

President Cole's Managers Meeting, Tuesday, February 17, 2009

SUMMARY (or What the President Heard)

1. It is of significant importance to the University for each of us to take seriously the whole area of assessment, accountability, and ethics (or "integrity") in order for us to achieve the goals which we are setting out to accomplish.
2. There is a core value at this institution of educating students
 - Pedagogy is a concept that must be taken into account
 - Support of students is critical
 - We must ask the question: Is it really possible to get a degree from Montclair in four years?
 - Do all the parts and pieces of programs and services facilitate the ability of students to get their degrees in a timely way?
3. We must strengthen the connection to our alumni
 - We have lost the connection to this high-potential resource base
 - They are not just a source of financial help
 - They can support the institution through advocacy, mentoring, and internships
4. Can we use the institution more intensively?
 - Should we be open year round?
 - While we are currently available days and nights, should we be open 7 days per week?
 - Do we make the best use of our physical facilities?
 - Are we properly servicing the needs of our population?
5. Who should our students be? How many should we have? There are three questions at the heart of any university in the American system of education:
 - Who shall teach?
 - Who should be admitted to study (and how many)?
 - What shall be taught?
6. Guiding principles are important. We have always had guiding principles and we continue to have them. But what should rise to the top of our list?
 - "Reasoned risk taking" (she said she particularly liked that phrase)
 - Openness
 - Innovation
 - Social responsibility

We need to decide which are the primary principles and then work toward their implementation.

7. The parts must all be integrated
 - Silo issues are still present and prevent us from being as innovative as we might be
 - We need to tap the advantages of the sum of all parts
 - Integration allows for the innovation and creativity we need now more than ever

8. Who is our public?
 - What is our community? Montclair? The three townships?
 - The two counties? The state? The nation? The world?
 - Our growth numbers are higher in outlying counties
 - Is New York City part of our community?
9. We need to continue to be creative in attending to the development and education of all of our employees
 - We cannot forget about people once they come in the door
 - We need to develop their skills and abilities in order to move the institution forward
10. Technology
 - Exploit technology as a core resource
 - Data-driven decision making should be central to the administration of the University
11. Financial issues and obtaining resources
 - Our sources of revenue are changing
 - Our use of resources must be carefully examined
 - Resource usage connects directly to affordability for our students
 - We must be concerned with affordability (which goes back to the question “Who shall we educate?”)
12. We must be able to answer the question: What is the uniqueness of Montclair State University?
 - Directly linked to “Who are we?”
 - We are not “the institution that would be Rutgers”
 - People know we are doing something important here, that we have done something dramatic, but they do not know what to call us
 - We must create that new name for them, that image, that idea that is the uniqueness and specialness of what this University is and wants to be

Separate from the presentations is the external environment

- Unusual times in this country, for the State, and for the federal government
- We are not certain how much money New Jersey will get from the stimulus or what will be done with the money
- Many things have already been eliminated or changed since the original document was produced; it is not specific as were earlier drafts as to which funds will flow to higher education if they flow at all
- The national financial picture is not getting better
- Our State is in crisis; the governor is looking to federal money to bail us out
- It is unlikely that we can look to government for the solutions to our problems; we must look to the things we talked about today:
 - Using resources
 - Expansion of our existing resources
 - Efficient use of resources
 - “Planfulness”
 - Data-driven management: getting the most out of every penny we already have in service

- We have a tough job ahead but we have trained and able people
- We have done it before and we can do it again and will continue to do it if we have to
- We have the ability to develop the thinking, the creative ideas, the ingenuity to make it happen no matter what
- The University relies upon the managers to point out the direction to take
- It will take commitment and determination and fearlessness and innovation but we shall succeed