

Illinois Institute of Technology

Staff Advisory Council Updates

Fall 2018 Town Hall

Unanswered Questions

Provost Peter Kilpatrick:

QUESTION 1 (*Sent as a follow up to the Provost's response to diversity in the workforce*): What do you mean by diverse and how will you keep accountability on this?

ANSWER: I believe a proper understanding of diversity is rooted in the correct understanding of the dignity of the human person. Every human person is a unique and unrepeatable creation and deserving of respect. This dignity is not a result of what we do, but who we are. Thus every human person, no matter their race, ethnicity, gender, orientation, or any other quality or trait, is deserving of our respect and possesses that dignity. Thus, we cannot tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or any other type of maltreatment of any person. Our current policies at IIT ensure this and it is my responsibility (as well as everyone else at IIT) to ensure that we hold people accountable to this. But we need to do more. Often harassment or discrimination is more subtle and manifests as aggressive behavior. So we also need to ensure that as a community we build a culture of respect, love, and justice. Again, this is everyone's responsibility. So when we witness aggressive and inappropriate behavior, we need to remind our coworkers that we all have a responsibility to maintain a respectful work environment. This is how I plan to help create a culture that celebrates diversity and is inclusive.

QUESTION 2: What can you tell us about the changes we can expect from Huron's assessment of Student Services? What is the timeline for implementing Huron's Student Services suggestions?

ANSWER: We are in the process of executing all the changes that will flow from Huron's assessment of Student Services. For example, we merged the "Office of Student Access, Success, and Diversity Initiatives" with the Office of Student Affairs. Much of the charge and mandate of SASDI was identical to the mandate of OSA. A major portion of SASDI is Career Services and we are in the process of hiring a new Associate Vice Provost for Career Services. We are also in the midst of restructuring many of the elements of the Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Admissions and Enrollments to create a true Campus One Stop, both in terms of our technology platforms as well as in terms of our physical location of these important contributors to student life. As with all things here at IIT, we must always make our actions and

decisions asking ourselves "how can I best ensure the success of our students." We believe as a leadership team that the changes we are making to student services will help us serve our students better.

CFO Mike Horan:

QUESTION 1: How do you plan to retain high-achieving employees in the next year in spite of financial constraints?

ANSWER: It's important to note that money is not the only way to retain talent in an organization. It's also about benefits and opportunities to grow and learn and be challenged as a professional. In order to be successful is recruiting and retaining our talented workforce, we need to focus on all three of these pillars. One of our goals over the next year is to establish a clear compensation philosophy that aligns with our organizational structure and job descriptions and allows us to better benchmark salaries against the market so that we can identify and rectify any gaps. We will also design a new process for employee development by improving the performance appraisal process to be more concise, more targeted and delivered to the employee more often, with measurable goals for development. Part of the goal-setting process is to develop an individual plan that helps both the manager and an employee identify stretch goals that help a person grow.

QUESTION 2: Can you provide us with an overview of how our new Procurement Office will function?

ANSWER: The Procurement Office is now headed up by Snow Rutkowski who has facilitated a series of procurement forums where this has been elaborated upon. In general the Procurement Office is working on design and implementation of an eProcurement solution that will act as a platform for all university departments to use for purchasing needs. Before the eProcurement solution, called Unimarket, is fully live and operational, the core Procurement Services team will continue to support campus in their requisition, procurement card, and accounts payable needs. The Purchasing team has started to and will continue to collaborate and partner more with campus departments and functional areas to identify common needs and requirements, facilitate negotiations of university-wide contracts that will provide competitive pricing and quality customer services, and leverage the resources on the Digital Learning, Marketing and Communications, and Human Resources teams to develop more training and communications material to ensure that end-users are well educated on the right procurement processes and updated on any new changes and development.

QUESTION 3: What happens with data from exit interviews? If a topic/issue has been brought up in an exit interview that if shared could improve office culture, how could it appropriately shared with the staff?

ANSWER: Human Resources has developed a new process in which they are looking for themes that arise from exit interviews in order to inform our understanding of the strengths and

weaknesses in a department. They are also looking at turnover rates to see what departments have higher and lower than normal turnover rates. Exit interview not only provide negative information for us; they also provide insights into things we are doing well so that we can find ways to build on our strengths as well. If a theme arises in an individual unit we will share it with the management and if appropriate with the staff in that department so that we can be constructive and make improvements. If the themes are related to the university as a whole, we'll share that as well, good or bad. People leave the university for a variety of reasons. Not everyone exits because they're frustrated. They often find a better position in life, hopefully because Illinois Tech helped them grow and prepare for it. We should rejoice in those. We will listen to those who are leaving because we have not supported them as we should, and use that feedback to turn those weaknesses around.