RECOMMENDATION 14 FOCUS GROUPS
NOVEMBER 18, 2014
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FAULTY CHAIRS

1. From the fall 2013 faculty and staff survey one third of the respondents stated that they had no knowledge about planning, decision making, governance, administrative structure, senate's role, and resource allocation. Why aren't you getting this information? Do you get the information from your supervisors, unions, college website or administration? Please tell us why you aren't getting this information and how the college can insure you do get this information. Do you have a preferred method to learn about the college?

Faculty Chairs felt those not getting the information on planning, decision making, governance, administrative structure, senate's role, and resource allocation is because they are not attending faculty union meetings and senate meetings.

- If faculty do not attend the meetings they will not know what is going on
- Adjunct faculty have difficulty attending meetings because of their work schedule; however, it is also obvious they are not reading their emails
- They do not feel there is any lack of information
- The College President and Leslie Milke, Senate President send out emails with the information
- One faculty chair felt, that in some cases there is a lack of involvement by faculty, and that if they were more involved they would have a better understanding of the administrative structure
- It appears faculty who are on campus and full-time faculty get the information
- The key is attending the meetings and participating
• The Shared Governance Chart should be published and available online.
• One faculty chair stated that it took her/him 13 years to learn the information once he/she became a chair he/she had time to learn it. As a faculty he/she felt it takes away from teaching

• One faculty chair is mentoring new adjunct faculty. This chair takes adjunct faculty member to union and senate meetings

• Mentoring is very important

• One faculty chair takes new faulty to meetings and introduces them.

• Participation in accreditation, Academic Senate, AFT, Shared Governance gives you the bigger picture

• It was suggested that we do something that sparks curiosity:
  
  o A survey and possibly provide an incentive
  o Ask a question of the week
  o Monte’s Minutes – brief summary
  o What is relevant for the week

• Faculty Chairs felt Monte’s Minutes was a great way to learn about what is happening on campus

• Having one area to go to get this information would be good; such as a Central Bulletin or just an area that everyone would know where to go rather than having to go to 10,000 places to find what you need

• Some people don’t open their emails, so possibly offering points for reading their email

The preferred method for getting the information is:

• Emails

• They felt Leslie Milke’s emails are great

• The President is attending committee meetings

• Town Hall Meetings

• Flex Day – President’s Summary, Academic Senate, Union
• Michael Allen, Vice President of Academic Affairs sends out emails. They like the Vice President’s emails because he tells them the direction they are moving.

The faculty chairs feel there has been a change in culture; therefore, allowing a more willingness to participate and provide information.
2. How effective is the administrative structure in making sure you know about the needs of the college such as: (1) Student needs, (2) employee needs, (3) resource needs, (4) community needs or (5) other needs? Do you have suggestions for improvement? (Organization Chart)

- We don't have enough administrative structure
- Deans are too busy. Nadia was very good with this; she was very responsive
- There are some emails that go unanswered by their deans
- Dean’s should send out an email when they are away
- More administrative support is needed academic areas
- It was felt that facilities is still a big issue. Facility needs are not being met. It is referred to as the “Black Hole”. They do have not had a faculty co-chair on the Facilities and Planning Committee
- They don't know when things are getting done. It’s not that there are not good people in those departments; there’s just not enough staff. I.T. completes the requests and responds. Unfortunately, with facilities there is no response
- One faculty chair mentioned that an employee was assigned a work order had not addressed the work request. The employee’s response was that he/she employee did not have a working computer. Faculty chair felt they really have to advocate to get anything done
- Missing structure, positions are not being filled specifically in facilities
- They felt that the Interim Dean Position needs to be filled
- It was felt that they do not know the needs of the community. They feel they should get a report from the Community Oversight Committee. They feel they are here just here to educate
- One faculty chair mentioned they were informed that a five year Budget Plan was needed; however, they were only given 6 days to put it together and submit it. The notice had a memo that was dated three weeks before.
- Information is being disseminated unevenly
Other Needs:

- They tell us about their needs but what about department chair needs

- Construction is happening; however, they don’t know anything about it. For example, they were changing the doors in one of the classrooms; the faculty member doesn’t know anything about it and couldn’t get in the classroom. They were changing the library door frames and adding cabinets and they didn’t know anything about it. As department chairs they are not being consulted

- While they were gone in the one summer another department was moved in and they were not informed about it

- When plans and goals change/occur, no notifications, communications are sent out. Karen Hoefel would send out communications to everyone every time there was something going on on campus

- It was mentioned that there was filing going on in the PE building and was not notified

- There should be more planning than reacting to things

- Communicate the plans

- Planning is done but it is not communicated

- Restrooms are closed for 6-8 weeks; then they start working on them 6 weeks later

- Gateway would send out constructions emails; now that they are gone they are no longer sent out
3. How effective is the administrative structure in making sure you know about the decision making on campus? How decisions are made and who makes these decisions and whether the decisions in your opinion are effective or not effective? (Shared Governance Chart). Do you have suggestions for improvement?

The group stated the following:

- There is a lack of communication
- Budget request were approved
- Notifications on budget approvals is an improvement
- Academic Affairs was not forwarding their request for others to look at the request
- Faculty actually went to Education and Planning Committee Meetings
- Other faculty did not look at what they had written

Effectiveness of decisions:

- Facilities Planning Committee approved a grant
- Gina Ladinsky approved rooms to be renovated which will go to College Council and was reported at a Faculty Senate Meeting
- It appears that decisions are effective
- Everyone thinks they are effective

Other Comments:

- No one knew that Shared Governance meetings are open to the public and that they could attend College Council Meetings or even Shared Governance Committee meetings
- The Chairs felt the organization structure should be posted, such as on windows and bulletins
• They felt there was no consistent communication; therefore, not effective

• They do think things are getting better and didn’t want to get involved

Suggestions for improvement:

• Deans need to be more available and more responsive

• A few committees need to be streamlined. Sometimes you hear the same thing two or three times, as if you are attending the same meeting over and over

• It was suggested that some committees meet every two or three months rather than on a monthly or bimonthly basis

• It was suggested that information should be provided about the meetings: what they are for, if they are permitted to attend, and why they should attend.

• Many topics are repeated in Council of Instruction

• Facilities problems and no action

• There is an impact on how clean the restrooms are; students prefer to go home than use our restrooms. It’s not the staff/individuals its’ the resources. However, there are those that take advantage and don’t do the work due to lack of supervision. They are found using the computers and in the restrooms. There aren’t enough people to supervise. This is something that needs to be discussed because it impacts all of us. Students are sneaking into staff restrooms.

• Leslie Milke from HFAC takes care of her area. Who takes care of the other buildings? Department Chairs are the ones that need to take things into their hands.
4. The fall 2013 faculty and staff survey found that the collegial climate on campus has improved. Does the improved collegial campus make more of you interested in getting involved in governance and decision making on campus? If so, in what ways does the climate encourage you to get involved?

Campus Climate:

- One of the Chairs stated that for many years faculty would just stay in the department. They were afraid. They also stated that the yelling was disturbing. "It was a nightmare."
- It has improved dramatically, as long as we are consistent on how we handle conflict on this campus
- At this time it appears that one group is not more powerful that the other
- There was a feeling that community members were given too much power
- It didn’t matter who had the power; it was just too much power
- One Chair stated he/she stopped attending any meetings and events and that last year was terrible
- Faculty were allowed to undermine the process and there wasn’t anything anyone could do
- Faculty would be crying every week; chair could only say “Sorry you just need to tolerate it.” That faculty member felt harassed.
- This year is much better
- AFT and Senate are working together
- Senate meetings are upbeat, there is a good vibe, there is order
- There are consistent rules; which is to be professional and collegial
- Those that speak up at meetings need to present a solution and not problems
- There should be more social things that bring us together because the current social events have gone a long way to bring people together and generate interest
• There should be more celebratory events on campus

• The President has done a good job trying to dissuade certain groups from starting a ruckus on campus. Another chair agreed; however, the he/she felt he also encouraged it.

• Danny Villanueva the Vice President of Administrative Services put his foot down.

• Danny Villanueva has been a very strong leader, administrator on campus. He is consistent and very strong. He put his foot down and he says “We are here to educate” And he is supportive of faculty. He is very clear and consistent
5. The College has hired more staff in Academic Affairs, Student Services, and Administrative Services. Do you believe the hiring has now put the college in a position to adequately serve the purpose and mission of the college? If not, why not? (Organization Chart)

- We need to use Outlook to invite to meetings. We need to use something that goes on our calendar
- More Plant Facilities staff needed
- They felt it was a little too early for feedback since the position were just filled
- Labs are not actually supported. Multi Media is the only one without a lab person
- The AFT Contract provides more support
- The Researchers hired have been very helpful. Research analyst position was felt to be an effective and vital position to have. The position is a great resource for them and she also provides a great turnaround.
- They felt it was too early to assume that the additional staff in Academic Affairs will be sufficient
- Faculty Chairs felt we need recruitment and that it was good the position was filled
- Still too early to tell
- Can’t comment on Dean of Student Success; they don’t feel it is a direct impact to them. They didn’t know what that position would be bringing
- The decision to fill the position of Manager of College Information Systems was an excellent one. The group also feels that Rodrigo Austria is a great hire, he is very good and responsible. His communication is great, he tells us what is going on, and is very responsive
- They don’t know what the high school assignments are
- They feel there is a huge gap in off-campus information
- Off campus: recruitment, communicating enrollment, hiring, and security
- Enrollment of students off campus is not happening. There are students that are not enrolled and it is not a new problem
- It was felt that there is no communication with the Sheriff's Department. The Active Shooter Training is presented every 3 years and one chair stated it should be more often. When one of them went to the Sherriff's regarding a security concern the Sheriff's did not follow up on it. This could be a concern, without a good rapport with the Sheriff's some might not feel safe or prepared in the event of an emergency

At the end of the session I asked the Faculty Chairs what they thought about the Focus Groups. They stated:

- Great lunch
- Thought this was very good
- Questions were good, provocative
- Would love to see some follow up on suggestions.
- Suggest to have focus groups in the semester
- Give at least one month advance notice
- It was a good idea
- In future have 5 other chairs if focus groups meet again