



2012-2013

Internal Operations
Workgroup Report

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Executive Summary

The Internal Operations Workgroup focused on improving communication among delegates and between delegates and campus leadership, in addition to clarifying leadership roles and responsibilities. In terms of gathering and disseminating information, the group created two surveys: one to determine how local staff assemblies engage their staff and raise concerns at their campus or at the system-wide level, and the other to provide delegates an additional opportunity to share critical and anonymous feedback regarding CUCSA quarterly meetings. Both processes appear to have had immediate value. The delegate survey provided information that can be acted upon at the following quarterly meeting. The campus survey provided diverse information from which all of the locations can learn and that they may implement locally.

As a new initiative, the workgroup wanted to implement best practices for advocating for CUCSA. With many years of successful accomplishments including work on the post-employment benefits, CUCSA should be a “household name” on the campuses. The group investigated CUCSA’s web presence on all the campus websites and found that all sites can use some improvement. The group also proposed guidelines for CUCSA advocacy. Again, delegates can implement these guidelines at their home campuses.

With SharePoint as the primary portal for electronic information sharing, its inadequate documentation made it problematic for workgroups to utilize. In addition, without guidance on directory structure, documents tended to be uploaded into random locations. As a result, the group created documentation to improve how to best use this tool for delegate collaboration.

When the workgroup convened, two reports had not been completed by the previous CUCSA chairs. This situation led to the examination of the current bylaws to ensure that they are still relevant today. As a result, the group proposed several amendments including assigning the Chair additional duties as the Immediate Past Chair and adding duties to the Secretary, such as working with an Electronic Communications Officer to ensure all reports are completed and posted. To bring the reports up to date, the group completed all past reports.

Introduction

For the 2012-13 CUCSA year, the Internal Operations Workgroup (IO) focused on improving communication among delegates and between delegates and campus leadership as well as to clarify leadership roles and responsibilities. The group needed to document standard practices on how delegates communicate with each other, how CUCSA generates and provides feedback, what type of electronic communications to use, and how the organization can bring more notice to CUCSA and inform others of the issues for which we are advocating. The team proceeded to investigate how the local staff assemblies gather feedback, how CUCSA or the local staff assembly conducts advocacy and outreach, if at all, and what electronic communication methods are available for CUCSA.

Research and Findings

Staff Feedback

The team's research shows that CUCSA delegates generally take responsibility for soliciting feedback from their local staff assemblies and responding with a summary to CUCSA. Approximately half of the locations have an established process for soliciting feedback that often involves a combined use of several methods for communication such as sending out emails to the "opt-in" list for the campus, providing access to a web survey on the Staff Assembly website, relying on local assembly members and "staff ambassadors" in key departments to facilitate the process or even, as what one campus called it, FBWA, soliciting "Feedback by Walking Around".

Delegates reported unanimously that paper communication is no longer effective, while informal networking and conversation is the most efficient way to reach out to staff to elicit responses. E-mail is the second best method of gathering feedback. Other approaches for engaging staff include all-hands meetings, town halls, lunch-and-learns, Friday breakfasts, and assistance from staff representatives at the divisional or departmental levels in publicizing the message out to a broader audience. Focus groups are only used by a quarter of the campuses, but of those that use this method, more than half of the respondents indicated that they find them to be effective. Campuses have acknowledged the potential to further engage staff through the use of web and social media as an opportunity that has yet to be fully examined.

To gain a better understanding of current practices for soliciting and gathering feedback from staff at each campus, the IO Workgroup created a survey and distributed it to the delegates of each campus in March 2013. The key quantitative results are the following:

- Respondents reported reaching 50% or less of staff when soliciting feedback, and of those reached, eliciting a response from 15% or less.

- 91% of respondents reported that informal conversation and networking is the most effective method for reaching and eliciting a response from staff followed by email, for example through a listserv, as reported by 65% of respondents.
- Half of the locations have no way contacting specific staff populations when collecting feedback.
- 88% of the respondents reported having an established process for exchanging feedback with the Chancellor or Senior Leadership of the campus.

In addition to the above, the survey revealed the following observations:

- Local assemblies are not reaching a sufficient population or diversity of staff to adequately represent staff input and concerns when gathering feedback.
- The most effective overall strategy for soliciting feedback is the combined use of several modes of communication such as e-mail, discussions, informal conversations, newsletters and surveys.
- Formal e-mail listservs could be more effective if local assemblies had a user-friendly way of contacting specific staff populations.
- Using the web for soliciting feedback has received mixed results, primarily because in order to use this method to reach a wider population, the websites need to be more robust than what it currently displays and a social media presence needs to be implemented.
- Campus leadership and staff are not sufficiently aware of CUCSA or of the local Staff Assembly and their missions.

Delegate Feedback

CUCSA leadership was also interested in improving feedback for the CUCSA quarterly meetings. In the past, the delegation attempted to give feedback to the host campus at the end of each meeting. Although most of the feedback was positive, leadership was unsure if the end of meeting feedback truly represented how the delegation felt about the meeting. To some people, it is difficult to express negative feedback even if it would be viewed as constructive criticism. As a result, the group implemented the post-meeting feedback survey. This vehicle allowed the delegates to provide additional feedback in an anonymous manner. Most of the delegation responded to the survey – 65% for December and 53% for March. Overall, delegates agree that the CUCSA quarterly meeting communication, logistics, agenda and speakers were well planned and organized. In addition, all delegates felt more organized to address system wide and local issues, as well as better equipped to research workgroup topics after each meeting.

Both surveys indicated mixed results for the CUCSA business portion of the agenda and for the importance of the Individual Development Plan. Although this was previously expressed by the delegation, the results of the surveys did not indicate its importance to the delegates. The usefulness of the feedback survey was comprehensive in its scope and goals and leadership was able to implement changes for subsequent quarterly meetings.

Clarification of Roles and Responsibilities

In researching various methods of storing CUCSA's archived reports and documentation, the group discovered that our electronic communication needs are increasing dramatically. In addition, inadequate documentation for the main collaboration software used by the Office of the President, which is SharePoint, makes it problematic and confusing for new delegates to use it effectively. As a result, the group created documentation for using SharePoint: a "How To" and "Frequently Asked Questions" on how to log in, navigate, upload and download files. The documentation included the current directory structure to clarify where information and documents can be uploaded in an organized fashion. A person currently in CUCSA leadership can modify the structure as needed by the organization.

The group discovered that there are two incomplete past Chair reports that have not been uploaded to the website. Since this specific requirement is not included in the CUCSA bylaws, the group decided to clarify the post-chair and secretary responsibilities to ensure that reports and other deliverables are appropriately completed. The group interviewed the current and previous chairs to determine the division of responsibilities and found that the confusion occurred during the summer months where the immediate past chair was still responsible for deliverables like the Regents' report, the chair's report and the workgroup reports, but at the same time, the incoming chair needed to start preparing for the new junior delegates and the September meeting. The group proceeded to clarify responsibilities and determine the appropriate timeframe to complete these deliverables.

As the group examined the Secretary responsibilities, they discovered the need to develop a defined process and succession plan for managing electronic records. Since this function is too important not to carry out on a yearly basis and required additional work for the Secretary, the group decided to consider a separate role for managing electronic communications. This role will be clarified along with the Chair and Secretary responsibilities during the process of amending the CUCSA bylaws.

The group completed all of the incomplete past reports and will upload them before July 31. The amendment to the bylaws will be ratified at the December 2013 meeting once CUCSA leadership and the delegation have the opportunity to thoroughly examine the amendments.

Outreach and CUCSA Representation

While CUCSA has existed since 1975, many staff at the local campuses or the Lab are not aware of the organization or its current successes in post-employment benefits, performance management, talent management and other areas that affect staff. The workgroup wanted to determine the extent to which CUCSA is promoted and described at the local assemblies in order to recommend best practices for marketing the organization. The group reviewed all the staff assembly websites to discover the following:

- References to CUCSA listed on the main page

- CUCSA's scope and objectives detailed effectively
- A link to the CUCSA website

The group found the following results:

- 75% (9) of the delegations had some reference to CUCSA on their main page.
- 83% (10) of the delegations provided some description or explanation of CUCSA somewhere on the site.
- 100% (12) of the delegations had a link to the CUCSA site.

In general, 33% (4) of the delegations provided a meaningful description of the scope and objectives of CUCSA, but the remaining 66% (8) provided a very generic or limited description. In order for local campus staff to be aware of CUCSA, we feel that there should be references to the CUCSA website (<http://www.ucop.edu/cucsa>) where they can find additional information beyond what is on the local staff assembly page.

In order for CUCSA to be an effective voice for staff and the University across the state, the workgroup also decided to explore how our organization or local assemblies can advocate for staff, CUCSA, and the University of California. The Staff Engagement Roadshow, done by CUCSA Chair Steve Garber and systemwide Human Resources designees Joe Epperson and Juliann Martinez, was a perfect opportunity to showcase CUCSA and have the local assemblies hear the scope and objectives of our work, what we are advocating for and current initiatives we are exploring. Because each campus is unique in its methods and processes, the group decided to explore best practices for advertising the organization. A "how to" for marketing guidelines will be posted on the SharePoint site before June 30 and distributed to the local assemblies. The group feels that in the future, CUCSA needs to build its brand recognition to leverage any marketing potential.

Workgroup Recommendations

Campus Feedback Practices

To improve best practices of the local staff assemblies' processes in gaining feedback from their constituency, the group recommends the following tasks for next year's Internal Operations Workgroup:

1. With the assistance and support of CUCSA leadership, explore options for obtaining consistent access to current staff email lists to reach a broader audience.
2. Explore opportunities for leveraging electronic communications with staff through the use of web and social media.
3. Examine the broader use of "Staff Ambassadors" to reach out to constituents and to facilitate the process of soliciting feedback. For example, the Lab leveraged division representatives to gather feedback on the engagement survey.

Post Meeting Feedback Survey

Because the delegate survey is short, easy to administer and adaptable to fit the agenda of each meeting, the group recommends that the following best practices be implemented immediately:

1. Distribute the feedback survey immediately after each quarterly meeting.
2. Ensure continuity of this practice by assigning it as a permanent task of the Internal Operations Workgroup.
3. To ease the administration of the survey, purchase a web-based survey tool such as SurveyMonkey. Survey administration was complicated by the use of an IO delegate's personal account.

Advocacy and Outreach

As an organization, CUCSA and local staff assemblies need to improve the branding and marketing of our "added value" to the campus and the public in general. If more non-represented staff are informed about us, they will realize that they have an organization that advocates for their important issues. We exist to present their issues to the leaders of the University of California who have the means and power to make decisions that directly effect staff. Therefore, in terms of CUCSA, we recommend the following best practices for distribution to the local staff assemblies:

1. Develop a well-written description of the scope and objectives of CUCSA.
2. Create a list of initiatives that have been furthered or accomplished as a result of CUCSA advocacy.
3. Create an on-going list of initiatives that are currently in process as a result of CUCSA.
4. Encourage local assemblies to reference a link to CUCSA's scope and objectives page.

5. Create a program to demonstrate the organization's value and engage staff interested in becoming part of CUCSA.
6. Examine the possibility of branded materials that delegations can use to market CUCSA locally.

For marketing CUCSA and the University of California, the group recommends the following:

1. Use the "how to" marketing guidelines at local events, staff gatherings and campus community outreach.
2. If possible, create logo items to be used in community events and inform the public of the importance of the University and its staff.
3. Create multi-campus events that advocate for staff such as Sacramento Day.
4. Continue to project a positive message of the University, and its staff, students, faculty and alumni.

Recommendations to Amend the Bylaws

As a result of examining our need for archiving CUCSA documents, historical records, and various reports, the team discovered that certain tasks needed to be clarified and effectively assigned so that they are completed on time. In order to do this, we recommend that the bylaws be amended to reflect the following:

1. Create a role called "Immediate Past Chair" whose term is July 1 to August 31. This role formalizes the responsibility of completing various reports to close out the Chair's year.
 - a. The creation of this role allows the separation of tasks between the Immediate Past Chair and the incoming Chair so that one can complete the previous year and the other can begin to prepare for the new year.
2. Create a role called "Electronic Data Officer (EDO)" who will be appointed by the Chair and work under the direction of the Secretary. This role will be responsible for maintaining the electronic records during the year and act as a resource for other delegates for electronic communication, storage and data delivery. This person will also assist the Secretary in maintaining contact with the CUCSA Alumni Liaison to keep former delegates engaged in our organization. This position will not be part of a current workgroup but can be available to assist all of the workgroups' electronic data needs.

The amendments have been drafted, edited, and await approval by the following:

1. CUCSA Leadership
2. UCOP Sponsor

The new bylaws will then need to be approved by a vote of the CUCSA delegation. We anticipate being able to vote on the new bylaws by the December 2013 meeting. In the meantime, the Chair and Immediate Past Chair will complete the tasks as stated by the new bylaws and the Chair will appoint a new Electronic Data Officer at the September 2013 meeting.

Lastly, the documentation for SharePoint will be uploaded to become part of the permanent archives.

Conclusion

CUCSA is an important aspect of the University of California campuses. Our mission is to advocate for staff issues so that they are heard at the highest levels of the organization. We need to let staff know that we are here to help them and by using clear and concise, targeted communication, it will allow us to engage as many of our constituents as possible. Our recommendations this year will allow the future Internal Operations Workgroup to become more effective in ensuring that the business of CUCSA continues to result in positive outcomes.