

Fostering Employee Engagement



Examples of Practices Implemented by Academic and Administrative Leaders

Leaders/managers play a key role in fostering engagement within their respective areas. They shape organizational culture, create the conditions in the work environment for faculty and staff to feel inspired, motivated, safe, and proud, and foster a sense of belonging. This document highlights some practices implemented by academic and administrative leaders over the last year to address area specific results from the Employee Engagement Survey (March 2022) and support overall employee engagement efforts.

Engagement Factor	Examples of Practices Implemented
Impact & Connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monthly leadership engagement meetings led by Deans for department heads and directors.• Enhanced engagement of both faculty and staff in student recruitment events.• Monthly department-wide staff meetings with professional development components, including inviting campus partners to share information.• Discussions at departmental meetings about how their collective work advance the vision, mission, and strategic priorities of the university.• Re-sharing and discussion of university-wide communication within departments.• Being visible and available, taking the time to walk around the office to connect with staff in informal ways.• Regular one-on-one meetings with staff.• Weekly team huddles to enhance communication.• Social activities, such as lunchtime team building opportunities, lunch and learns, and after work get together opportunities.• Bi-weekly team meetings for collaboration, discussion and celebration.• Inter-departmental meetings to bring all members of a portfolio/division together to enhance collaboration, communication and understanding.• Communications to encourage staff to attend campus events and gatherings.• Division wide Town Hall meetings.
Growth & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stretch assignments and special projects for individuals in managerial positions to support career growth and succession planning.• Increased opportunities for staff to attend development opportunities.• Letters of support for faculty and staff to apply to the Leadership Development Fund for Marginalized and Historically Underrepresented Groups.• 360 feedback process for leaders and psychological safety training.• Coaching and mentoring of staff and leaders.
Recognition & Appreciation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhancement and/or establishment of Department/Faculty specific awards and events to recognize the work conducted by faculty and staff.• Increased showcasing of faculty and staff successes through Daily News and other Faculty specific newsletters.• Taking the time regularly to express appreciation to staff for a job well done.• More concerted effort to submit nomination packages for awards such as Alumni Teaching Award, Mary-Lou Dietz Award, Distinguished Professor awards, etc. to ensure recognition of faculty and staff for their contributions.
Positive & Supportive Workplace Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formalized department specific faculty and staff onboarding.• Initiatives to support mental health throughout the year including having an Employee Mental Health Strategy Ambassador.• Update, educate, and celebrate components included at staff meetings.• Modeling wellness practices such as not e-mailing direct reports outside of regular working hours, not responding to messages on vacation unless it is an urgent matter, taking lunch, etc.• Monthly internal newsletter to help improve unit-wide communication.• Training for leaders on having difficult conversations, conflict resolution, and respectful workplace environments.• Department specific Employee Engagement Committee.• Team-building sessions and other get together opportunities for team members to connect and learn from one another.

Creating a work environment that fosters engagement is a journey, not a quick fix. The practices outlined in this document are part of that journey undertaken by various areas across the university. Collectively, they:

- Build a culture of appreciation where every effort, no matter how large or small is acknowledged and recognized.
- Foster camaraderie, help build trust and a positive work environment.
- Promote continuous learning.
- Encourage and support employee wellness.
- Bridge the gap between managers and employees.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The next Employee Engagement Survey will be deployed March 5, 2025.

The results from the 2022 survey provide the baseline information from which we will be able to measure progress.