

Title: 'A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing' – Reflections on the Identity Transformation of Becoming an Administrator

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As anyone transitions through an academic career, there are inevitably transitions that result in possible identity transformations. I have personally experienced the uncertainty that comes with such transitions when I moved fully into an academic developer role from my previous discipline (history), and again when I moved into the role as Director of a Centre for Teaching and Learning (even though still serving as an academic developer). The most significant transition in my career, and the one that has caused the most reflection on the impact that it is having on who I am and who I want to be as an academic, is my recent transition into a newly created senior administrative role at a different university with responsibility for teaching and learning.

Shortly after accepting the position, a colleague sent me a recent article from *The Chronicle in Higher Education* about moving into administrative positions titled "All the Wrong Reasons" (Jenkins, 2012), with a quick comment asking "what are your reasons?" While there have been several recent explorations of the increasingly central role of academic development in institutional change in higher education (Fraser, 2005; Schroeder and Associates, 2011), which on one level would inform my response to such a question, it prompted a completely different level of reflection about my personal academic identity and what it meant for me to (as another colleague joked) 'drink the kool-aid'.

That reflection, however, could not prepare me for the sense that I got from a few faculty colleagues that I became one of 'them'. Indeed, for a small subset, it seemed that I became the 'enemy' by the simple transition into my new role. In talking this experience through with another colleague making the same transition at my university, she stated that it is almost like our faculty colleagues think we are now the 'wolf in sheep's clothing'. In thinking on this metaphor, and the transformation of identity that I was experiencing, it struck me as quite the opposite.

This paper explores my personal narrative of identity transformation over the past year as I transitioned into a senior administrative role with responsibility for teaching and learning. As well, it explores the results of a pilot qualitative study exploring the similar transitions of others in the Canadian context, who have made the shift from academic developer to senior administrator.