education Conversations create a positive and constructive space where staff and faculty can explore ways of re-connecting calling with professional responsibilities. In this academic year we will investigate the themes of uncertainty, impermanence, and resilience in academia.

Our time together is bounded by norms designed to create an open invitation to share while respecting individual choices to not share at a particular time. Prior to each meeting an agenda and brief reflective reading is sent out.

Three individuals who attended past Heart of Higher Education Conversations offer the following observations:

“I value the opportunity to connect in a personal and intellectual way with other like-minded DU colleagues. The welcoming, caring environment allows me the opportunity to put aside titles, positions, levels of education, etc. for a few minutes and just focus on the shared humanity of striving to find purpose and meaning in our work and lives.”

“Heart of Higher Education fills my soul each month as I gain insights and reminders of how my inner life is connected with my work with students. I am grateful for the vulnerability of my colleagues who share openly about how they integrate their authentic selves with the work that they do.”

“The Heart of Higher Education is a space where we can show up as our whole selves. I am so looking forward to continuing with this beautiful group and our soulful conversations this quarter! And, even though I can't make every meeting, I loved reading this poem, and I'm going to make certain I have some time to reflect upon it. What a gift.”

Meeting Schedule (two meetings a month with the same content)

-Sept 23rd, 12:00-1:00

-Sept 24th, 10:00-11:00

-Oct 21st, 12:00-1:00

-Oct 22nd, 10:00-11:00

-Nov 23rd, 12:00-1:00

-Nov 24th, 10:00-11:00

(Zoom Call at <https://udenver.zoom.us/j/9341740736>)

For more information please contact Paul Michalec at paul.michalec@du.edu