

## M E M O R A N D U M

TO: All University Managers

FROM: Judith E. Hain

DATE: February 9, 2009

RE: Preparation for the February 17<sup>th</sup> Managers' Meeting

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Last year University managers met as a group with Dr. Cole and engaged in an exercise that would inform the University's next strategic planning process. That exercise involved managers in each division talking as a group to develop aspirational goals for both the division and the University; identifying two major obstacles to achieving the aspirational goals; and, beginning to identify some initial ideas about how to overcome those obstacles. Those discussions were then reported out in presentations by a spokesperson from each division to the larger group. The presentations were exemplary of the kind of thoughtful and committed leadership at the University and formed a basis for moving forward in our new strategic planning effort. The themes that emerged as aspirational goals were as follows:

- Continue to enhance our learning environment through greater engagement in the larger world and more complex engagement within the University
- Enhance our continued prestige, standing and accomplishments
- Create a culture in which we facilitate one another's work, communicate and collaborate in a meaningful and consistent fashion
- Build a campus community which enhances pride in membership, generates a new spirit of teamwork toward the achievement of a common purpose, and allows us to celebrate our community and accomplishments
- To become a model of customer service in relation to one another and the other customers we serve

The barriers identified included:

- Resistance to change
- A rigid reward system that doesn't allow for recognition of unique individual efforts/accomplishments

- Working in silos and the attitude that “it’s not my job”
- Trust and communication issues
- Competing priorities based upon scarcity of resources and time

Potential solutions included such anticipated initiatives as the Bell Tower and new strategic planning effort as ways in which to influence our culture and processes as well as to:

- Engage in more intentional and new ways to help us understand each others' work
- Invest time and resources in the professional development of University employees
- Educate University employees about the significant role of the University in this State and create a connection between the work that each individual here performs and the positive contribution it makes to our overall accomplishments
- Develop ways in which to build trust, teamwork and community to energize our collective talent to work more effectively and constructively

With the preceding work as a context for our new strategic planning effort, we are now in a position to share a working draft of the new strategic planning document with you for your input. The attached document represents the emerging areas of focus for the University's new strategic plan. The forum for processing and sharing that input will be the upcoming managers' meeting with Dr. Cole on February 17<sup>th</sup>. We have planned an interactive working session for the 17<sup>th</sup>, starting at 8:30 and ending at 10:30 and want you to be able to prepare prior to the actual working session. To that end, we are providing the document in advance so you will have the opportunity to review it, consider the various areas of focus, identify the area in which you have the strongest interest and begin to develop your answers to the questions set forth immediately below. The first half of the meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> will consist of individual group discussions concerning the attached document. You will be asked to group yourselves by the particular focus area in which you have the strongest interest. Dr. Cole will join us for the second half of the meeting during which each individual group will report out to the whole group on the discussions that took place. To provide some structure for this group work, we have developed two questions that we would like your group to discuss. They are:

1. Overall do these seem like the right areas of focus?
  - a. If not, what would you add, delete or modify and why?
2. What are the 3-5 things that need to happen to support the achievement of the specific area of focus on which you are working?

We will provide laptops and flipcharts for each of the working groups to assist you with capturing the essence of your discussions and to allow you to record and send it to HR. We will then synthesize your notes in a document that can be shared back with the group and with the Strategic Planning Committee.

Thanks in advance for your preparation and participation. Your input is an important part of the process in the development of the University's new strategic plan.

Attachment

