

Collegiality is important to the College as it promotes a positive workplace with a focus on investing in people. The most valuable asset of the College includes faculty, staff, and students and the culture of professionalism they create together. Several years ago, the College formed the Staff Culture Committee and the Faculty & Staff Committee on Collegiality. The over-arching goals of both committees were to ensure continued dialogue by way of 360-degree feedback mechanisms, and to provide specific recommendations for action to the College leadership.

In April 2016, the Faculty & Staff Committee on Collegiality conducted a faculty survey that focused on overall faculty/staff relations. Approximately 35% of all faculty within the College completed the survey. The intent of the survey was to assess the current level of collegiality and respect between faculty and staff in the College, and to identify areas of concern and strength. The members of this committee include Dr. Chana Akins (Faculty), Dr. Edith Glazer (Faculty), Dr. Armando Prats (Faculty member through 2016), Kathleen Harman (Staff member through 2016), Brad Harrington (Staff), Christine Gildersleeve (Staff), Will Bickers (Staff), and Mellissa Cowan (Staff).

Prior to the survey, the committee discussed a variety of challenges associated with facilitating positive working relationships between faculty and staff. Some of these were:

- Staff may not fully understand the academic structure and faculty culture and the uniqueness of staff-faculty relationships.
- Faculty may not fully understand staff roles and responsibilities within the College and may not be fully aware of how the staff support their immediate academic goals.
- Staff may not be comfortable in their own working relationships with academics (faculty, researchers, department chairs, and deans).
- Faculty are usually not trained in management, directing and supporting staff, giving feedback, performance evaluations, etc. Yet, their positions often require them to perform these crucial functions. They may not see the importance of clarifying staff expectations and supporting staff members' development.
- Staff may feel underappreciated in their professional dealings with faculty.

### Survey Summary

- 98% of faculty indicated that interactions between faculty and staff are cordial and respectful (Positive)
- 95% of faculty indicated that staff are respectful to the faculty (Positive)
- 94% of faculty indicated that staff are responsive to their needs and help them find solutions to problems (Positive)
- 91% of faculty indicated they are comfortable asking staff to assist them with tasks (Positive)
- 81% of faculty indicated that staff have adequate training to do their job (Positive)
- 90% of faculty indicated that staff are aware of faculty pressures and workload (Positive)
- 69% of faculty indicated there are appropriate channels in place to evaluate/enhance staff performance (Mixed)
- 33% of faculty indicated they are not comfortable asking staff to assist them with things they deem are outside of their normal area of responsibilities (Mixed)
- 68% of faculty indicated the College's administrative units do not have enough staff to fulfill the needs of the academic departments (Negative)
- 65% of faculty indicated that if they have a problem with a staff member's performance that they know who to address their concern with (Negative)
- 48% of faculty indicated there is not enough departmental staff to fulfill the needs of the academic departments (Negative)
- 49% of faculty indicated they are unsure of what type and level of support they can acquire from department and college staff (Negative)
- 52% of faculty indicated they are unsure of what staff to go to for questions outside of the department (Negative)

### **Committee Recommendations**

1. Incorporate discussions of how to manage faculty-staff relationships effectively and relay organizational structure and support expectations with the Faculty (Chairs Meetings, All staff faculty meetings, department faculty meetings, new faculty/chair orientation, etc.)
2. A culture of accountability fostered among all faculty & staff for behavior that is not collegial. A reporting mechanism such as an online form to submit concerns or information anonymously.
3. Provide faculty training during new faculty orientations and Chairs Retreats on faculty interaction and expectations of staff.
4. Promote social opportunities for informal interaction between faculty/staff

Working relationships between staff and faculty are a pillar on which the success of the College depends. It is important for the College to support initiatives with the potential to change faculty-staff culture for the better. If you have questions or comments regarding the survey, please contact a member of the committee.

Respectfully,

Dr. Chana Akins, Dr. Edith Glazer, Brad Harrington, Christine Gildersleeve, Will Bickers, and Melissa Cowan