

Right Serving, Right Sizing Final Report: President's Office and Reporting Offices

As the campus has undertaken the process of Right Serving, Right Sizing across the five divisions, the President's Office was also engaged in asking similar questions about the ways our offices serve the campus and the ways we might be more efficient in our operations.

There are five full-time employees in these areas:

- President and Assistant to the President (2)
- Chief Diversity Officer/Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (1)
- Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment and Research Associate (2)

There are no full-time clerical or secretarial employees in these offices, but student workers, interns, and retired employees assist on a part-time basis.

The President met with each of the Directors and with the Assistant to the President to discuss these questions:

- In what ways does your office serve the mission of the university?
- How has that mission or your approach changed?
- What are the most time-consuming responsibilities you have?
- Are there other ways to direct your energies and resources?
- Are there aspects of your work that could be done differently or by different people?
- What ideas do you have for decreasing expenses in your area?

This is a summary of the ideas that emerged in our thinking about the President's Office, the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment.

President's Office

The office is responsible for coordinating the work of the Cabinet and the College Council; for serving as an important connection to the community, elected officials, and the State University of New York; for planning some all-campus events; for managing accounts overseen by the President; for final decision-making in personnel and student judiciary matters; and other responsibilities associated with leading an organization. It is currently a remarkably small operation, as we have tried to operate without clerical support. These are the recommendations for better serving the campus in the future:

Secretary 2. To serve the campus and community better, we need to add a Secretary 2 in the President's office. This person can help with scheduling, event planning, records and documents, website, supervision of student workers, and communications. This person will also provide clerical support for the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment—which currently have no clerical support. Previously, the

office had a Keyboard Specialist, but many of the needed responsibilities would be beyond the work of that title. In previous administrations at Fredonia, additional staff had been part of the office, and most president's offices include a number of staff (Chief of Staff, receptionist, correspondence and speech writing assistance, financial manager). Most offices have at least a Secretary 1, but the DEI and IRPA offices do not. A Secretary 2 would be sufficient for assisting the President's Office, DEI, and IRPA in serving the campus and community.

Special Assistant to the President. One of the most urgent needs is to have the University Handbook completed, available, and used by the campus. This is a project that has been in progress for about a decade, and what is needed is to have the handbook as a website that can be used by all. Members of the Cabinet agree that this should be housed on the President's Office website (with links from other pages) and maintained by the President's Office. Prof. Rob Deemer, returning from an ACE Fellowship, has agreed to serve as a temporary Special Assistant to the President for 2017-2018, with this handbook as his primary responsibility. He had worked extensively on this project when he led the University Senate, and what is needed to have the work done by Amy Beers and Janet Mayer formalized in a clear, campus-wide electronic document. This title is a temporary, project-based appointment with a small stipend; it is not included in his workload and does not redirect his principal obligation away from teaching and professional work in the School of Music.

Expansion of the Cabinet. To ensure strong communication and collaboration in areas that affect the campus as a whole, the President would like to expand the Cabinet to include the Chief Information Officer (Steve Rieks) and the Director of Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment (Xiao Zhang). These two leaders have come in once each month to report on issues or to seek the Cabinet's direction or approval on requests, but it would be helpful for them to be present for all discussions of the Cabinet and to be able to add items to the agenda on a regular basis. Every division relies on IT for business practices as well as educational purposes, and every division relies on institutional research and data in its decision making. Expanding this team will help us move forward. Currently the Director of Marketing and Communication meets with the Cabinet once each month and at other times when needed; this arrangement seems to work well and will continue. The Executive Cabinet (just the President and Vice Presidents) will meet on a regular basis to discuss issues across divisions.

Information Technology. Because information technology impacts the entire campus, the recommendation is to move the reporting line for the Chief Information Officer so that he reports directly to the President instead of the Provost. There would also be a change in title, as he would no longer be an Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The title would be Chief Information Officer, without a salary change. This change would reflect the more universal role of ITS across campus and allow Academic Affairs to focus on critical issues of teaching and learning, degree programs, faculty support, student success, library services, and accreditations.

Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

This office has had a critical role in the past few years, as state and federal regulations in regard to opportunity, discrimination, sexual harassment/assault, and other issues have greatly increased. The Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) serves the campus in policy development and guidance, responding to claims of discrimination, and being an important resource in sexual assault prevention and response. In the last three years, the number of cases requiring support,

consultation, and investigation has risen from 33 to 63, with the largest number coming from faculty. Many of these cases require multiple interviews and interventions.

However, much of the work of this office is not reactive but proactive—creating opportunities for training, discussion, and unit support related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The current CDO spends considerable time assisting the campus in ensuring that the work and learning environments at Fredonia are inclusive and equitable. This includes guest lectures, training initiatives, and collaboration with International Education, the CEASE program, the Professional Development Center, Human Resources, Residence Life, FSA, Judicial Affairs, Athletics, University Police, and the Center for Multicultural Affairs.

The CDO is currently leading a team in the finalization of a DEI Strategic Plan, required by SUNY for all campuses. As those goals and the implementation tasks emerge, what is clear is that this cannot be a one-person office. Particularly with the increase in diversity of the incoming class in Fall 2017 (more than 30% from underrepresented minority groups), increased attention to the diverse needs of students with disabilities, increased numbers of students with self-reported mental health issues, we need to invest in ways to ensure the success of all students and to support the goal of greater diversity of Fredonia's faculty and staff. The President expects that the DEI plan discussions will include a staffing plan for at least one other person to assist in meeting the critical goals of the DEI plan.

Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment

As this year's Strategic Enrollment Management and Right Serving, Right Sizing processes have made clear, Fredonia increasingly relies on data for decision-making, assessment, and improvements of processes. The IRPA office plays a critical role in meeting the data needs of the campus, but we need to strengthen the supports that this office provides. We need to do an evaluation of the needs for data and explore the ways this office can serve divisions and units even better. Having the Director of IRPA on the Cabinet will be helpful, but we need to ensure that this office knows the data needs and has the tools it needs to assist others.

As we move toward the next self-study and review for Middle States accreditation, with a visit expected in 2020, we need to ensure that we have consistent, documented, institution-wide uses of assessment data to inform and improve practices. The Institutional Effectiveness Committee has an important role in this, as does the IRPA office.