Dean’s Annual Report
Ohio University Lancaster Campus and Pickerington Center

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The following summary of accomplishments of calendar year 2015 captures some of the activities of the campus with a focus on those where the dean’s office has had a role in starting discussion, facilitating activity, or supporting and providing opportunity for work that moves the campus forward. This summary is not intended to represent the work of an individual, but rather the collective work of faculty and staff moving forward in a direction that is chosen to fulfill a common goal and commitment to educating and enriching the lives of those we serve.

The paper is organized with sections for planning and management, personnel matters and external relations that are similar to the dean’s evaluation instrument completed by faculty, but do not appear in the exact same order. Depending on content, some sections include a narrative explaining the area of work whereas other sections include brief sentences describing specific activities.

PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Goal Achievement/Project Areas and Implementing Goals

In identifying goals for discussion and direction of the leadership team at the summer retreat, I had the opportunity to reflect on the input as a result of campus meetings, campus leadership meetings and input from the comprehensive dean’s evaluation. At the retreat, key items and projects to focus on included the following:

Projects. Begin a fresh strategic planning process for the future. Develop a business continuity plan. Identify ways to improve communication flow within the organization.

Professional and faculty development. Identify professional development opportunities. Revisit the scholarship release program.

Academic program promotion. Initiatives to improve curriculum and learning. Continue to work on retention.

MAJOR PROJECTS

Communication. As with most organizations, communication is a challenge that includes finding the right mechanism, timing, as well as the right amount of information. In a study by Modern Think Consulting, it was found that communication is something that needs attention and can be improved across Ohio University. Rather than waiting for a systems approach to the issue, I, as well as the leadership team, felt a proactive work at the campus level would be of benefit. While we initially considered a team to examine the issue and to advise me as dean on changes to campus communication, it was decided that we should make use of a content expert to analyze the issues. Professor Thomas-Maddox agreed to conduct a formal evaluation of campus communication with the assistance of a graduate student. A survey instrument was customized to our campus and distributed to
faculty and staff this fall. Focus groups were conducted to gather more information on key items. I have reviewed the raw data results of the survey and the graduate student is developing a set of recommendations for the next steps.

**Effective use of committee communication.** An important component of campus communication and shared governance is effective use of committees. While it is generally agreed that the minutes of Executive Committee and Dean’s Cabinet are very helpful, it is essential that the communication from divisions and committees that insures a wide range of input from various campus constituencies is being documented and moved forward to faculty leadership, the Executive Committee and the dean. While there have been calls for minutes of all faculty and administrative committees by Executive Committee, it is not routinely happening or fails to be distributed outside of the committee membership. To resolve this issue, all committee charges are being reviewed and are being organized into a policy manual that will add, where appropriate, the Executive Committee’s charge on communicating activities. The manual will be comprised of the components of policy statements (formal role and charge of committees, their composition and responsibility) and, where necessary, the policies can be expanded upon with procedures (defining who will perform what tasks and when), work instructions and forms. The Executive Committee and Cabinet are in the process of reviewing existing committee charges and a draft of revisions will circulate for committees to make recommendations back to the Executive Committee hopefully by the end of the spring term or early fall at the latest.

A change that has already occurred in committee effectiveness and their importance in providing input to campus decisions is to determine the majority of the committee membership in April rather than waiting until fall. While new employees need to be integrated into committees in the fall, this simple change means committees can be active faster and contribute more to campus processes.

**Strategic Planning.** It was agreed that while there were reasons Executive Committee and Cabinet recommended not to pursue strategic planning as a project in previous years, now was the time to move forward. Some aspects of planning continue, such as staffing and facility upgrades, but aspects of our core operation need examined. Similar to the Communication Study, a campus content expert was identified and Professor Hoyt was contacted regarding facilitating the process. However, Professor Hoyt received the news that he had been awarded a large grant and several meetings followed on best ways to move forward. In that same time frame, I was informed that the campus would be participating in a process with a consultant on our future in a larger scale university initiative of OHIO for Ohio and how Lancaster, Pickerington and Dublin are part of a central Ohio strategy. The larger scale thinking towards the question of what our role should be in central Ohio formed the core of our strategic plan work. The question of our role in Central Ohio was posed to the faculty and then worked on by the leadership team. The results of the leadership process was then taken back to the faculty which helped shape the presentation given to the consultant. This plan continues to evolve and we will continue to seek campus input moving forward. Additional components of staffing, resources, facilities, community and potentially others areas of future planning will need defined towards the end of this academic year, during retreats this summer and possibly early fall.

**PERSONNEL MATTERS**

In many ways, 2015 proved to be a challenging year with several vacancies occurring between June 2015 and January 2016. As faculty and staff are our most important resources, it was important to review the structure of positions that were vacated and charge search committees to bring to campus high quality
applicants meeting those defined needs. We have been successful in filling the following positions: lab management associate, clinical experience coordinator, accounting support associate, administrative services associate in our Testing Center, administrative specialist in our Associate Dean’s Office, IT support specialist, communication and marketing manager, development and external affairs director, associate dean, assistant professor of criminal justice/sociology, lecturer of health services administration, lecturer of human services technology and visiting lecturer of electronic media. We are just beginning a search for a lecturer of accounting technology. Positions pending approval include a faculty member in math and a career counselor.

**Faculty and Staff Development**

**Faculty Development.** In 2015, we had five faculty members promoted increasing the number of tenured faculty for the campus. All going forward had successful records of quality teaching, scholarship and service and were supported at all stages of the review process.

In order to improve faculty development, a plan was discussed and formalized with Executive Committee in February 2015 to provide funds when they are available to support additional faculty travel for a second and unique scholarly presentation. Supporting productive scholars will help in encouraging scholarship at Lancaster.

An idea established in a previous year to provide the faculty member recognized as the professor of the year with funds to attend a pedagogy conference was reviewed and expanded to allow a variety of “teaching focused conferences” that are both general and specific to a discipline. In addition, the dean’s office sponsored travel funds to attend the “original” Lilly Conference at the Miami University location. Funding for such teaching-focused conferences carry the stipulation of requiring faculty to make formal presentations on something they learned at the conference with other faculty on campus.

It was very good to see faculty and staff initiating processes on their own to improve teaching as well. The work of Professor Nevin and Paul Campbell in creating and organizing a series on teaching has led to the spinoff development of a faculty learning community by Professor Wang and Paul Campbell.

An ongoing concern regarding the current structure of providing release time for faculty scholarship was brought to my attention. I facilitated a meeting with Executive Dean Willan that resulted in discussing the issue with academic leadership. They decided to reconstitute the committee membership and charge them with several tasks which included revisiting the structure of the scholarship release program. I was pleased to be appointed as the RHE dean’s representative to this committee as it will give me the opportunity to continue to focus on an issue important to the campus faculty, as well as hear first-hand the view of faculty across campuses on the RHE mechanisms for faculty development and compare our activities and processes to those of sister campuses.

**Unionization process for some staff.** This year also saw the unionization of our physical plant staff. This process took a fair amount of time in learning the particulars of the contract and how specific situations required guidance and discussion on implementing personnel policies and procedures. I believe we have learned a good bit in a short period of time and are settling into the change.
**Student Orientation**

I am connecting with more students in conversations about the campus and I also continue to be an advocate for things important to them, as well as personally attending events such as orientations sessions and awards events. This year there was excitement to start an Alpha Phi Omega Chapter at OUL and I was pleased to participate in the recognition of that accomplishment. In 2015, we also held our first Awards Banquet to recognize the contributions of faculty, staff and students of the Lancaster and Pickerington campuses. Attendance was fairly good and many walked away learning something about the accomplishments of others. While being careful to minimize the costs of holding the event, it was felt the event was successful, valued by the students and should be continued.

**ONGOING ACTIVITIES**

**Academic Program Promotion**

In support of our primary mission of education, I help promote academic programs in ways outside of the normal marketing and recruiting processes. Brief statements on this year’s activities are summarized below.

**FCCB direction.** OUL partners with various community organizations with complementary goals. One such organization is Fairfield County College Bound (FCCB). FCCB’s mission is to help students make a choice to attend college. Working with counselors within the school setting, the program startup has been limited to Lancaster City. Meeting with FCCB leadership, I provided suggestions and ideas for expansion of the effort which were implemented for 2015.

**Prepared for AQIP review.** A large amount of work for the associate dean’s and dean’s office was on collecting into one place and organizing over 650 documents needed for the HLC AQIP visit. While OUL was not a location visited by the team, the reviewers did request several documents for verification of compliance of maintaining such records in accordance with accreditation standards.

**Paramedic program.** Nationally, paramedic education had moved to requiring accreditation which required OUL to navigate state and national standards while ultimately moving towards elimination of our non-credit program. Additional faculty and program management costs to maintain accreditation were examined and would have exceeded revenues. At the same time, we were seeking to continue to serve our community’s continuing education needs by investigating a partnership with Grant Hospital’s non-credit program. To meet their accreditation needs, they are required to have a higher education partner and, thus, we worked to gain approval of an associate of technical study (ATS degree program) that would also serve other campus purposes.

**Program curriculum.** One of the smaller programs on campus is Engineering Technology, but it is also one that is high priority for community and economic development leaders. The associate dean and I have worked to assist the program director on ENGT curriculum, establishing a partnership with Eastland Fairfield Career Center for potential joint use of an advanced manufacturing center and made visits with three employers on their needs in education and training.

**Program review.** I supported a seven year review for DSI and a follow-up review on MAT. I met with the DSI program director regarding a recommendation for program suspension, development of a certificate for ASL and advocated for DSI to be offered in Athens.
ABLE. We have had discussions with ABLE regarding a “fast start program” where ABLE courses could be held in late summer so as to proceed our fall term and reduce the need for remediation of some students. Such an approach could reduce the number of terms students would be enrolled speeding time towards graduation.

Grants. I participated in a grant proposal for innovation strategy funding with Russ College Pavement Institute located on the OUL campus and our engineering technology program areas. Unfortunately, the proposal was not among those that moved forward from the second to the third round of the application process.

Hosting graduate programs. We are in the process of planning for a graduate cohort in counselor education in Pickerington.

Fiscal Management

Fiscal management is a critical issue for regional campuses, as well as many sectors of education. This has required careful consideration in the filling of faculty and staff lines noted earlier. As examples, OUL filled positions in criminal justice/sociology and human services technology, as well as moving a group IV to a group II position for health services administration. Each of these share a common component of maintaining strength in a growing need for jobs in social services and medically related fields. With the same careful consideration, I elected to fill a vacant electronic media position with a group IV while the program undergoes a curriculum review process called for by the RHE deans. A group IV allows for that process to work and more information to become known before moving forward.

Second to investment in human resources, is the investment in facilities. To support the new BA in biology, a renovation project to have two biology labs was undertaken. Extensive work was done to document the extent of our deferred maintenance issues and build a plan towards overcoming such deficiencies. Building envelope/water penetration issues remain a priority as we replaced a large portion of the roof on Herrold Hall and are finishing the portico project. As we look to enhance features of the campus with a new fitness center starting this summer and creating a new and expanded tutoring space, we also have projects identified to finish the remainder of the Herrold Hall roof, as well the gym roof.

An ongoing project is working with various developers to establish student housing for the Lancaster campus. This process will continue as it is believed that having such housing would increase enrollment/FTE.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

University Relations

Relationships with units within the University, but external to the campus include arranging for an extended visit by the new CIO to Lancaster. It was his first exposure to an OHIO regional campus and a series of meetings provided an administrative director’s perspective, a faculty perspective, an OUL-IT perspective, as well as my perceptions of our relationship with OIT and support services received.

In a similar manner, based on numerous conversations on campus about the Bobcat Bistro operation, I met with and arranged meetings between campus leadership and the leadership of auxiliary and culinary services.
**Fundraising and Donor Relations**

Externally, fundraising and stewardship activities are essential functions for the dean to be engaged with on an ongoing basis. This last year saw the successful completion of a nearly entirely donor funded renovation project for the Bobcat Bistro and significant community support for the renovation of the theatre’s sound and lighting systems, as well as aesthetic updates to painting, carpet and the grand drape curtain. While the campaign officially ended, the work continues as we focus on building relationships with potential corporate donors, as well stewardship meetings and planning events in 2016 to recognize donor contributions to the campus.

**Other External Relations**

As dean, I participate in a wide variety of local, regional, state and national meetings. A listing of some of the activities during 2015 is below:

- Participated in the Fairfield County Foundation Ambassador’s Reception as a member of the Foundation Board.
- Attended the Fairfield County Developmental Disabilities Celebration of Possibilities event.
- Attended all Ohio University Board of Trustees meetings and Foundation Board meetings held in Athens.
- Participated in the Annual Chamber of Commerce Dinner and Awards event.
- Held a meeting with the Chancellor and OHIO officials at the Pickerington Center.
- Discussed police response jurisdiction issues in emergency situations with the Lancaster Chief of Police.
- Attended several workforce development meetings around state.
- Worked with consultants to complete a workforce development analysis on logistics, health and manufacturing.
- Attended IUC meetings.
- Participated in the OU state government luncheon.
- Served as a speaker at the Lancaster Noon Rotary.
- Attended community events, such as Fairfield Medical Center ribbon cutting.
- Provided leadership and held meetings to establish OU Lancaster as the first Heart-Safe Accredited College campus in the nation.
- Held meetings with school leaders.
- I joined the board of Fairfield County Development Disabilities.
- Serve on the Lancaster Festival Board.
- Served as the conference chair and organizer of the national meeting of the Regional and Branch Campus Administrators.
- Provided oversight and support of the Covered Bridge Music Series as a partnership between OUL and the Lancaster Festival.

**UNIT GOALS**

Over the course of 2016, the focus will be on the implementation of planning activities characterizing 2015. This will include moving forward with a direction set by the OHIO for Ohio initiative, implementing new approaches to campus communication based on the findings of our study, and
implementing action plans to support strategic goals and directions that are formed as part of a new strategic plan.

This year will likely be exciting as we move forward in a new strategic direction. It will also be a challenging year as we adjust to tighter budgets and changing student enrollments. However, I remain very optimistic that it will be a successful year because of the collective talents that make working at Ohio University Lancaster so great. Each day talented faculty and staff make the most of opportunities and are creative in solving problems so that we are able to continue a vital role of educating and enriching the lives of the citizens of central Ohio.