Pursuing Operational Excellence Task Force Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2020

Co-chair Marie Williams opened the meeting with introductions at 10:00 am and thanked everyone for their time.

Committee Members Present:
Mark Beasley, Director, Enterprise Risk Management Initiative and KPMG Perm Professor, Accounting Poole College of Management
Rich Berlin, Associate Vice Chancellor, Campus Enterprises
Jeff Baynham, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor, Advancement Services, University Advancement
Adrian Day, Assistant Vice Provost, Finance and Planning, Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
Warren Jasper, Professor, Textile Engineering, Chemistry and Science Wilson College of Textiles
Leda Lunardi, Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering, College of Engineering
Doug Martin, Associate Vice Chancellor, Facilities, Office of Finance and Administration
Joyce Munro, Assistant Dean, Business Operations, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Barry Olson, Associate Vice Chancellor, Business Administration, Division of Academic and Student Affairs
Caroline Ortiz-Deaton, Director, Information Management and Student Funding, The Graduate School
Jason Painter, Director, Science House, College of Sciences
Nancy Whelchel, Director, Survey Research, Office of Institutional Research and Planning

Guest:
Kevin Rice, Director, Learning and Organizational Development, University Human Resources
Kelly Wick, Director of Special Projects, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
Philip Alarcon-Furman, Graduate Student, Wilson College of Textiles

Committee Members Absent:
Jim Broschart, Associate Vice Chancellor, University Development, University Advancement
Amira Hijazi, Doctoral Student, Industrial Engineering, College of Engineering
Barbara Moses, Associate Vice Chancellor, Budget and Resource Management, Office of Finance and Administration
David Rainer, Associate Vice Chancellor, Environmental Health and Public Safety, Office of Finance and Administration
Shawn Troxler, Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel

Marie shared that this will be the first of five sessions to take place between now and July to work towards a white paper with some recommendations. There are two outcomes of today's discussion, what do we mean by operational and organizational excellence and creating the shared understanding of the challenges we face in achieving what we think will be operational excellence.

Kevin shared that the discussion for today will be creating the foundation for the future discussions. There will be breakout groups to discuss the two outcomes Marie discussed in her opening remarks and shared the topics of the upcoming meetings through the next two months. He shared the instructions for the activities of the meeting. The first activity will be a breakout group with the participants assigned to one of four groups with the task to create a common definition of operational excellence at NC State. Each breakout group was given the opportunity to share the definition they created.

Doug Morton shared the definition created in the first break out group, with the idea that there are standards which are set by us and others. The standards are in student success and research and the experience of being at NC State. He stated that operational excellence is intentionally meeting or exceeding those standards. The experience at being at NC State is unique and no one else has that it is about the whole of campus participating and meeting or exceeding that standard.

Jeff Bayham shared the definition created in the second breakout group which was focusing on the greater good of NC State by promoting a team-oriented, collaborative processes. Thinking about being customer-centric, whether it is fellow faculty, staff or students, while staying within university policies and regulations.

Adrian Day shared the definition created in the third break out group, the group thought a lot about the core missions of the University, including instruction, research, extension and economic development. How do we make the core missions function better within the University by leveraging actionable intelligence and how it provides support for the organization and adding value to improve our processes? Group three placed a lot of emphasis on customer service to customers across campus to achieve the larger goals of the University.

Jason Painter shared the definition created in the fourth break out group, the group focused on three areas; customer service, employee engagement, resource management. Customer service is providing great services and products as cost effectively as possible to faculty, students, and partners, with continuous and constant improvement. Employee engagement as a development of a culture of collaboration to eliminate organizational silos, synchronization of processes, policies, and systems across the University. Resource management is the efficient use of all resources including people, materials and equipment to eliminate waste and remove redundancies.

Marie Williams commented each of the areas on campus are like pieces of a puzzle that must be integrated and connected to accomplish the mission, vision, values, and strategic goals of the University.

Kevin instructed that for the next activity the participants will be placed into breakout groups again to discuss what are some of the challenges here at NC State in terms of achieving

operational excellence. Each group is to then identify the top three challenges they discussed and then will present those top three challenges to the full group for discussion.

Joyce Munro shared the challenges the first breakout group discussed. The first being the many layers the University has at the department, college, university and then UNC system and state levels. The second challenge cited was that the University does not currently have the right balance of centralization versus decentralization. The third challenge is the lack of true diversity in leadership roles and among faculty at NC State.

Jeff Bayhamn commented that it can be very taxing to try to be innovative or entrepreneurial with these many layers and as a result can disincentivize faculty and staff to implement change and innovations.

Nancy Whelchel shared the challenges identified in the second breakout group. The first challenge being the critical need to standardize operational systems and the associated data within the University. The second challenge is similar to what the first group shared in the difficulty in adopting new initiatives. One reason for this could be the "we have always done things this way" mindset that is still present at the University. The third challenge was the red tape and bureaucracy. Some of the systems we use are not agile and make it inefficient to get our jobs done.

Phillip Alarcon-Furman shared the challenges identified in the third breakout group. The first challenge is the size and complexity of the university, number of students and faculty, leads to multiple people being involved to make a decision and making the process complicated and time consuming. The second challenge is a lack of trust, needing so many people getting involved to get a task done correctly. The third challenge is the reward and performance measurements may not align with the actions, desired goals, visions and values of the university and may lead us in different directions.

Rich Berlin shared the challenges identified in the fourth breakout group. The first challenge identified was convincing people of the value of communications, and considering the duplication of effort. Do we value the benefit of communication? The second challenge identified was the cultural and operational differences among the college's divisions and units can hamper the continuous improvement initiatives in progress across campus units. The third challenge identified was the funding to support the programs, to move to think and do funding and have the flexibility financially to fund our excellent initiatives and ideas to fruition.

Jeff Baynham made the point in discussion of the fourth groups' third challenge of funding is having the right experts supervise the right people. Having the right people guiding the teams that have the expertise in the desired skills.

Marie Williams agreed that this a good point and the great discussion by all of the breakout groups.

Kevin Rice took the group through a dot vote exercise to collectively identify the top four challenges the groups presented. The votes will be used in planning for the next session and the votes will be used to look at the challenges in common and the overlaps. The top vote was cultural and operational differences among colleges, divisions and units. The second top vote is

matching resources to the appetite for innovation and creative thinking. Other challenges identified that were closely tied were willingness to adopt change and red tape transparency agility and also layers of the system that we are in. These top four challenges will be used to help plan for the next session on May 27, 2020 at 9:30 am.

Marie Williams then thanked the group for their great ideas and high levels of engagement and thankedKevin Rice for facilitating the session. She then shared that we have one parking lot item for later discussion which is to incorporate a lot of the survey data when it comes to metrics. Marie gave closing remarks to remind them that during the next session we will be pulling what we have learned from this meeting to think about what are the areas of opportunities. She commented that even though the group is diverse the themes from the breakout groups were similar and she appreciated everyone's input and the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 pm.