



# President's **FOCUS**

## *Monthly Report to the Board*

December 2017

### **Integrated Strategic Planning: Human Resources**

Serving students most thoroughly—the core work of the College—advances best when the people who do that work are well-supported by efficient, knowledgeable human resources professionals. In this past year, the Office of Human Resources and Strategic Talent Management (HRSTM) has been redesigned to maximize responsiveness, efficiency, and expertise. Professional development programs are now housed under E-Learning, Innovation, and Teaching Excellence (ELITE), while organizational development remains an HRSTM function. Employee and labor relations have been re-envisioned and enhanced by a new director. All of these changes are in preparation for the planning that will integrate the expansive work of HRSTM with the broader planning of the College.

This issue of the *President's Focus* will explore some of the variables that are being considered as HRSTM develops its own master plan in support of the core functions of the College. It will also examine how HRSTM is attending to several priorities that are important across the College including fiscal and operational stewardship, accountability, and a culture of customer service. It will also highlight where HRSTM planning intersects with the needs of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

One part of the redesign of HRSTM has been the assigning of faculty and professional development to ELITE, which now includes the Center for Professional and Organizational Development (CPOD). While ELITE has



some crossover with HRSTM on skills training, the director of ELITE is part of the Academic Affairs leadership team. ELITE works primarily on projects that enhance teaching and learning, including new technologies, distance education, and initiatives such as open educational resources (OERs). As collegewide academic initiatives arise, ELITE is poised to provide consultations or resources that help employees make their work most effective. For example, ELITE plans for the faculty members who will serve as “embedded” support in classrooms where it is needed, contributing directly to student success.

Making employees maximally effective is achieved through trainings and consultations offered by ELITE. Ensuring that employees who work in every office and in every role clearly appreciate their important role in recruiting and retaining students is a challenge being considered currently by ELITE. In connecting employees in one specialized area of the College to a new emphasis on customer service, ELITE has a direct impact on employee effectiveness and student success. At the same time that ELITE provides trainings on specific skills sets, it also serves to advise faculty on the use of technology. Since not all faculty members will gravitate to the same types of technology, ELITE can guide individual faculty members—or departments—to wider technology choices and explore their nuanced application to classroom and online learning. As the College moves closer to creating career laddering for employees, ELITE will offer skills trainings for employees who want to advance, and will design competencies for online formats. ELITE’s work is tightly connected to the College’s wider strategic planning processes. Its work is constantly evolving to meet the needs of employees, whether in the classroom, the counseling office, student services, or other parts of the College. The impact of ELITE can be seen in how many employees it serves in a year. Last fiscal year, ELITE provided 755 workshops to over 4,000 participants. One thousand more employees participated in almost 70 multicultural training workshops. In part, because of ELITE’s training, 98 percent of MC faculty now use Blackboard, while 92 percent of students do. As the College evolves, ELITE’s role will too, creating a consistent support system.

Organizational development, formerly part of HRSTM’s Center for Professional Development (CPOD), is a critical aspect of the effective delivery of human resources services providing insight on continuous improvement, succession planning, and employee development. The introduction of 360-feedback evaluations for supervisors is an example of a step toward a more holistic assessment of employee performance. This year’s employee engagement survey is another



tool through which HR hopes to glean additional information about employee attitudes and ambitions, so that it can improve the employee experience. Strong employee engagement with the College's mission is one of the fundamental building blocks of a high-performing organization and the higher response rate to this year's survey suggests employees are eager to improve the College. HRSTM has also been working to update the College's personnel policies and procedures to reflect contemporary issues and national best practice in human resources to effectively support the College's work. Increasing clarity about job roles, managerial responsibilities, and enforcement mechanisms have all been recently evaluated by the group working on policies and procedures. The office has also been at the center of the realignment of the College's compensation structure. Such realignment will ensure that our compensation program is externally competitive and internally sustainable, which is essential to the College's fiscal well-being.

With the College's emphasis on workplace efficiencies, the business practices of the HRSTM office itself are being redesigned to improve service delivery across all divisions of the College. This model employs human resources "internal consultants," who function as employees' first point of contact for all their human resources needs. By streamlining this process, employees will spend less time interacting with multiple HRSTM staff members. Communicating accurate and consistent information is a priority that has been stressed in HRSTM's redesign.

HRSTM itself is making several significant changes in its own work to improve service delivery. Workday, a cloud-based technology, allows flexibility and enhances business processes including payroll and benefits, recruitment, and onboarding processes. Performance management, which will include employee performance evaluations, will also be implemented in Workday within the next fiscal year. Standardizing protocols for routine audits is another practice that will be finalized in 2018, adding consistency and transparency to various processes.

Employee and labor relations are also critical to College operations and institutional success. HRSTM is working to strengthen the College's relationship with employee unions and to resolve conflicts through robust dialogue and collaboration. Succession planning is another area in which HRSTM is intentionally engaged. As our employees retire, the College must prepare to transition their responsibilities to other employees or find the appropriate skills and talent outside the College. To do this effectively, HRSTM continues to position itself strategically as an employer of choice to talented candidates. The office is also working diligently to enhance the hiring process to include



anticipated replacements for which future hires might be trained once on board. Ensuring that the MC workforce is diverse and that employees' experience is one of inclusion are goals of HRSTM that touch recruitment and professional development. Strategic recruiting increases the applicant pool of diverse candidates. Providing career mentoring and professional development opportunities to all employees is another HRSTM initiative. HRSTM's collaboration with the Council on Equity and Inclusion as well as the Ombuds Office and the Office of Compliance, Risk, and Ethics, is typical of the cross-divisional conversations and initiatives that inform its work.

The world of human resources has become increasingly more strategic over the last two decades. In fact, its role has expanded greatly beyond what is often perceived traditionally as the operational and transactional roles of human resources. Its daily interactions with employees impact the way our people perceive the care and efficiency of our organization. In preparing employees to do their best work through training and development, HRSTM impacts the *quality* of the work employees are poised to perform. In its strategic approaches to recruitment, hiring, and succession planning, HRSTM shapes the diversity and preparedness of the College's workforce far beyond the present moment. This responsibility requires foresight and planning in which they are already engaged. Their collaborative efforts strengthen the core work of all areas of the College and position the institution to achieve more, in the interest of students and the community.

