Douglas A. Hallenbeck, Ph.D.
Administrative Philosophy

My leadership style includes beginning with one simple question: “What does perfect look like?” Then, working with others to make perfect a reality, I bring staff and students together to work collaboratively to find the best direction to go and to discern how to put it into action. I like to get a wide variety of opinions and perspectives that challenge me to look at our work from multiple angles. I also believe in surrounding myself with good people and allowing them to do their job. It is my job to set the course and then to get out of their way.

My administrative philosophy is rooted in systems theory, which all parts of the whole interact as a system. Therefore, all parts of an organization work together and that is that interaction that impacts the success of the organization. This means departments within and across divisions working together. As an example from my career of over 20 years, I have led large, comprehensive departments and have been an integral part of the development of strategic collaborative relationships between Student Life areas and our Academic Affairs partners. It is the role of the administration to provide opportunities and remove obstacles for students to be successful, all the while focus on student learning and success.

I believe in the value of all members of the organization to impact the lives of those we serve. While there is a great difference between the frontline custodial staff and a Vice President; we all have regular opportunities to interact on both a professional and a personal level. A large part of my success is in going out and talking to staff, showing an interest in them, and getting to know them as individuals. This goes a long way in having staff feel welcome, wanted, and included. We strive to have staff at all levels understand the importance of their roles in the success of their area and the students they serve. Each one of us has the potential to make a positive impact. Because our staff members understand their roles, the importance of their roles, and how they individually and collectively contribute in the success of the organization, we are able to increase our effectiveness and meet our student learning outcomes and goals.

I also believe in the importance of assessment and using data to drive strategic planning. Using this philosophy while at Clemson University (2008 to the present), I have successfully controlled operational expenses and kept them at the same level without compromising service or quality. By increasing efficiencies, improving staff buy-in, and strategically investing in our facilities and programs, we have surpassed expectations and excelled in our operations and services. In fact, we developed and are in the process of executing a strategic plan that includes the largest single capital project in Clemson’s history. I have also worked closely with the Vice President for Finance and Operations to develop a financial model that has allowed us to begin over $300 million in new capital Housing and Dining projects and to plan an additional $200 million in planned renovations over the next 15 years, while also enhancing the student learning opportunities within the areas I oversee.