

4-28-2017

Cluster Team Design Workshop I [April 28, 2017]

Plymouth State University

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Cluster Team Design Workshop 4-28-17

Interested E&D faculty, as well as faculty and staff from other clusters met on 4-28-17 from 9:30 to 11:30 in Heritage for the first of two “cluster team design workshops” (the next workshop will be held May 12th from 2 to 4pm).

The Workshop began with a short overview from Cynthia Vascak using slides from the recent town hall. Most of the session involved discussion of models within cluster and other groups at the meeting. At one point, groups shared their vision/models for approaches to cluster/university organization and leadership.

Discussion and questions that emerged from the E&D group discussion:

-How will this reorganization make things any easier or save money? (Later in the session a question addressed the need for a budget discussion since a previously advertised session on cluster budget savings was withdrawn.)

-What will happen to the council of chairs? Will the larger, emerging group of “coordinators” for programs be too large and unwieldy for governance/deliberation?

-How do we operate with different processes and organizations across clusters? Where is the subject-matter knowledge, consistency, and fairness for resolving faculty and student issues? How do faculty and students know where to go for things? How do we maintain a professional stance when we don’t know what’s going on?

-Can we use a “skeleton” analogy to help describe what we need? Everyone should have the same invisible “skeleton” structure while offering different programs and opportunities.

-We discussed and presented at one point John Krueckeberg’s “brainstorm” model for AA and clusters (shared separately). There was considerable interest in this model.

-We revisited the original invite for faculty and programs to “choose a cluster” and wondered aloud whether those assumptions still held. What new assumptions can we make about what it means to have a cluster home? What about the “home room” model suggested originally by the President?

-Some expressed frustration that viable options and models were in discussion 18 months ago, yet work on this task was just moving forward in earnest now. Why the long pause? What does this say about the current effort? How will the process proceed? What are concrete next steps going to be?

-One faculty colleague remarked, “We haven’t achieved much!” Many agreed.

-Some worried about asymmetries across clusters, some clusters being almost a “super department” in terms of membership and theme. Others noted the differing size of clusters (at least in terms of faculty subscribers) and tendency to divide things by 7 equally among clusters (unfairly).

At the end of group discussion, some clusters (and other groups formed there) shared different visions for cluster org and leadership. Deans promised to capture and share notes, charts, visuals and other artifacts from the discussion as a whole.