



To: All Faculty and Staff

From: Warren Petty, Vice President for Human Resources

Date: May 20, 2019

Subject: Faculty and Staff Engagement Update

In spring 2018, the Division of Human Resources conducted a survey of faculty and staff to gauge perceptions of the campus community and later shared the results with you at the beginning of summer 2018. The survey results indicate that, overall, faculty and staff report a tremendous sense of pride in the University and a strong commitment to the work of the University as well as high regard for President Farvardin and the institution's shared vision. The survey results also helped the administration identify opportunities for improvement, especially with respect to engagement of faculty and staff. In particular, the survey results indicated the University needs to improve in the following areas: create a culture of greater respect and recognition, increase communication across the institution especially as it relates to enhanced clarity and more inclusive decision-making, foster greater collaboration across divisions and departments, ensure that resources and support for faculty and staff are in line with the tremendous growth that is already taking place and envisioned for the future, and provide leadership development training to enable leaders to develop positive cultures within their own divisions to improve employee satisfaction. Since we communicated the results, the University's administration has been engaged in a coordinated effort to understand the factors that contributed to the overall low engagement scores and the important areas to center our improvement efforts.

Below is a brief outline of the process we undertook to inform our response to the survey results:

- Held discussions at the Cabinet, Academic Leadership, Faculty Senate, and Divisional level to review and analyze emerging themes from the faculty and staff engagement survey (June 2018 – September 2018)
- Established and convened a working group consisting of 18 faculty and staff members to identify and recommend priority areas of focus (October 2018 – January 2019)
- Held individual meetings with each Dean and Vice President to review the working group's recommendations and gain additional insights (March 2019 – May 2019)
- Finalized a set of objectives and implementation action plans (May 2019)

After extensive conversations and input, we have identified the following areas to focus our energies to strengthen the faculty and staff experience in the coming years.

- **Recognition:** Develop ways to regularly acknowledge employees' contributions.
- **Foster faculty and staff professional development:** Develop and implement more formal faculty and staff mentoring programs/skill building at the academic unit and administrative department level.
- **Develop managers:** Develop and implement a mandatory supervisory training series for Department Chairs/Program Directors, Administrative Unit Directors, and frontline supervisors on fundamentals of leadership and supervision to create and sustain a positive department culture in which faculty and staff work together effectively.

- **Increased transparency and communication:** Provide more informal opportunities for two-way dialogue between senior leaders and departments/units to encourage communication on challenges, key initiatives, providing a rationale for decisions, and having accessibility to executives.

**Next phase of the engagement initiative:**

- Each School/College and Administrative Unit will use the information gathered in the discovery meetings to develop their own action plans to address the priorities listed above. During this phase, decisions about actions steps may be implemented across the University, at the School/College or unit level, or at the division or department level based on the priorities identified. Schools/College and units have already begun to implement their own initiatives.
- Engagement Working Group will continue to meet and develop ways to measure and communicate progress and leverage best practice resources to help support action plans.
- By fall 2019, employees will be able to follow the progress of the engagement initiative through regular updates on the HR Website.
- In spring 2020, we will once again administer the Faculty & Staff Engagement Survey through the Chronicle of Higher Education's The Great Colleges to Work For program.

Stevens' administration values the feedback of our faculty and staff and is committed to creating a welcoming and supportive environment that fosters a culture of excellence, advances our mission and strategic priorities, and establishes Stevens as a great place to work.

Special thanks to the engagement working group for their investment and participation in ensuring Stevens' continued success.

**Working Group Members:**

- **Anastasia Greene**, Assistant Vice President, DCM
- **Brendan Englot**, Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering, SES
- **Cindy Chin**, Associate Provost
- **Deborah Sinnreich-Levi**, Associate Professor, CAL
- **Ellyn Lester**, Teaching Associate Professor, CEOE, SES
- **Frank Fisher**, Professor, Mechanical Engineering, SES
- **Jamie Houghtaling**, Controller
- **Michael Parente**, Assistant Vice President, IT
- **Nicole Malantchouk**, Assistant Director of Outreach & Prof. Advancement, SoB
- **Peter Dominick**, Teaching Associate Professor, SoB
- **Rajarithnam Chandramouli**, Hattrick Chair Professor, ECE, SES
- **Robert Maffia**, Vice President for Facilities & Campus Operations
- **Sara Klein**, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs
- **Steven Hoffenson**, Assistant Professor, SSE
- **Susan Gross**, Assistant Vice President for Financial Aid & Undergraduate Admissions
- **Susan Metz**, Executive Director, Diversity & Inclusion
- **Ye Yang**, Associate Professor, SSE