

UNI Campus Conversation Recommendations Approved by Campus Governance Groups June 27, 2005

Background

The “Campus Conversation” initiated in fall 2004 by President Koob consisted of two related questions:

- What makes UNI a great place to work? and
- What would make it better?”

President Koob qualified those questions with the following statement: “We are seeking answers to these questions which can be implemented to benefit not only individual employees, but can contribute to the realization of UNI’s mission of offering a world class university education, providing personalized experiences, and a lifetime of opportunities to students and employees alike.”

To pursue answers to these questions, the following actions have been taken to date:

A Campus Advisory Committee was assembled to: 1) consult with the President of UNI and provide advice on broad campus issues, and 2) encourage and facilitate communications and coordination among the various constituencies at UNI. Committee members listed at:

<http://www.uni.edu/pres/univcomm/advisory.shtml>

Requests for comments in response to the two overarching questions were solicited from the campus via UNlonline as well as through division channels. Responses to the questions were received from 146 individuals and groups representing all sectors of the UNI campus.

The Campus Advisory Committee considered all responses, consolidated the overall themes suggested by the responses, and developed a white paper which was shared with the campus.

On February 4, 2005, a campus-wide workshop was held and more than 200 individuals representing all employee groups on campus as well as students participated. During the workshop, participants elected to join small-group discussions on the following areas, which had been presented in the White Paper: Campus culture, communication & diversity; Curriculum development; Employees: gathering places & events, recognition; Organization structure & processes, support staff, student employment; Leadership development; Conservation, and Parking. Each breakout group reacted to the white paper, identified priorities for action, and explored the feasibility of implementing the priorities. Following the breakout discussions, all attending convened to discuss overall themes.

As noted in that white paper, under Iowa Code, certain topics originally suggested by the campus may only be pursued through collective bargaining. These topics, including: career management, employee benefits, flexible benefits, professional development, tuition as a benefit, and wellness, were not discussed at the February 4, 2005, workshop.

Subsequent to the campus-wide workshop, the Campus Advisory Committee discussed the identified priorities, campus impact, feasibility/cost, and timelines for implementation. The Committee developed Preliminary Recommendations for Action and made those available to the campus for feedback. The document, revised based on that feedback, follows.

The Campus Conversation Preliminary Recommendations were reviewed and approved by all campus governance groups.

Next Steps

With the approval of the campus governing bodies, the campus will move forward with implementation per the task force approach identified during the Conversation.

Campus Conversation Workshop – Overall Comments

The priorities for action identified in the breakout and large-group discussions fell logically into three overall theme areas: Leadership, Communication, and Recognition. Following is a discussion of each of the three theme areas, followed by specific tactical recommendations from the breakout discussions, presented in priority order (as determined by the Campus Advisory Committee) with the tactics having the highest priority in each theme area presented first.

It is important to note that some of the tactical approaches belonged under more than one theme. For instance, the idea of continuing to have a Campus Advisory Committee may be viewed as both a Leadership trait of the university and as a vehicle to ensure effective Communication on campus. Tactics that serve a dual purpose are included in as many theme areas as appropriate in recognition of this crossover role.

It is not within the scope of the Campus Advisory Committee to work through the specific details of implementation, therefore, each tactic includes a statement assigning responsibility for implementation to a specific group if such a group is already in place or states that a task force and process will be created. Further, the discussion of each tactic identifies the campus impact and implementation timing.

Theme: Leadership

“*Leadership*” encompasses both the overall value of leadership on and off campus and the tactical approaches to establishing, training, and evaluating leadership. The values focused on-campus included:

- Develop a campus culture based on respect and trust, and
- Increase communication across campus.

The Campus Advisory Committee views these values as important over-arching goals which may be achieved through the implementation of the tactics. The values goals will stand as touchstones against which to gauge the effectiveness of implemented tactics, i.e. By implementing the following tactics, has UNI moved toward achieving a campus culture based on respect and trust?

A third value related to UNI off campus:

- Increase the perceived value on campus of university interaction with off-campus entities.

Leadership Tactical Priorities

1. Formalize leadership education
 - a. **Goal:** The goal of formalized leadership education is to be focused and intentional, so that all employees know the expectations related to their jobs, can do their jobs well, and feel appreciated in the doing of these jobs.
 - b. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts all employees on campus directly.
 - c. **Approach:** Establish a task force involving all employee groups and all employee levels. Among other responsibilities, the task force will create a common understanding for 'leadership,' and then establish ad hoc committees as needed charged with focusing on defined areas of need, e.g. teamwork, communication, policy and fiscal environment, and diversity. The task force and each sub committee will be responsible for reporting on actions and progress to each other group, establishing an approach for initial education as well as ongoing education. It is recognized that developing strong leadership is not a one-time initiative. The objective is to establish an approach that is systemic to the university now and in the future.
 - d. **Timing:** The Task Force will be established by fall 2005 with responsibility for having a plan ready for implementation by fall 2006.

2. Re-establish the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence
 - a. **Goal:** The goal is not to re-establish per se the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching, but rather to establish a unit on campus that is more expansive in structure and scope, working cross-college to, among other things, set up the best teaching/learning experience, gain input to curriculum/degree programs, offer support to professors at all teaching experience levels, and implement outcomes assessment. Special Note: One breakout group focused on the need for increased support for graduate level education. The Campus Advisory Committee agreed that this is one aspect of leadership training for the colleges as well as a topic for discussion in the re-constituted Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence.
 - b. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts faculty.
 - c. **Approach:** Assign to the Faculty Senate to establish a committee.
 - d. **Timing:** The committee would be established immediately with responsibility to report to the Faculty Senate with a plan for implementation by December 2005. Implement the new Center by July 2006.

3. Create a broader understanding and appreciation of diversity, modeling diversity at the highest levels of the institution
 - a. **Goal:** By broadening the understanding of diversity and modeling this understanding, create a more welcoming and supportive campus.
 - b. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - c. **Approach:** Assign to the Leadership Task Force (Leadership Tactic #1) because understanding, promoting, and modeling diversity must be integral to every UNI leader.
 - d. **Discussion:** It is noted that the Educational Student Services Division has already been working on a broader definition of diversity, which the Task Force may take into consideration. This draft definition is: "An appreciation of people with different backgrounds with an emphasis on gender, race/ethnicity, religion, age, sexual

orientation, physical abilities, socioeconomic class, and national origin.” Further, the Educational Student Services Division goes on to answer the question: Why do we value diversity? “Diversity is valued because it generates a multiplicity of ideas and viewpoints, leads to more creative and efficient problem solving, fosters an understanding and acceptance of individuals from different backgrounds and recognizes the contributions that a variety of individuals and groups can make.”

- e. **Timing:** Implementation as part of Leadership Training by fall 2006.
4. Establish an approach to student employment that maximizes learning.
 - a. **Goal:** Maximize the opportunities for students to work on campus and regardless of on- or off-campus to link their work to their academic program of study whenever possible.
 - b. **Approach:** Establish a task force, including students, local employers, and all campus units.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus as well as off-campus employers
 - d. **Timing:** Establish a Task Force by fall 2005 and implement student employment plan by fall 2006.
5. Recognize and reward leadership initiatives
 - a. **Goal:** Encourage a leadership mindset and approach in all UNI employees by recognizing and rewarding leadership initiatives whenever and wherever they occur.
 - b. **Approach:** Assign to the Leadership Task Force (Leadership Tactic #1) because this must be integrated into overall university leadership thinking/training.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** Implementation as part of Leadership Training by fall 2006.
6. Continue Campus Advisory Committee
 - a. **Goal:** Continue to emphasize the importance of communication to and from all campus constituencies by maintaining a committee representing all campus groups in an advisory role to the President.
 - b. **Approach:** Continue current committee, adding new members as appropriate.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** In place. Ongoing.
7. Ongoing process improvement
 - a. **Goal:** Ensure university processes are appropriate to meeting university needs.
 - b. **Approach:** Create a process improvement task team using campus-based expertise and external training as appropriate. The process improvement task team will be responsible for forming ad hoc committees to address campus processes including, but not limited to: diversity policies, parking needs, conservation and campus sustainability, staff needs, and safety.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** Task team is created and educated in process improvement procedures during FY 06 and begins the process review cycle in FY 07.

Theme: Communication

“Communication” as it was discussed in the breakout discussions involved both interpersonal skills and the flow of information on campus related to specific topics. In addition, ‘communication’ was seen as important both on campus and off campus. It was the sense of the Campus Advisory Committee that those participating in the discussions preferred to see that on-campus communication worked effectively before addressing off-campus communication issues.

Communication Tactical Priorities

Communication – On Campus – Interpersonal

1. Recognize and reward employee contributions
 - a. **Goal:** Ensure that every employee feels valued for their contributions both through formal and informal recognition vehicles.
 - b. **Approach:** Assign to Leadership Training Task Force (Leadership Tactic #1). Fully implement and raise awareness of the recently established employee recognition program, which recognizes every employee for years of service and provides informal recognition opportunities throughout the year.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts all employees of the university.
 - d. **Timing:** Program is in place. Evaluate effectiveness on an annual basis.
2. Continue Campus Advisory Committee
 - a. **Goal:** Continue to emphasize the importance of communication to and from all campus constituencies by maintaining a committee representing all campus groups in an advisory role to the President.
 - b. **Approach:** Continue current committee, adding new members as appropriate.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** In place. Ongoing.

Communication – On Campus – Issue Oriented

1. Increase the Effectiveness of Communication on Campus
 - a. **Goal:** Ensure that the campus is adequately informed of, and has input to, issues of importance, including but not limited to: parking, conservation, and safety.
 - b. **Approach:** University Marketing & Public Relations to create a task force to establish a template to achieve effective communication with all on-campus and off-campus audiences related to these topics.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** Task force to be formed by July 1, 2005 with template in place for implementation by January 1, 2006.

Communication – Community

1. Understand how UNI does/can connect with communities
 - a. **Goal:** Increase the number of learning opportunities for UNI students using community-based experiences while assuring these learning opportunities simultaneously provide service to the community.
 - b. **Approach:** Create a task group to identify a mechanism to create the two portfolios necessary: 1) a portfolio of faculty, staff and students seeking a community based

opportunity, and 2) a portfolio of community based opportunities for learning and service.

- c. **Impact:** This recommendation has the potential to impact the entire campus, but likely will first impact interested parties only.
- d. **Timing:** The Task Force will be established by fall 2005 with responsibility for having a plan ready for implementation by fall 2006.

- 2. Develop a campus value system that makes community connections important
 - a. **Goal:** Demonstrate how community based learning and service opportunities benefit participating faculty, staff and students.
 - b. **Approach:** Add this charge to the Task Force named in the previous item with the same impact and timing parameters.

Theme: Recognition

"Recognition" was a theme that manifested itself in a number of ways in the breakout group discussions. Overall, there is a clear desire by all elements of the campus for formal and informal recognition of effort. Recognition has been addressed in both the Leadership and Communication theme areas and is continued here to reinforce the importance attached to it in the campus discussion and to present additional approaches to recognition.

- 1. Recognize and reward leadership initiatives
 - a. **Goal:** Encourage a leadership mindset and approach in all UNI employees by recognizing and rewarding leadership initiatives whenever and wherever they occur.
 - b. **Approach:** Assign to the Leadership Task Force (Leadership Tactic #1) because this must be integrated into overall university leadership thinking/training.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts the entire campus.
 - d. **Timing:** Implementation as part of Leadership Training by fall 2006.
- 2. Faculty/Staff Gathering Place
 - a. **Goal:** Establish a gathering place for use by faculty and staff that provides dining and meeting options
 - b. **Approach:** Dining Services to take the lead in assessing campus interests in a gathering place, e.g. location, services, etc.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts all faculty and staff.
 - d. **Timing:** Report prepared by December 2005 with implementation as feasible.
- 3. Recognize and reward employee contributions
 - a. **Goal:** Ensure that every employee feels valued for their contributions both through formal and informal recognition vehicles.
 - b. **Approach:** Assign to Leadership Training Task Force (Leadership Tactic #1). Fully implement and raise awareness of the recently established employee recognition program, which recognizes every employee for years of service and provides informal recognition opportunities throughout the year.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts all employees of the university.

- d. **Timing:** Program is in place. Evaluate effectiveness on an annual basis.
4. Develop an Event Assistance Program
 - a. **Goal:** Encourage and support faculty and staff attendance at campus events by implementing a financial assistance program for event tickets.
 - b. **Approach:** The task force assigned to evaluate creating a Menu of Perquisites (noted below) will consider Event Assistance as part of its work.
 - c. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts faculty and staff.
 - d. **Timing:** Report prepared by December 2005 with implementation by July 2006.
 5. Create a Menu of Perquisites for Faculty and Staff
 - a. **Discussion:** It is recognized that what makes one person feel valued may not make another person feel valued, e.g. a close parking place may be desirable for one person but irrelevant to another who would be incentivized more by a fitness membership.
 - b. **Goal:** Establish a menu of perquisite options from which faculty and staff can select to respond to their individual interests.
 - c. **Approach:** Establish a Task Force to explore a range of items, e.g. parking, WRC, event tickets, etc., which could be presented as a menu to employees and staff. Task Force will explore the cost associated with such a menu.
 - d. **Impact:** This recommendation impacts all faculty and staff.
 - e. **Timing:** Report prepared by December 2005 with implementation by fall 2006.

Evaluation of Success

The Campus Advisory Committee identified three gauges of success for task force actions:

1. **Task force make up** – Each task force will include broad representation from campus groups. No one group will be established as making decisions independently of all others.
2. **Actions against specific goals and objectives** – As part of its initial responsibility, each task force will self-identify objectives and performance indicators against which it will operate.
3. **Regular communication to campus** – On a quarterly basis, each task force will be responsible for self-reporting to the campus its progress against its own performance indicators.

Cost of Implementation

The Campus Advisory Committee also considered the cost of implementation of these recommendations to the extent that is possible without knowing all the details. It is clear that some tactics may be implemented with little, if any, cost while others have significant expense attached. The cost of implementation was not considered in how these were ranked for implementation; however, it is important to note that dollars required to establish any new program may require budget tightening in other areas. It is the Campus Advisory Committee's expectation that the assigned task force groups will perform a cost analysis and present that along with any recommended implementation plan.

