



Vice President's Boldness by Design initiatives: Stewardship of Human Capital

Participatory Management – A result of WACFO Diversity & Pluralism committee concern of labor inclusion and communication issues. WACFO purpose was to ensure a more inclusive work environment, by definition precludes a strict top down management style. It includes respect of all members of the University community regardless of positions. A powerful and institutionally advantageous illustration of this is the practice of including all levels of staff in the decision-making processes. The Diversity & Pluralism committee proposed the following strategies:

- 1) Develop an understanding in the staff of international and domestic cultural differences and similarities
- 2) Foster an understanding of the institutional advantages of the inclusion of all members of the University community in decision-making
- 3) Demonstrate the value of respect for all members of the University community without regard to 'rank' or 'class'
- 4) Recommendation of inclusion practices based on the uniqueness of each individual
- 5) Increase participation in WACFO of disabled and international staff

Overall Implementation Strategy

Transition to a more inclusive work environment for staff employees.

Issue

In a university setting, providing opportunities at all employment levels within the support and operational units for creative input, problem solving, and work process changes and improvements requires that the institution bring together diverse backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints. By engaging a more diverse set of individuals, the university will be better positioned to fulfill its mission. The sharing of different perspectives on problem solving and work process change efforts should be encouraged and supported across all employee classifications, which will result in a more engaged workforce and more inclusive work environment. Open communication, spirited problem solving, collaboration, and participatory management styles should be developed.

Approach

Establish a work group of innovative, creative people who routinely demonstrate these competencies to help identify the best attributes of a successful and participatory manager/supervisor. The work group would identify a set of best practices for managers and supervisors, including engaging all levels of employees in problem solving, idea development, change and process improvements, and the like.

Training and education programs for managers and supervisors will be developed and enhanced that include participatory management skill development. Supervisors would be expected to demonstrate inclusive management styles. Efforts will be undertaken, working collaboratively with various campus resources, to identify and implement effective strategies for transitioning to a more inclusive work environment for staff employees. Attention will be given to the identification of effective strategies for achieving maximum employee input through inclusive team building, understanding differences, valuing different perspectives, and managing conflict and difficult dialogues.