

**COS Faculty Meeting
Minutes**

April 7th, 2022, 12-1pm

Meeting recording distributed via email

Attendee List in Appendix A

1. Call to order – 12:02
2. Approval of minutes from March 3, 2022
 - 2.1. Motioned by Ron M and approved by Zoom thumbs up reactions
3. Discussion regarding incentives for faculty engagement and positive reinforcement – Peter Plavchan and Rebecca Jones
 - 3.1. Besides systemic issues like compensation, what can COS do to help you feel valued as a faculty member?
 - 3.2. What would incentivize you to be engaged on campus in the future?
 - 3.2.1. Ron: We need to recognize the staff more, not enough appreciation for their work
 - 3.2.2. Natalie: The COS faculty social at the old mason club before spring break in 2020, great to see people in social setting.
 - 3.2.3. Catherine: pay equity would be a big ones for faculty and staff for mental health, it would be nice if we had officials zoom free days.
 - 3.2.4. Nadine: Compensation
 - 3.2.5. Joanna: Free lunch once a month for COS faculty
 - 3.2.6. Joel: But, to some extent the pandemic destroyed the fragile culture we had here on campus the hallway conversations the camaraderie among faculty so we it's a challenge, but also an opportunity for us to define how we want that culture to look post pandemic sorry.
 - 3.2.7. Joel: very few people on campus
 - 3.2.8. Alexandra agrees with what is said. There is no one around. I miss everyone
 - 3.2.9. Ron in chat: A grill out day
 - 3.2.10. Cody: A few years ago, we began to hold a tea and coffee hour at SMSC. This event was held once a month and all faculty, scientists, post-docs, and graduate students were invited. Our goal was to bring very siloed groups together. It worked better than anticipated.
 - 3.2.11. Peter: I want to get out ahead of this as a faculty, because if we don't be careful about administration, perhaps pursuing punitive measures right we don't want to like. And having faculty there, I mean that's that's the benefit of students get it's not just inside the classroom it's the outside classroom conversations that happen randomly to so.
 - 3.2.12. Hopefully this summer will be easier/better and we can start connecting again in person
 - 3.3. Mask Policy Changes on campus
 - 3.3.1. The “blue” level was introduced in in March to the website:
 - 3.3.2. <https://www.gmu.edu/safe-return-campus/personal-and-public-health/face-coverings>
 - 3.3.3. The levels were invented in the fall of 2021. There is no clear documentation of any scientific nor quantitative basis for the determination of these levels in a fashion that is transparent and communicated to faculty.
 - 3.3.4. Unclear if any college of science faculty were involved in development of new mask policy.
 - 3.3.5. Rebecca: Did anyone know about this before the email from Tuesday morning?
 - 3.3.6. Pat: it's been in development, for several weeks a month and it's in coordination with the Virginia Department of Health.

- 3.3.7. Faculty were not consulted in how changes to Mason's mask policy would be implemented mid-Semester – e.g. would faculty have the option to change course modality based upon mask guidance?
- 3.3.8. Faculty senate was not informed of the email before it came out
- 3.3.9. Pat: Deans and chairs knew about this change for several weeks. There were
- 3.3.10. Rebecca: Students signed up to be my in-person class knowing masks and vaccines were required, now the University has changed the rules on them in the middle of the Semester. How can we respond? Can we require masks in our classes?
- 3.3.11. Pat: Yes, I think you can.
- 3.3.12. Jason (shaking head): The Continuity Group has not met since the announcement on Tuesday, but I know faculty cannot require masks be worn in their offices. I suspect the policy will be similar for classes.
- 3.3.13. Rebecca: Ok, so there is conflicting information here. I will work with Pat and Jason to try to provide more clarity and guidance as soon as possible.
- 3.3.14. Rebecca: Why is testing being decreased? Shouldn't we be increasing testing?
- 3.3.15. Pat: wastewater monitoring is being scaled up to compensate
- 3.3.16. Rebecca: If we can collaborate in the next few days, to try to iron out what specifically faculty can do with regard to our own classes. collect some background information, we can provide to the scientists in our college about how these decisions were made, I think all of that would be extremely appreciated so let's say we'll work towards that in the coming days.

4. Upcoming events

- 4.1. General Faculty Meeting Scheduled for April 20, 3:00 - 4:15 p.m. This meeting, provided by the Faculty Handbook, is an opportunity to engage with and hear from the President, Provost, and key university leaders on several issues that are important to the general faculty. This hybrid meeting in Merten 1201 and via Zoom:
<https://gmu.zoom.us/j/92622391874?pwd=U2hRSIFDM29XcHpvc3JzQ3VYnpCZz09>
- 4.2. COS Undergraduate Research Colloquium, April 27, 2022, 2-4pm, gather.town
- 4.3. All University Commencement, Friday, May 20, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. EagleBank Arena
<https://gmu.edu/graduation>, faculty marshals needed
- 4.4. College of Science Graduation event, Saturday, May 21, 10-11 a.m., EagleBank Arena

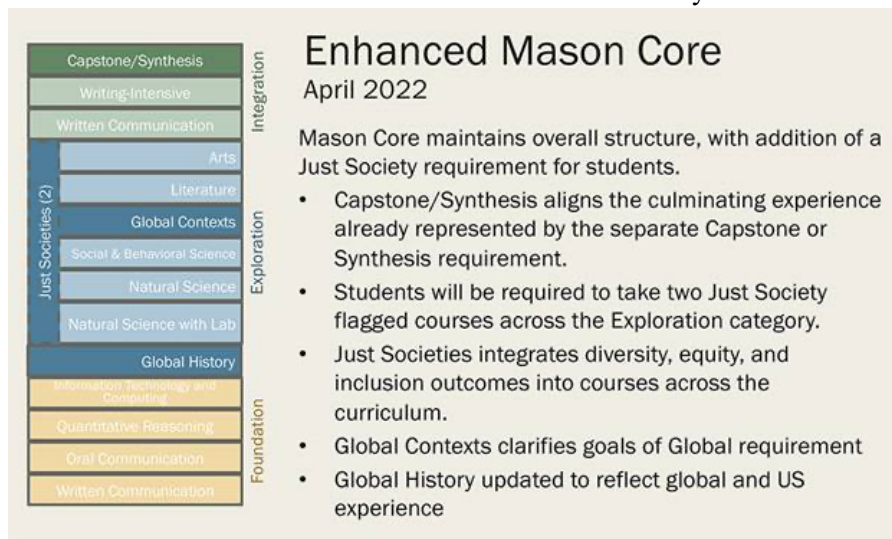
5. Announcements

- 5.1. Term Faculty Leave Process has been approved, timeline and Website live:
<https://science.gmu.edu/node/144258>
- 5.2. Tenured faculty: <https://science.gmu.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources/human-resources/study-leave>
- 5.3. Changes coming to Mason Core – David Wong
 - 5.3.1. The Faculty Senate will discuss proposed changes to the Mason Core at its next meeting on April 27th. To see a summary of the Mason Core changes [click HERE](#). Please provide the COS Faculty Senators with any questions or concerns you have about the changes **by April 22nd** using the feedback form on the Teams COS GMU Senators Group, located [HERE](#).

One of the changes will be to **300-level synthesis courses**. COS has most of the 300-level synthesis courses within the university. Under the new Mason Core, those courses will not have much longer "synthesis" life. Please let Faculty Senator David Wong know if your department wants to work together and with Mason Core to deal with this issue. Alternately, have your curriculum coordinator contact him at dwong2@gmu.edu.

5.3.2. Background:

The Mason Core Committee has considered multiple models to enhance the Mason Core over the past year. Based on extensive discussion, incorporating feedback from over 1000 members of the Mason Community, the Mason Core Committee has developed this Enhanced Mason Core framework to enact over the next few years.



5.3.3. Jason Kinser provided clarity on the courses – the difference between synthesis and capstone was not clear. Existing 300 synthesis courses will be grandfathered for a time. Then Mason will work with departments to transition them to 400 level.

5.3.4. Rebecca – The faculty senate will be voting on these changes at the next faculty meeting later this month. They are trying to be accommodating to our programs and will be a lot of work in the future to make the shifts.

5.3.5. COS faculty can submit comments to their COS senators here:

<https://gmuedu.sharepoint.com/:w/s/COSGMUSenators-GRP2/EdYyaLjglghDk1cbQl7TbocBAC5pv62qSy-LZcHOdjOu8Q?e=eo6rsP>

6. Nominations for open positions for 2022-2023 academic year – Nirmal Ghimire

6.1. Nominations will be accepted for the following positions:

| Position | Open positions and restrictions | Term |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--------|
| Nominations committee | 2 positions, at-large, elected | 2 yrs. |

6.1.1. Natalie: Randy McBride nominated for nominations committee

6.1.2. Chao: Natalie Howe nominated for nominations committee

6.2. Current nominations opened from the floor for the following positions:

6.2.1. No nominations voiced.

6.2.2. Email Nirmal with nominations for Grievance asa soon as possible

| Position | Open positions and restrictions | Term |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Chair | 1 position, at-large, elected | 1 yr. |
| Chair pro tempore | 1 position, at-large, elected | 1 yr. |
| Secretary | 1 position, at-large, elected | 1 yr. |
| Faculty Senate | 3 positions, all at-large, elected | 3 yrs |

| | | |
|---------------------|---|--------|
| Grievance committee | 2 positions, all at-large, tenured faculty only, only 1 per department (cannot be from Maths, Systems Biology, and AOES), elected | 3 yrs. |
| P&T committee | 1 position, at-large | 3 yrs. |

7. Update regarding Research Marketing Initiative – Tracy Mason
 - 7.1. Peter Plavchan is a new Dean’s Faculty Fellow focusing on improving our research reputation communications to our peers and prospective graduate students.
 - 7.2. Opportunity for greater recognition for faculty accomplishments
 - 7.2.1. We are creating a list of reporters and influencers where we want our research press to go.
 - 7.2.2. Leveraging the information from the strategic plan as well.
 - 7.2.3. Peter will share updates.
 - 7.3. Request for Information from Faculty:
 - 7.3.1. https://gmu аз1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5vaT0bdzGdGmTFc
8. Update from Chief Business Office – Meghan St. George (Appendix B)
 - 8.1. FY23 budget update/reminders
 - 8.1.1. Authorized budget decrease of ~\$3.3M
 - 8.1.2. Budget priorities: Compensation, academic advising, Commitment to A-JEDI, Growth in enrollment, advance research, academic impact
 - 8.2. Budget Meetings in May 2022
 - 8.2.1. Chair budget request presentations to planning and budget committee
 - 8.2.2. Planning and budget committee meeting
 - 8.3. Planning and budget committee for this budget cycle membership listed
 - 8.4. COS Research administration model assessment
 - 8.4.1. Kick off meeting held March 30th, 2022
 - 8.4.2. Quality of service on administrative burden
 - 8.4.3. Advisory committee membership in slides.
 - 8.5. New Proposal system coming – RAMP – live in July. Testing in process.
 - 8.5.1. Research Administration Management Portal (RAMP), to support the university’s growing research enterprise. The RAMP Project Team would like to invite all members of the GMU research community to join us for a **Virtual Town Hall on Thursday, April 14, 2022, from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM**. Come learn more about this exciting new initiative, meet members of the project team, and have your questions answered!
 - 8.5.2. For your reference in advance of the Town Hall, we have a one-page [RAMP Information Sheet](#) describing the project, and you can also view our short [Introduction to RAMP Video](#) for additional details.
 - 8.6. Chart of accounts (new fund structure), what we currently know as orgs to simplify the process.
 - 8.7. Changes to new Hiring Policies
 - 8.7.1. Job posting length minimum dropped from 20 to 10 days

8.7.2. <https://ramp.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/RAMPOnePagerV7.pdf>

8.8. Meghan in chat: I also wanted to share that all of your ideas for faculty and community engagement are fabulous! I will work with Rebecca to see how we can best support that as a college. Thank you!

9. Update from Chief Diversity Officer – Paula Danquah-Brobby (Appendix C)

9.1. Opportunities for Growth, Expansion and Innovation

9.2. DEI = A-JEDI = Access, Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

9.2.1. DEI is older way of talking about this topic.

9.3. Meeting with wide-cross section of COS faculty staff and admin to identify themes

9.4. Current activities include

9.4.1. Re-engaged the Inclusive Excellence Plan subcommittees

9.4.1.1. Need more members for the faculty and graduate student retention groups (email if interested)

9.4.2. Working with Vanna (COS HR) and others to update entire employee funnel process, including STEM organizations that connect to underrepresented and minoritized groups.

9.4.3. STAFF advisory committee

9.4.4. Organize a COS faculty and staff outdoor social event

9.4.5. Working on getting access to demographic data for students staff and faculty

9.4.6. Working on a K-12 A-JEDI summer event with the College of Engineering

9.4.7. Working with Global Education Office to increase the amount of money offered to faculty for study abroad courses (the current amount is woefully low)

9.4.8. Collaborating with Pritha and Aimee at the Stearn Center on embedding A-JEDI into a STEM course

9.4.9. Working with CARD-RM to look at our approach research

9.4.10. Working with COS leadership on how we can come together to heal and move the community forward towards inclusive excellence

9.5. Being honest about current status. in the spirit and transparency, shared meeting presentation with Dean and chairs

9.5.1. Very low employee morale

9.5.2. Too many employees sharing they are actively looking to leave COS

9.5.3. Leadership barriers: things that happen in our environment that make things challenging.

9.6. Presented a flowchart on what she is looking at for faculty hiring and retention, staff, and student retention, outreach and new initiatives. Very thorough and encouraging list of things to work on to improve our culture.

9.6.1. Presented consequences of not addressing these concerns.

9.7. Final remarks

9.7.1. This is a new day. This is an opportunity for growth and innovation and expansion.

9.7.2. Thank you for all that you do to support our wonderful students and community.

9.8. Faculty comments in chat

9.8.1.Lance Liotta in chat: Fantastic wake-up call to collective action Paula!

9.8.2.Catherine Sausville in chat: Thank you so much Paula! This really resonates

9.8.3.Rebecca Jones in chat: Thank you for these words, Paula.

10. Presentation from Center for Anti-Racist and Decolonized Research Methods (CARD-RM) – Meagan Call-Cummings

10.1. Will share some handouts, and invite them back for another meeting.

10.2. Deferred to next meeting

11. Adjournment - 1:03 pm

Appendix A

Alexandra Masterson
Aman Ullah
Andrea Cobb
Andrea Nikoi
Bill Kennedy
Catherine Sausville
Chao Luo
Chris Lockhart
Cindy Smith
Cody W. Edwards
David Wong
Dmitri Klimov
Duy Nguyen
Estela Blaisten
Fadi
Farhang Alem
Gabriela Bulancea
Gerald Weatherspoon
Hamdi Kavak
Igor I Mazin
Jason Kinser
Jie Zhang
Jim Lawrence
Joel Schnur
John Qu
Julia Nord
Kenneth W Foreman
Kimberly A Rule
KL Akerlof
Lance Liotta
Lillian Virgil
Liping Di
Mahamadi Warma
Mariaelena Pierobon

Matt Rice (GMU)
mazin
Meagan Call-Cummings (she/her/hers)
Megan Erb
Meghan St. George
Michael Summers
Nadine Kabbani
Natalie J Burls
Nirmal Ghimire
Olga Gkountouna
Patrali Banerjee
Patrick Gillevet
Paul Houser (GMU)
Paul So
Paula Danquah-Brobby
Peter Plavchan
Pritha Roy
Rachel Kirsch (she/her/hers)
Rebecca M Jones
Ron S Mahabir
Ruixin Yang
Saleet Jafri
Sarah Ward
sharis
Sharmin Abdullah
Sharrell Hassell-Goodman
Tammie Howell
Tim Leslie
Tina Bell
Tracy Mason
Tyrus Berry
William Hahn
Xiaoyan Tan
yuliya dobrydneva



CBO Updates

COS Faculty Meeting
April 7, 2022

COS Updates

- **FY23 budget update/reminders**
 - **Authorized budget decrease of ~\$3.3M**
 - **Budget priorities include:**
 - Compensation
 - Academic advising
 - Commitment to A-JEDI
 - Growth in enrollment
 - Advance research
 - Academic impact
 - **Budget meetings in May 2022**
 - Chair budget request presentations to Planning and Budget Committee
 - Planning and Budget Committee meeting
 - **Planning and Budget Committee for this budget cycle:**
 - Barney Bishop
 - Paula Danquah-Brobby
 - Cody Edwards
 - Pat Gillevet
 - Jason Kinser
 - Jim Kinter
 - Mary O'Toole
 - Gerald Weatherspoon
 - Chi Yang

COS Updates (cont.)

- **COS research administration model assessment**

- Project advisory group kick-off meeting held March 30, 2022
 - Paul So (P&A)
 - Lance Liotta (CAPMM)
 - Pat Gillevet (ADR)
 - Paula Danquah-Brobby (DEI)
 - Meghan St. George (CBO)
 - Stephanie Ann Flores (COS HR)
 - Kate Daie (COS Research Administration)
 - Mike Laskofski (OSP)
 - *Note: Lillian Virgil providing project management support*
- Interviews currently in process
- Project completion anticipated June 2022
 - Interim status updates will be provided

University Updates – Finance

- **RAMP (i.e., new research proposal system)**
 - Testing of new system in process
 - Training being developed for both staff and faculty
 - Go live in July 2022
- **Chart of accounts (i.e., new fund structure)**
 - New fund structure to replace what we currently know as orgs
 - Purpose is to simplify and provide improved data and reporting
 - Implementation July 1, 2022
 - *All day training for relevant staff on April 27th*
- **New university budget model**
 - Allocation-based costs for university resources and services (includes IT, facilities, central offices)
 - New model being developed; to be tested concurrently in FY23 before being finalized and rolled out in FY24

University Updates – HR

- **Faculty and Staff Experience Survey (conducted by Gallup)**
 - Survey opens April 18th
 - All data is kept strictly confidential by Gallup; no personal information is requested
 - [More information and FAQs](#)
- **Changes to Mason hiring policies (effective April 1, 2022):**
 - **Minimum job posting** length requirement for Faculty searches is **reduced from 20 to 10** business days
 - **Search committees** are **no longer required** for **Classified** searches
 - **Hiring authorities/managers** may have **direct involvement** in the search process to provide subject matter expertise when necessary

COS Faculty Meeting

Opportunities for Growth, Expansion, & Innovation

April 7, 2022

DEI = Access, Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (A-JEDI)

- Everyday we are moving a step closer to establishing a foundation that will get us into A-JEDI Mindset!
 - ✓ Meeting with wide cross-section of COS staff, faculty, and admin. faculty to identify themes around our community's A-JEDI related needs and concerns
 - ✓ Re-engagement of Inclusive Excellence Plan (IEP) subcommittees
 - **Need more members for the faculty retention and graduate student retention groups**
 - If interested, please email me: pdanquah@gmu.edu
 - ✓ Working with Vanna (COS HR) and a few others on refining and updating entire employee recruitment funnel process (including identifying and joining professional STEM organizations that cater to + support underrepresented, marginalized, and /or minoritized groups)

DEI = Access, Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (A-JEDI)

- Everyday we are moving a step closer to establishing a foundation that will get us into A-JEDI Mindset!
 - ✓ Working with our CBO (Meghan St. George) to establish a STAFF advisory committee to better support and advocate for staff related needs and concerns [details soon to come!]
 - ✓ Organizing a COS faculty and staff outdoor social event
 - ✓ Working on getting access to demographic data (students, staff, & faculty)
 - ✓ Working with the Engineering College on launching A-JEDI summer event for K-12 students and building more student pipelines that for K-12 schools in underrepresented, marginalized, and /or minoritized communities
 - ✓ Working with the Global Education Office to see how we can collaborate and increase the amount of money that is offered to faculty to develop and execute a study abroad course (the current amount being offered is woefully low, which decreases motivation to access this AMAZING opportunity for faculty and students)

DEI = Access, Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (A-JEDI)

- Everyday we are moving a step closer to establishing a foundation that will get us into A-JEDI Mindset!
 - ✓ Will collaborate with Pritha and Aimee (at the Stern Center) on project to embed A-JEDI into a STEM course
 - ✓ Working with Center for Anti-Racist & Decolonized Research Methods (CARD-RM) to look at our approach research
 - ✓ Working with COS leadership team (Deans and Chairs) to address current state of COS community and how we can come together to “heal” and move our community forward towards Inclusive Excellence.
 - ✓ That being said, in the spirit of **transparency and clear communication**, I am going to share with you what I shared with the leadership team this week.

Purpose of Discussion

- Very low employee morale
- Too many employees sharing that they are actively looking to leave COS (but also sharing that they are “heartbroken” and “love COS and will stay if things change”)
- Employees are seemingly very fearful to express needs & concerns (due to fear of retaliation)
- Candidates not accepting offers of employment due to concerning issues that we have complete control over
- **We have a pot that is / has been boiling and will soon boil over!**

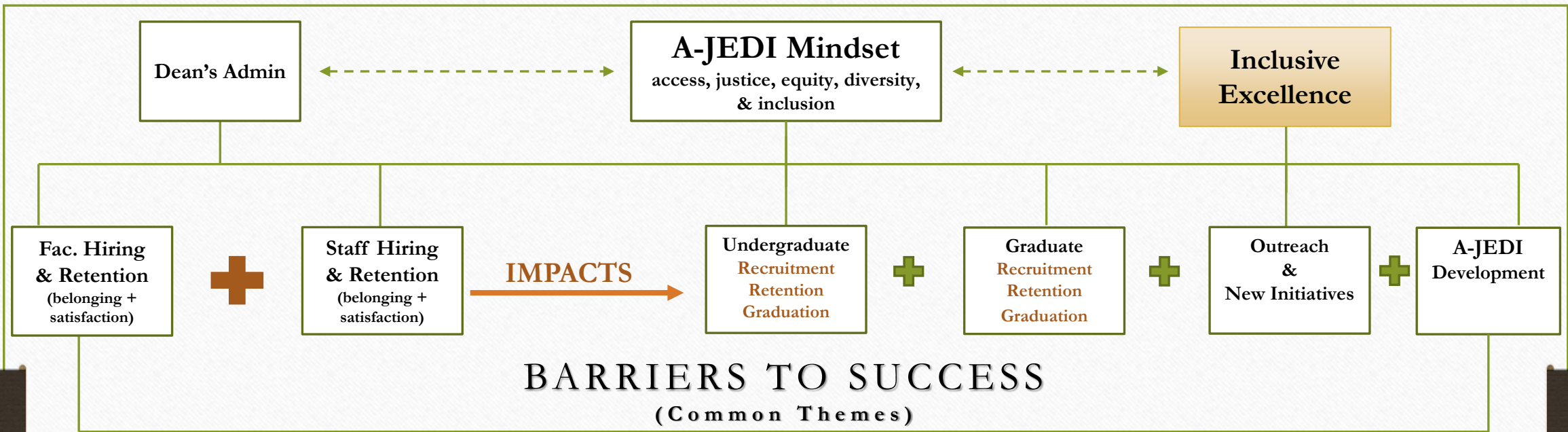
What's Working?

(not an exhaustive list)

- Research intensive and driven
- Strong STEM curriculum
- Discipline specific knowledgeable instructors
- Love for respective disciplines
- Flexible on-ground vs. remote work options
- Amazing bridge and accelerator programs
- Innovative work being done w/in units
- Team of experts within relative fields
- Team that is passionate about what they do and what they can offer
- US News Ranking
- Technology to support work output (Teams, Zoom, Outlook, etc.)
- Wonderful COS community of faculty, staff, and students

Leadership Team Barriers

- Global pandemic
- Racial discord and unrest
- “Great Resignation”
- Primarily virtual “contact” over last 2 years
- Deteriorating mental health of community (as a result of pandemic)
- Compassion fatigue
- Move from in-person to online or hybrid teaching pedagogy
- Have to operate within limits / confines set by Central (e.g., COS budget)
- Leadership Team Changes + Positions that still need to be filled
- Historical / Legacy challenges that have been passed down from one leadership successor to the next



Need for More / Improved...

- Transparency
- Trust in SLT
- Effective Internal Communication
- Acknowledgement, Recognition, Reward (SR+), Support, Advocacy (on behalf of staff + fac)
- Resources (e.g., space & lab inequities, funds for PD, Prehealth advisor for COS exclusively)
- Efficient & Effective Systems + Processes
- Faith in Effective and Swift Action & Resolution of Employee Relations Issues (despite numerous complaints filed = impact psych safety)
- **Units Too Siloed**
- **Compensation**

- **Too Decentralized**
- **Reinforcement (Reward) of Bad Bx. & Perf.**
- **Supervisors/Mgrs. in Need of Leadership Trng.**
- **Lack of Accountability Measures in Place**
- **Maintenance of Punishment Contingencies**
- **Workload Imbalance (Teaching requirements, Doing job function of multiple people– whether real or perceive)**
- **Infrequent / Ineffective Feedback Loops**
- **Microaggressions & Retaliation**
- **Historical Problems that Persist**
- **Key Roles that Need to Be Filled**
- **Ppl Held Responsible for Growing Programs & Delivering Quality Services yet Lacking Resources**

- Needed to Succeed / Achieve What They Have Been Tasked With**
- **Need for increased staff recog., support, & inclusiveness**
 - **Increased Development for Unit Needs (vs. General COS Needs)**
 - **IT Support for Running Unit and Program Social Media Sites // IT training on Tech.**
 - **Measurement & Evaluation Processes to Determine Effectiveness of Various Initiatives**
 - **Research Admin***
 - **Salary, Salary Compression***
 - **DEI / A-JEDI***
 - **Performance Evaluation Process***

Consequences

- **Low Morale & Community Cohesion**
 - ✓ Disengagement (e.g., lack of COACHE survey participation)
 - ✓ Burnout
 - ✓ Lack of Compassionate Communication & Civility
 - ✓ Decreased Performance
 - ✓ Decreased Communication of Needs and Challenges due to Fears of Retaliation
 - ✓ **High Turnover / Increased Turnover Rates**
 - ✓ **Candidates Refusing Offers of Employment (e.g., stating lack of supportive environment that facilitates growth as a scientist and educator, and lack of strong sense of community)**
 - ✓ Ongoing / Frequent Microaggressions
 - ✓ Inefficient or minimal use of technology products & services that can support and improve performance

Opportunities for Growth, Expansion, & Innovation

- Here is what I want to tell you:
 - ✓ Deeply sorry
 - ✓ We HEAR you, we SEE you, and we are LISTENING
 - ✓ WE ARE GOING TO ACT! It's **way past time** to change the current state of our community
 - ✓ Change takes time BUT change WILL happen
 - ✓ Change will require the contributions and efforts of us ALL (this is will not be a solely “top down” approach– we all need to collaborate in order to build and reframe a COS community, environment, culture, and climate that we **all want and rightfully deserve**) I know many of you are feeling weary, exhausted, and disengaged– but I ask you please join us in rebuilding our sense of community, belonging, and culture so that we can finally put an end to this current (and prolonged) state of affairs.
 - ✓ Please feel free to reach out to me if you would like to talk more about anything I have presented today. Both myself and the various members of the COS leadership team will follow up and provide information on next **actionable** steps and ways for you to get involved.
 - ✓ Our COS community is full of AMAZING people who love what they do (teaching, research, admin., service, etc.) and are stellar!
 - ✓ **THANK YOU for all that you do to support our wonderful students and community!**