

Status of FRRC Review of COACHE Survey Results

January 17, 2017

The COACHE survey results placed Missouri S&T by far below others in the 89-institution cohort in six out of 25 categories, reflecting that the climate is perceived by the faculty as being especially poor in these aspects. In the opinion of the FRRC, the most significant information revealed by the COACHE survey results is that faculty view senior leadership as inadequate and shared governance as lacking. The result is a breakdown of trust between the faculty and administration. We believe that faculty morale, quantified by the survey as extraordinarily poor relative to comparator institutions and past climate, is a primary cause of our ongoing challenges in recruitment and retention of faculty – the two issues central to the charge of the FRRC.

To date, the FRRC has met with the following individuals and groups to discuss the survey results and what we see as the underlying issues.

- The campus faculty, at an open forum (Oct. 4, 2016)
 - Opinions expressed by the faculty about leadership and shared governance concur with the analysis of the FRRC.
 - We noted a significant gap in how the COACHE results are perceived by the faculty and the administration.
- Dr. Catherine Riordan, executive coach to Chancellor Schrader and Provost Marley (Oct. 25, 2016)
 - We noted a significant gap between our perception of the senior leadership and campus climate and that of Dr. Riordan.
- Chancellor Schrader and Provost Marley (Nov. 1, 2016)
 - Provost Marley took responsibility for specific actions and outcomes, described tangible activities he had already carried out, as well as plans for future activities, especially as related to increasing engagement and restoring trust with faculty. He also articulated his experience of the executive coaching and described it as very helpful in understanding and addressing feedback from faculty. He reiterated his respect for the faculty and commitment to expressing that respect through direct personal interactions.
 - Chancellor Schrader acknowledged her role in the strained relationship between the faculty and administrators, including herself. She expressed her belief that the survey results reflected the climate in a period of high tension and that progress has since been made, but asserted that more work remains to be done. She expressed regret for overlooking the importance of direct communication, which she had sometimes avoided to respect the authority of other administrators. She stated that she has pulled back from a number of external obligations to allow time for more internal interaction, reiterated the commitment of her leadership team to empowering the faculty, and stated that all of us need to work together to improve the climate.
 - In opinion of the FRRC, despite the executive coaching, leadership issues identified by the COACHE survey have not yet been sufficiently addressed.

- President-Designate Choi, President Middleton, and Chief-of-Staff David Russell (Nov. 22, 2016)
 - A group of FRRC members, elected by Faculty Senate, attended this meeting as representatives of the faculty.
 - President-Designate Choi indicated that he is aware of the climate at S&T and is seeking to understand what UM System can do to support activities on our campus.
 - The faculty group expressed concerns regarding frustration of the faculty at the lack of tangible improvement in the situation, the time already invested in remedies, and the increasing urgency of addressing the situation with respect to faculty retention.
 - President Middleton acknowledged the patience of the S&T faculty and stated that dramatic action may be overdue.

The FRRC will continue to serve as the central point of communication regarding ongoing review of COACHE results and related activities. While we believe that the overall poor campus climate is the single most significant factor in retention and recruitment, the scope of the senior leadership and shared governance problems that drive the current climate are beyond what can be significantly affected by this committee. Therefore, in our opinion, it is critical that other groups and individuals with the ability to positively affect these areas take an active role in improving leadership and shared governance on campus. We will continue to work with other groups and individuals well-positioned to affect positive change in the campus climate.

All information related to the COACHE survey, including the full numerical results, written comments, and slides from the open forum, is available at: <http://provost.mst.edu/coachesurvey/>.