FACULTY AND STAFF RELATIONS

A Partnership for UC

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PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT

“The greatness of the University of California follows from the excellence of its people – its faculty, staff and students; however, a mere collection of outstanding individuals will not advance the University. Our ability to excel in our missions depends on collaborations and collegial environments. A collegial atmosphere can only come about through strong partnerships based on mutual trust and respect. Therefore, in support of the University’s missions, the faculty and staff of the University of California affirm their responsibility and commitment to creating and fostering a cooperative and professional working environment.”

--excerpted from “The Task Force on Faculty/Staff Partnership,” January 1999, Council of University of California Staff Assemblies (CUCSA) and the Academic Council of the systemwide Academic Senate participating.
SHARED GOVERNANCE

The faculty of the University of California is uniquely privileged to share in the governance of their institution. The Board of Regents of the University has delegated to the faculty, acting through the agency of the Academic Senate, specific authority and responsibility over major portions of the University enterprise. By virtue of these delegations the concept of shared governance in the University of California means that management responsibility is in fact shared between the Academic Senate and the University administration, which acts through authorities specifically delegated to the President of the University and the Chancellors.

[from, "REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON SHARED GOVERNANCE AND SENATE OPERATIONS," UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC SENATE, DAVIS DIVISION, DECEMBER 13, 2004]
FACULTY: A DEFINITION

- Think about graduate training – it’s all about “critical” thinking
- Question everything
- Find the flaw
- Judged and challenged
- And judging and challenging

STAFF: A DEFINITION

- We’re all about “the rules”
- We’re “Team Players”
"DMV RAGE" SYNDROME

Fig. 6
"SOLVE THE MAZE"

REMEMBER: If you get stuck on a problem, simply move on to the next one.

AVG. TIME: 8 Min.

PAGE 36 OF THE OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT JOB APTITUDE TEST.

"DMV Rage" Syndrome

Fig. 17
"CONNECT THE DOTS"

(A, B)

(Hint: \( \cdots \cdots \cdots \cdots \))
UPDATE ELEVATOR #26

While performing the scheduled maintenance service on elevator #26, additional items were discovered that require further attention. These additional items were undetectable prior to disassembling the area scheduled for the preventative maintenance. We are saddened that we were unable to meet our goal by returning this equipment to service on Monday morning, but, we adamantly remain committed to perform all the necessary repairs as quickly as possible.

While I regret the temporary inconvenience this may cause you, I thank you for your understanding and assure you the benefit of an improved, more reliable elevator service when our work is completed.

This is an example of thoughtful communication, with strong consideration for customer service. ("saddened"! They "are saddened"! Now how can you get mad at that!)
FACULTY AND STAFF RELATIONS

NORDSTROM “U”—Part B

Date: Tue, 29 Nov 2005 17:05:34 -0800
To: “Physics Researchers”; From: [MSO]
Subject: Proposal turn-around time

PI’s,

Researchers and staff have been very busy lately with proposal submissions, several of which have required a very quick turn-around time. I write to ask, therefore, that in order to provide Jennie & Susan with enough time to do a thorough job, and to help maintain their sanity(!), that PI’s provide Physics staff with at least one week to prepare your proposals for submission to the Office of Research.

An “A” for effort, but actually quite irritating

NORDSTROM “U”—Part C

Remember also that the Office of Research requires proposals be submitted to their office at least five days prior to the funding agency deadline in order to provide a full review. Failure to provide five working days necessitates an emergency review by that office and the PI must assume full responsibility for all errors subsequently identified by the sponsor or the campus.

But also not effective—you’re telling them how to avoid a review they never think is necessary.

Thank you for your consideration!
FACULTY AND STAFF RELATIONS

How to handle these relationships

- These faculty-staff relationships can be the best part of our jobs.
- They are the reason we’re here.
- The onus is “on us”.

How to handle these relationships

- Move beyond the emotions.
- Build strong support base with supervisor.
- Support your staff for a united front.
- But, there ARE LIMITS!
A Day in the Life…

Welcome to the real world of the academic MSO.

- You arrive at work on Monday, and you are greeted by a call from Labor Relations about two on-going grievances filed by staff in your department.
- Today a candidate for a faculty position is arriving for a campus interview and the staff person assigned to take the candidate on a campus tour is home with the flu.
- The $15,000 emergency allocation from the Dean has not arrived as promised and now the Assistant Dean wants to see a copy of the e-mail that promised it in the first place, which you can’t find.

- Four of your faculty have written a joint e-mail to the chair to express their displeasure at not being consulted by you about the selection of a computer programmer who was just hired.
- A senior faculty member stops by your office to remind you that a major piece of her research equipment was not delivered yesterday according to schedule, and that the delay is jeopardizing her research with every passing moment; she wonders out loud if this would have happened if she had accepted that offer from Harvard last year.
- Your most trusted senior staff person is sending you dagger looks from her desk across the main office, although you can’t for the life of you remember if you said or did anything to upset her.

[taken from a UC Davis presentation by B. Singh]
Scenario 1—Post-doc Jury Duty

A faculty member has been here six months and his post-doc is called to jury duty and put on a long trial. He comes to tell you that he doesn’t think he should have to pay the post-doc when he’s not doing any research.

What do you do?
[Option Finder Exercise/Follow-up Discussion]

A: Be sympathetic and supportive but remind him that “the university” guarantees our salaries when we are serving and, in this case, he is “the university” since he hired the post-doc.

B: Be sympathetic and supportive and tell him you will see what you can do.

C: Be sympathetic and supportive but tell him that he will have to pay the post-doc. Then offer to help him find fellowships or other funding that might put the money back into his budget.

D: Be sympathetic and supportive and tell him that he will have to talk to (the chair, the dean, etc.).
Scenario 2—Immigration Issue

A faculty member comes in to your office to tell you that she has successfully recruited a visiting researcher from Germany who will be here in a month. Can you take care of it?

What do you do?

[Option Finder Exercise/Follow-up Discussion]

A. Congratulate her on her good fortune but tell her that J-1’s are currently taking 3 months.

B. Congratulate her on her good fortune, tell her that the normal processing time is three months but you have developed strong relationships with the International Center staff and you might be able to get it that fast.

C. Congratulate her on her good fortune and suggest that she and her German colleague set up a virtual working relationship online because her research will be out of date by the time we can get her in the country.

D. Congratulate her on her good fortune and ask her for the information so you can get started on the visa, not mentioning that it will not be ready in one month.
Scenario 3—Renovation Fiasco

A new faculty member has been here six months and still cannot work in his lab. He comes into your office and has a meltdown over the time it has taken for the renovations and demands to be reimbursed for his lab people’s salaries during the downtime.

What do you do? — (And do you remind him of the 14 work order changes he has requested along the way?)

Option Finder Exercise/Follow-up Discussion

A. Sympathize, hand him a tissue, and remind him for the 14th time of his 14 change orders.
B. Sympathize and commiserate with him about how long it’s taking and tell him you will personally speak with the project manager and see if something can be worked out so that at least part of the lab will be useable soon. Tell him you will look at the budget and discuss with the chair the possibility of partnering with him on some of his expenses during the unexpected delay.
C. Excuse yourself and go to someone else’s office and look at the current job openings on campus.
D. Sympathize and commiserate with him about how long it’s taking and share with him that your facilities unit is a total fiasco and that it’s always difficult working with them and they’re always over budget. Someone should do something about those people.
Scenario 4—Faculty Assistant

You assist a faculty member in hiring an administrative assistant to support his research directly. Because of the low starting salary, you are only able to find someone “from the outside.” The new hire has just been in your office in tears, saying she feels like she’s landed on Pluto and the professor made her so nervous she was trying to shove the disk in upside down.

Now you have the faculty member in your office telling you YOUR new hire is so stupid she was trying to put the disk in upside down. What do you do?

[Option Finder Exercise/Follow-up Discussion]

Scenario 4—Faculty Assistant

A. Talk to the faculty member and remind her that our world can seem very different to someone “from the outside” and the new employee needs time to acclimate and receive further training.

B. Improve your department orientation process and include the new employee in an orientation session. Then talk to the employee and the supervisor to understand specific concerns offering advice for improving the working relationship.

C. Talk to the employee and explain the way the university operates and the way the faculty member works and his/her pressures. Offer words of advice on how to cope and how to be successful working with Professor Smith.

D. Offer to mediate with both people in the room and get to the bottom of the problem with specific examples of problems and suggestions for how to resolve them.
SUMMARY

- Faculty and Staff have important roles (one can't exist without the other)
- A solid partnership is key to success for each
- Build wins and trust - so the faculty will accept "bad" news when "no" is the only answer
- Build confidence - so faculty know they can come to you with a problem (and possibly avert disaster in advance)

“DMV Rage” Syndrome