Recommendations

The HERI Faculty Committee report reveals several important themes from faculty perspectives, highlighting areas such as diversity, inclusion, classroom dynamics, technology use, work-life balance, and recognition. Key insights and recommendations include:

Continuing to Enhance Faculty Support and Resources

Faculty respondents have a notable sense of responsibility (when compared to the comparison groups) in encouraging respect for different beliefs, promoting students' ability to write, and preparing students for graduate school and jobs after college. The institution should reduce barriers that prevent faculty from doing such tasks which have been deemed important.

The findings from this survey indicate a united sense of ownership among faculty to prepare, develop, encourage, and welcome all students. Washburn University and Washburn Institute of Technology can make significant strides in creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all its members by continuing to support faculty in their main roles of facilitating the success of students.

Continuing to Promote Relations with Administration

It is recommended to build on existing strengths, such as continuing to provide opportunities for faculty input on administrative decisions, policy development, and overall collaboration with student affairs and administration. Although approximately 75% of faculty understand the criteria for advancement and promotion decisions, it would be desired for this to be higher. One step that has already been taken since this survey was completed was the new creation of the position of Assistant Provost for Faculty Development in the Academic Affairs office. This position is vital in the coordination of development and communication among faculty, both new and existing.

Faculty Development

There is a perceived need for more development and mentoring support, especially related to promotion, pointing to potential improvement areas. It is recommended to continue to improve and enhance faculty development through new faculty orientation, mentoring, and professional development through C-TEL. It is also recommended to consider offering professional development or a leadership pathway to help build leadership capacity in current administrative leaders and to prepare future administrative leaders. Finally, consider increasing internal grant funding for research.

Program Development

Positive faculty performance in helping students with research can be attributed to university programs such as Washburn Transformation Experience (WTE) and Apeiron, indicating these and other, similar programs should be promoted more. On the other hand, more attention should be paid to university programs that can help faculty manage stress.

COVID-19

Leadership should continue to reflect on their processes from COVID to replicate and improve them to be ready for a time when we need to pivot to remote learning. It is recommended to continue to provide and improve technology support for online learning and consider what more can be put in

place to support faculty mental health and physical health should a similar situation arise in the future, and to consider ways the administration could alleviate worry over job security.

Classroom Dynamics

Faculty efforts to create non-competitive, collaborative learning environments show progress, but ongoing professional development in inclusive teaching is needed.

Technology

Views on technology in the classroom are divided, with many seeing it as a distraction. This calls for better integration strategies to harness its educational potential.

Diversity Discussions

While most faculty feel capable of discussing diversity issues, some lack confidence, underscoring the need for continuous training.

Work-Life Balance

Many faculty struggle with balancing personal and professional responsibilities, suggesting the need for supportive policies like flexible scheduling.

Fairness and Recognition

Concerns about needing to work harder to be seen as legitimate scholars indicate possible bias issues. Mixed views on the institution's diversity efforts and decision-making involvement point to areas for policy and cultural review.

Institutional Support

Mixed feelings about support for faculty development and governance participation highlight the need for clearer communication and more transparent processes.

Conflict Management

A significant number of faculty feel unprepared to manage diversity-related conflicts, indicating a gap in training programs.

Advancement Clarity

Uncertainty about promotion criteria calls for more transparency and consistency.

Student Preparedness

Concerns over students' basic skills signal a need for stronger support structures, such as tutoring and advising.