

DATE: September 26, 2019

TO: Stephan M. Wilson, Dean, College of Education, Health, and Aviation and College of Human Sciences

FROM: Steering Committee

SUBJECT: Faculty and Staff Feedback from the College Kick-Off (August 13, 2019)

During the Inaugural College Kick-Off held on August 13, 2019, feedback was solicited from staff and faculty following the activity facilitated by Dr. Marjorie Kostelnik. Individual comments were collected, transcribed, and categorized with the assistance of College staff.

Next, members of the Steering Committee examined the feedback and generated key concepts or themes that emerged following the Kick-off activity. A summary of these themes are indicated below. An overarching sentiment expressed by staff and faculty from both original colleges is that, *“everbody is in the same boat, we’re just in different ends of the boat!”*. In general, following the Kick-Off activity, *there was a feeling hope, optimism, and positivity that was communicated by staff and faculty.*

STAFF TAKEAWAYS

Theme: Desire for Consistent Communication

- More frequent communications/two-way communications (opportunity to receive feedback in centralized location)
- Concern and/or interest in understanding how decisions are made
- Particular concerns related to job security as the College undergoes reorganization

Recommendation: Need for weekly, bi-weekly source of information (place, time, day of the week), includes updates on roles, relocations/moves, committees, etc. (e.g., Thursday’s Memo)

Theme: Need for Partnership/Community Development within New College Among Staff and Faculty

- Concrete directions/clear expectations are provided in a timely manner to staff
- Staff and Faculty are engaged together during discussions related to the New College
- Morale and rapport between staff and faculty of the merging college is priority #1

Recommendation: Opportunity for staff to provide feedback to the administration. Staff are interested in contributing input and engaging in the generation of solutions for challenges related to the formation of New College (e.g., create a systematized approach or process for soliciting staff feedback that is shared with the College administration).

Theme: Increase Culture of Collaboration

- Design culture for collaboration among staff in both colleges

Recommendation: New College activities that are focused on establishing, building, and strengthening relationships among staff (and faculty) between both original colleges.

Theme: Lack of Student Voice

- Provide opportunities to solicit and gather input or feedback from students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Students should be informed as decisions are made related to the New College; Appreciation that the decisions that are made will have the potential to significantly impact their time here (as students) at OSU

Recommendation: Inclusion of students on governing committees within New College.

FACULTY TAKEAWAYS

Theme: Provide facilitated times or opportunities for scholarly/research collaborative group discussions related to programmatic and/or instructional innovation

- Semi-structured
- Thematic
- Facilitated
- At times that least detract from daily demands

Theme: Directed leadership from the College Administration with specifics regarding:

- Clear vision or purpose for the New College
- Timeline for proposed activities/processes associated with the creation of New College
- Steps, processes, expectations, and available resources to implement creation of New College and/or creation or reorganization of academic units and programs

Theme: Desire to have an emphasis in the New College on meeting the most pressing needs of the State of Oklahoma, specifically those needs related to education and health.

COMMUNITY BUILDING EXERCISE TAKEAWAYS

In addition to the feedback provided through the activities facilitated by Dr. Kostelnik, the Steering Committee gathered staff and faculty input related to “culture” through the Community Building exercise held during the lunch period. As a result of the exercise, faculty and staff generated a ranking of key elements that are central to establishing a college culture that respects and honors individuals for their contributions to the mission of the New College. The top five elements, ranked in order of importance, are shown below:

- 1. Reasonable workload and expectations; a culture that values work-life balance and flexibility to meet the needs of students and other stakeholders.*
- 2. Teamwork consisting of clearly defined duties (i.e., clear expectations) and consistent/positive communication.*
- 3. Open, timely, and authentic communication (e.g., transparency).*
- 4. Positive and collaborative work environment.*
- 5. Mutual respect.*

This feedback has been posted to the Steering Committee website and has also been shared with the “Culture Club” Growth Initiative Team.

Cc: Jorge Atilas
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