



University Task Forces Memo

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Memorandum

To: Campus Community

From: Jay Golden, President

Date: January 21, 2020

Ref: Organizational Updates and University Task Forces

Transparency and shared governance are important pillars to build on if we are collectively going to create a stronger and more impactful Wichita State University. I have committed to advancing both as the new President. This note to the campus is intended to communicate to each of you about substantive initiatives and organizational changes I am introducing based on your input and my assessment of our opportunities.

When I entered the Presidential search process almost seven months ago, I began my review of our university, including analyzing data and quantifying our impact for our students and region. Immediately upon the announcement of my appointment I followed up on this effort by reaching out across our campus to actively engage our faculty, administrators, staff and students. I also posed a number of in-depth information requests to our administrators and university leaders, including our faculty, staff and senate councils. We posted those written questions online for your viewing after my arrival, and in coming weeks I will be posting a summary of those findings on Wichita.edu/president.

I have also been spending a great deal of time actively meeting with alumni, community leaders and as other individuals and constituent organizations throughout our region listening to their opinions and views.

Today, I am announcing a number of university-wide task forces and other studies to give the broader campus community an opportunity to provide input and suggestions on various topics that will have an impact on our institution moving forward. It is important that our faculty, staff, students and in some cases community members/alumni participate in this process to ensure broad representation and different perspectives in developing recommendations.

As the President of our Faculty Senate wrote to me recently, "...shared governance should encourage sufficient time and place for conversations to occur where ideas and opinions can be expressed, debated, evaluated, and resolved. Moreover, shared governance should start from the premise that any idea can be shaped, molded, fundamentally transformed or even rejected on the basis of feedback from the constituent groups."

In that spirit, I have asked our faculty, staff and student leaders and our administration to provide nominations of individuals across our campus to serve on the multiple task forces as part of our commitment to shared governance and transparency.

Attached is a summary of organizational changes I've begun and brief descriptions of the task forces and other studies. My office will post rosters of those participating in each task force, Wichita.edu/taskforces. Recommendations from each task force are to be provided to me no later than 90 days from today, April 20. I plan on sharing the results and subsequent actions based on your input at a campus-wide town hall before the spring semester ends.

I want to thank all of those volunteering to serve, as well as those assuming expanded administrative responsibilities outlined below. Working together, we can accomplish even more for our students, university and region.

Thank you and go Shockers!

Dr. Jay Golden
President

ORGANIZATIONAL UPDATES

RESEARCH & GRADUATE STUDIES

As we seek to diversify and expand our research, it is imperative that a broader segment of our faculty and student body are engaged and provided the necessary support. I have asked Dr. **Coleen Pugh**, currently Dean of the Graduate School and Associate Vice President for Research, to lead the Office of Research and continue as Dean. She will report to the Provost for both of these roles.

Diversifying our research will provide long-term benefits for our region and the financial sustainability of our university. While we will continue to focus and grow defense, aviation and aerospace research, this newly independent office will focus on diversifying our portfolio through increased sponsored research from traditional funding partners such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of Energy (DOE), National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), etc.

INDUSTRY AND DEFENSE PROGRAMS

Wichita State University is internationally recognized for leadership in applied research for the aviation sector, while also rapidly increasing our support for the Department of Defense. In fact, WSU's National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) is being compared by our peers and governmental / industry leaders with such leading institutes as the Georgia Technology Research Institute (GTRI), Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab (APL), Penn State's Applied Research Lab (ARL) and Utah State University Space Dynamics Lab.

The continued growth and momentum we are realizing with industry and defense applied research is of critical importance to our institution, region and nation. Reflecting my commitment to continued growth in this important area, I am elevating Dr. **John Tomblin** to Senior Vice President, where he will lead a newly organized Office of Industry and Defense Programs. Dr. Tomblin will continue to serve as the Executive Director of the National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) reporting directly to the President.

GENERAL COUNSEL

David Moses, our General Counsel, has advised me that he intends to retire at the end of the fiscal year. To ensure a smooth transition, I am appointing **Stacia Boden** General Counsel and **Misha Jacob-Warren** as Deputy General Counsel while David scales down his workload towards retirement.

INNOVATION CAMPUS

I have requested **Tonya Witherspoon** assume the additional responsibilities regarding our highly successful Innovation Campus. She will continue her role as Associate Vice President for Industry Engagement and Applied Learning. Additionally, she will have a dotted reporting relationship to the Vice President of Finance and Administration and the Senior Vice President for Industry and Defense Programs.

In this expanded role, I have tasked her to: 1). Increase transparency relating to future development and management of the innovation campus, 2). Developing updated and expanded models of co-locating faculty and students with those private and public organizations on the innovation campus (in addition to the interns hired) and, 3). Improve outreach to faculty of the numerous research equipment and facilities available on the innovation campus to advance research and scholarship success.

I have tasked Tonya to work with my office in creating an Innovation Campus Advisory Committee of non-conflicted representatives from our administration, faculty, staff and students, as well as community and industry members.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Based on my needs and managerial approach, I am not in need of a Chief of Staff. Therefore, I am eliminating both the Chief of Staff role and the Deputy Chief of Staff role.

I have asked **Anna Clark**, who currently serves as Deputy Chief of Staff, to assume the role of Director of Operations, reporting directly to the President. Internal Audit, the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance and the President's Office staff will continue to report to her.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & STRATEGY

Our university is at an important juncture in time where the traditional approach and support of higher education is evolving. It is critical to me that our campus community and policy makers are fully engaged with Wichita State University as we seek to develop new programs. In addition, as we work to grow faculty and student research, we need to provide our faculty support and coordination with federal agency program directors as well as non-governmental organizations in Washington, DC.

This increased emphasis is going to require a great deal of time and energy. I have asked **Andy Schlapp**, who was serving as Chief of Staff and directing Government Relations, to lead a re-envisioned Office of Government Relations and Strategy as Executive Director. Andy will continue to serve as Executive Director to the Board of Trustees. **Zach Gearhart** will continue to serve as Director of Government Relations.

INNOVATION AND NEW VENTURES

Innovation will play an even greater role at Wichita State University. It is important that innovative activities in all disciplines on our campus are encouraged, recognized and supported in a coordinated

manner. An innovative campus is not simply what our faculty are doing in their labs or studios. Rather, an innovative university supports a culture that stimulates our students to work across the disciplines in the development of a new generation of technologies, services and businesses, i.e., microenterprises. I am confident that Wichita State University has all the components to become the heartland's most innovative university. We will grow as an institution that attracts students from across the central United States and beyond and develops the infrastructure and support to keep them in Kansas and grow their enterprises.

I have asked Dr. **Jeremy Patterson**, Dean of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Innovation, to assume the additional responsibility and title of Interim Executive Director for Innovation and New Ventures, reporting to the Provost.

None of the new roles described above involve additional positions. Rather, there will be net reduction in administrative positions.

TASK FORCES

ENGAGEMENT & REGIONAL PROSPERITY

A university is one of the most important catalysts in driving regional economic development. I would argue that Wichita State University is the most important driver for a diversified economy for our region and very important for all of Kansas. Rather than use the historic lens of economic development, I would like to frame it in the lens of prosperity. I strongly believe that our faculty, staff and students working together can make important and positive impacts to support the people and communities of south-central Kansas.

I have been so pleased to witness the number of different individual efforts, as well as the WSU institutes and centers, undertaking engagement activities in our local community and in locations throughout Kansas. I am proposing we update our organization to coordinate and expand our programs under a single Office of Engagement and Regional Prosperity.

The office would report directly to the President and lead activities in our adjoining neighborhoods, greater Wichita as well as across south-central Kansas with a focus on coordinating resources to support engagement at Wichita State University.

Assistant Vice President **Kaye Monk-Morgan** and Dr. **Scott Wituk**, the Executive Director for WSU's Community Engagement Institute, will co-chair a campus-wide task force to prepare an inventory and gap analysis of WSU programs that support local, regional and state-wide community collaborations, with a special focus on what WSU is doing in rural and economically constrained communities. They will provide recommendations to more effectively coordinate efforts and address gaps.

DIVERSITY, HUMAN RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is important to me that our university makes even greater strides in diversifying our leadership, faculty and staff to better reflect the composition of our student body today and the future. I am, therefore, interested in developing a new organizational design that builds on our progress in order to achieve the type of goals we all seek.

That's why I am announcing the formation of a university-wide task force to explore the creation of a unified Office of Diversity, Human Resources and Professional Development that would better leverage our personnel and resources and elevate this priority to achieve our collective goals. The office will consolidate programs and responsibilities that have been located in different offices.

This new office will report directly to the President and will focus on the recruitment of faculty, administrators and staff that represent the diversity of the nation. The office will be tasked by the President to ensure that our faculty, administrators and staff have an inclusive environment to work and are offered programs for professional development so that we can expand the talent pipeline at Wichita State University.

I have asked Professor **Edil Torres-Rivera** and Professor **Voncella McCleary-Jones** to co-chair this task force and provide written recommendations on this concept, or variances of the model to me.

MILITARY, VETERAN AND FIRST RESPONDERS

I join this campus and state in placing a great value on serving the needs of our veterans, active duty service members, ROTC students, first responders and their families. WSU has a number of vital programs in place and there are considerable opportunities to expand our offerings and be more effective in coordination of our programs. Therefore, I am proposing an Office of Military, Veteran and First Responders, reporting to the Provost.

This office will focus on increasing academic offerings at WSU to those in uniform and their families. It will also further expand our offerings to support those on campus and in the region and coordinate these activities through research, engagement and creative activities. I also want to explore growing our ROTC programs, including the addition of an Air Force ROTC program and other programs such as Explorers and EMS.

I am asking Vice President **Marché Fleming-Randle** and University Police Chief **Rodney Clark** to prepare an inventory of all WSU programs that support active military, veterans and first responders, including their families. The campus-wide task force will provide recommendations to more effectively coordinate efforts, address gaps, develop new academic and outreach programs and create a new vision.

FOUNDATION AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS

I have asked **Elizabeth King**, CEO of the WSU Foundation, and **Courtney Marshall**, CEO of the WSU Alumni Association, to co-chair a task force that includes their respective boards to evaluate opportunities to integrate foundation and the Alumni Association programs to maximize both philanthropic giving to the university and alumni engagement.

These conversations will also consider how an integrated organization could enhance enrollment, applied learning, corporate connections and research opportunities by more advanced approaches of alumni and corporate engagement, while also providing operational and cost efficiencies. The task force will provide recommendations regarding the combining of operations while being cognizant of the challenges presented by doing so.

CAMPUS COMMUNITY AND INCLUSION

Dr. **Aaron Austin**, AVP of Student Affairs, and Dr. **Rodney Miller**, Dean of the College of Fine Arts, will co-chair a task force focused on developing options for additional Shocker-specific programs on our campus to further enhance the student and campus community experience, with a special focus of celebrating our diversity, inclusivity, creative activities and university accomplishments.

NEW ACADEMIC – INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

I have asked Provost **Rick Muma** to form a task force with representation from across our campus to evaluate requests for WSU to add new partnerships for academic and/or research programs, including programs located in Chihuahua, Mexico, and a possible dental school to serve south-central and rural populations in Kansas.

ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

WSU Tech President **Sheree Utash** will be leading an effort with me to explore ways to enhance and expand our affiliation in a manner that will significantly increase opportunities for all Kansans to have access to higher education. We will focus on developing new programs, creating new alliances and investing in systems to support the student experience.

FINANCES

Werner Golling, VP of Administration and Finance, and Dr. **Larisa Genin**, Dean of the Barton School of Business, have been tasked with co-chairing a campus-wide task force regarding university finances. The task force will provide recommendations on financial sustainability, transparency, creating new public-private partnerships and, parking. I want them to lead the development of a planning process in case of a future economic recession. The task force is also being asked to develop initial plans to address the rising costs of higher education and expanding programs on financial literacy programs for all our students.

ATHLETICS

Athletics Director **Darron Boatright** and Dr. **Jeremy Patterson**, Dean of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Innovation, will co-chair this task force. I have been approached by our students, alumni and community members regarding our existing athletic programs as well as interest in possible new programs (varsity & club) including but not limited to soccer, e-sports, lacrosse and ice hockey.

The task force will examine these issues and make a set of recommendations. I am also requesting they provide me options for the reutilization of the Cessna Stadium complex to host any new sports, as well as being adaptable for housing a new football program at any level if the financial model changes in future years. The recommendations need to advance the student experience, future student recruitment and community engagement in a financially sustainable approach.

OTHER STUDIES

CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY

Werner Golling, Vice President for Finance and Administration, will work with the existing campus-wide Sustainability Steering Committee to draft a position description for an inaugural campus sustainability

director and Office of Sustainability Initiatives, consistent with similar positions existing on campuses and businesses throughout the nation. This office would be asked to work with faculty, staff and students to identify and develop programs that lower our operating costs by reducing our ecological footprint.

Additionally, I am tasking the campus committee to explore the creation of a faculty-led Sustainability Center to undertake grant-funded applied research for our campus and our region.

MASTER PLANNING

One topic that a great number of you brought to my attention has to do with issues relating to our physical campus. While the great majority believe we have a beautiful campus, there were suggestions put forward regarding future needs for classrooms, offices, athletics/intramurals, research facilities and other student activities. Suggestions were provided for increasing green space and common areas, as well as suggestions specific to the Innovation Campus and university-owned land surrounding our campus. Finally, concerns were expressed about parking (availability of spaces, too much land devoted to surface parking, etc.), as well recommendations for improved branding around and on our campus.

Our last master plan was completed in 2014. It is time for an updated vision and plan. I have asked **Emily Patterson**, Executive Director of Facilities Planning, to initiate the process of updating our Master Plan through the engagement of a qualified outside party (consistent with university master planning processes across the country). This process will ensure the active participation of our students, staff and faculty, as well as community members. More information will be provided in the future as the process progresses.

MARKETING & BRANDING

Related, I am asking **Shelly Coleman-Martins**, Associate VP for Strategic Communications and Chief Marketing Officer, to actively engage members of our campus community to examine how effectively we are branding and marketing our institution and provide recommendations.

Two priorities include working with our Deans and Shocker Stores to identify web, communications and apparel branding needs for our colleges and opportunities that enhance institutional and unit-level affiliation by our students and alumni. This includes enhancing the promotion of innovation, research & creative activities at WSU in addition to our already strong marketing of Shocker athletics.

Finally, strengthening our branding and marketing in key enrollment markets along the I-35 corridor is of vital importance to our institution. This group will be working with our Strategic Enrollment team, Alumni Association, Shocker Stores and other campus constituents to provide recommendations on how to enhance our efforts.

I appreciate all of the work and feedback from everyone involved.