

# The HR Hub

Thank  
YOU

Volume 16

April 27 2009

## Inside This Special Edition:

*The All School Meeting Facilitators share their experiences in the Break Out Sessions and your views as they heard them.* 2-7

*Calendar* 8

Thought Provoking

Participatory

inclusive

Candid

constructive

PRODUCTIVE

Helpful

Honest

Communal

Optimistic

ground breaking

hopeful

ENGAGING

Encouraging

Positive

Informative

Anticipatory

Inspiring

## SUMMARY OF BREAKOUT SESSION FACILITATOR COMMENTS FROM THE APRIL 15, 2009 MEETING

Feedback is listed in order from most frequently to least frequently mentioned:



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People seemed hopeful / optimistic / positive

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People hope this is the beginning of communication, not the end

People felt like they were heard / appreciated / not over looked

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Something similar should be done for the students

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People were tense at first

Feeling of deep caring

More communication with a similar format for faculty, staff and students

\*

People appreciated receiving the information

Group was timid at first

Passionate about offering suggestions

Experience was groundbreaking for the campus

*Note - one asterisk for each time the item came up.*

## FACILITATORS COMMENTS

The mix of participants for my group was largely staff with three faculty. The group was very timid and appeared hesitant to offer any participation to the first question regarding the meeting and the current fiscal status. My personal sense was the staff was a little intimidated by the faculty presence. After some prompting and encouragement, we did have a great conversation regarding the strategic goals and the future of the school. The group was very passionate about offering suggestions on how to move forward and what would most benefit the students and how to enrich their experiences while in our care.

Thanks for the opportunity to help!

Most of the employees in my group just happened to be faculty members. They seemed to feel that the number one concern is preserving the artistic excellence of UNCSA through this economic crisis, and also drawing support from the community.

I must say that even though there was some initial tension, through the questions asked and open flow of discussion, the tension was relieved and I believe that everyone left with the feeling that there is much more hope than they may have thought. I made sure to reiterate throughout the breakout session that the reason everyone was there was because of the fact that leadership wants to hear from *us*. I know this allowed them to leave feeling like they will not be overlooked.

Even though things are so uncertain right now, its nice to know that after leaving the breakout session everyone felt heard, appreciated, and hopeful.

*"In my breakout session, the overall feel was somewhat tense, but despite the tension everyone seemed hopeful."*

I think the mix was good and I think people felt comfortable saying what they needed to say. I did find it necessary to reassure them on several occasions that it was a safe forum but trust takes time to develop so I wasn't surprised at any hesitation. I was impressed at how they expressed their concerns in a positive way or, if they were having trouble doing that, the other members of the group helped them along. They were so grateful for the opportunity to voice their opinions – I've had a number of them contact me since – even people who weren't in my group but knew I was a facilitator.

**FACILITATORS COMMENTS**

My breakout session went very smoothly. I think we had about 12 people in the room. Overall, the feel was one of deep caring for the school and the work that the school does. People had some questions, but many of the questions/ideas were around managing people's expectations, which suggested to me that most people understood that economic times are hard and that cutbacks are a reality. For instance, there was concern that people might get upset when they see buildings going up or certain departments spending money in the midst of cutbacks. The group suggested that providing honest, timely, specific information about budgetary differences could help alleviate some backlash around these types of issues. Many people expressed appreciation for the opportunity to listen and talk and wanted to make sure the same opportunity was afforded students.

The dynamic of the group I was in was faculty heavy – so the majority of the conversation was around how we view the school as teachers. We spent time trying to imagine what this institution could be like. It was not a despairing conversation, but a hopeful one looking toward the future of the institution. The understanding is that this will take much time and discussion – one group member mentioned that this is really a discussion for a retreat and not 45 minutes – but we all understood that this is a first step. There may have been a little animosity toward the upper administration in the sense that we know they didn't create the situation, but we seem to be reacting instead of being proactive. The one comment that I don't think made it to our sheet was that this same process – presentation, questions, breakout sessions – should be held for the students also. I am sure they have as many questions as we do and deserve the same time to process and respond. It might also be a good idea to ask them what they see as the most important assets of the school. If you need facilitators for this type of meeting I would be glad to help out.

*"We spent time trying to imagine what this institution could be like. It was not a despairing conversation, but a hopeful one looking toward the future of the institution."*

## FACILITATORS COMMENTS

I thoroughly enjoyed my session and its participants. It was an eye opening experience. I tried to set the tone in our group right off the bat by saying that everyone's comments were welcome and that everyone would be given a chance to share. I reminded everyone that this event came about because the administration wanted to change the culture of the campus community and they cared about what we all thought.

My group was mixed as well. I had 11 people, some from facilities, staff, faculty (arts and academic). I first asked how they "felt" about the All School meeting and had several takers. The overall tone was not fearful, but excited about the changes (some thought long over due) that we would have to encounter because of the budget crisis. Many felt this was the schools opportunity to bring the entire campus community together. Everyone agreed that the separatism that exists limits the productivity of faculty and staff.

One topic was passionately supported by all and that was that we must do everything in our power to support the students whole person. Once that was said, suggestions came from everyone.

Overall, they were very receptive to these type meetings and welcome future opportunities to be heard by the administration. They thanked me and all who were involved for taking these steps toward a better UNCSEA.

It was awesome experience and I would love to participate in the next!

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We had a very diverse group and everyone was very positive about the meeting and the question session after. The overwhelming feeling was that people just wanted an answer and everyone is quite edgy about not knowing. The staff felt like they could be let go at any minute and staff were not safe but Faculty were safe from being laid off.

*"The people in my group hope that this is just the beginning of communication and open meetings and not the end."*

## FACILITATORS COMMENTS

There were 13 participants in our group, including myself. Everyone participated and the group mix was good. Unfortunately, there were no employees from Facilities Management or Student Life in our group, and from a personal perspective, that would have enabled us to have shared as a more complete “mini campus community”, but... As questions came and by working together as a group in forming how to phrase the comment or ask the question on paper, a feeling of security, similarities and sincerity seemed to open the door for more engagement by all.

Participants truly appreciated and expressed the desire for continual communication in the formats that had been utilized that day. While there were moments of hesitation and fears expressed, the experience was ground breaking for this community.



We had a good group mix. Most of our time was spent with some discussion – about the session, but mainly about sharing point-of-views. I thought this was important enough that we mainly put down statements on our pages that the group agreed to, after discussion. I hope that works for you.

The overall experience was extremely positive and the group of faculty-administrative staff-support staff -and others was a formula for a lot of “I am glad we talked about that, I understand now.”

Out of the conversation the number one priority that came out was more communication with a similar format without supervision from upper administration.

Hope this helps – I really enjoyed it.



**FACILITATORS COMMENTS**

I thought it would be more helpful to the Administration to have every point of view represented, rather than looking for consensus within our group. There were strengths and drawbacks to this approach.

We had trouble understanding the difference between “immediate priorities” and “priorities for UNCSA.” I don’t think our list was too coherent, and it certainly wasn’t comprehensive. Someone in the group suggested we list our lowest priorities — the things we didn’t think UNCSA should be doing — and that got a much more impassioned and coherent response.

One other note: I think working in a corner of Crawford presented special challenges — the noise level was not easy to work through.



*Please remember to check  
our website for updates to the Frequently Asked  
Questions via the link below. We hope you find  
this information informative and useful.*

<http://www.uncsa.edu/announcement/budget.htm>

## FACILITATORS COMMENTS

Our Breakout Session went well. Overall, the dialogue seemed optimistic - primarily concerned with educational sustainability, operational transparency, and equitable resource distribution between schools/departments. I've listed below the key points of our session.

- ◆ Improved Strategies for Recruiting High Quality Faculty and Students
- ◆ Improved Strategies for Faculty/Staff Retention
- ◆ Improved Strategies for Campus Transparency and Communication
- ◆ Improved Faculty/Staff Incentives, such as free tuition for a child or spouse
- ◆ Maintain Small Class Sizes
- ◆ Secure Production Budgets – cutting ONLY as a last course of action



We had a productive breakout session on Wednesday.

Everyone participated in our discussion and we came up with some very important questions. Congratulations on the good work you are doing.



The feeling I received from my group is more of concern. I think the majority of my folks want to preserve the integrity of the school, its programs, spirit, and its positive and creative energy.

*"The Office of Human Resources is committed to functioning as a strategic partner in the development and retention of a highly qualified, diverse workforce."*

**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**Beth Cox**  
 Director of Human Resources  
 Email: [cox\\_b@uncsa.edu](mailto:cox_b@uncsa.edu)  
 770-3317 Phone  
 770-1402 Office Fax

**Tyka Calloway**  
 Executive Assistant  
 Email: [Callowayt@uncsa.edu](mailto:Callowayt@uncsa.edu)  
 770-1428 Phone

**Ginger Salmons**  
 Records Management  
 Email: [salmonsg@uncsa.edu](mailto:salmonsg@uncsa.edu)  
 770-1377 Phone

**Keyona McNeill**  
 Benefits Representative  
 Email: [mcneillk@uncsa.edu](mailto:mcneillk@uncsa.edu)  
 770-1451 Phone

**Ashley Sanders**  
 HR Generalist  
 Email: [sandersa@uncsa.edu](mailto:sandersa@uncsa.edu)  
 770-1481 Phone

**Susan Porter**  
 Business Systems Analyst  
 Email: [porters@uncsa.edu](mailto:porters@uncsa.edu)  
 770-3318 Phone

**May 2009**

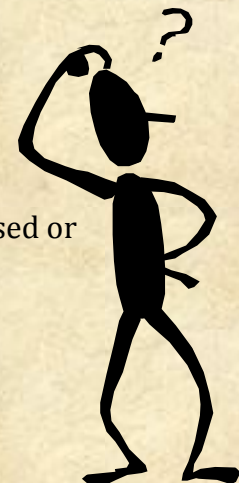


SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 MOTHER'S DAY	4	5 Permanent Timesheets Due	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 MID MONTH PAY DAY	16
17	18 Mid-Month Timesheets Due	19	20	21 Staff Council 11am Eisenberg	22 Performance Review Training *	23
24	25 MEMORIAL DAY	26	27	28	29 MONTHLY PAY DAY	30
31	HR Staff Meetings: <i>Our office will be closed during these times!</i> May 21st (9 - 11am) & May 29th (2 - 4pm)					

\* Performance Review Training May 22nd 12:30 - 2:30 (RJR Screening Room)

*Just Ask!*

How can we help you? Do you have questions you'd like answered but perhaps don't have enough time to stop by HR and ask? Chances are, if you have a question, someone else does, too! If there's a topic you'd like addressed or explained, please let us know by emailing The Office of Human Resources at [AskHR@uncsa.edu](mailto:AskHR@uncsa.edu).



*Names of those making the inquiries will remain confidential.*