Minutes from 4/23/2014 Organizational Agility: Community Subgroup Meeting

**In attendance**: BJ Hoerner, Heidi Miller, Katie Schmitz, Kim Slusser, Lynn Wild

**Organizational Agility Committee Goal**: To identify specific and concrete actions that will enable RIT to be a more responsive and agile university.

**Community Sub-Committee Goal**: Identify at least one concrete item of action pertaining to respect/faith/trust across the RIT community of students, faculty, staff and alumni. Recommendation is due two weeks from today (so Wed. May 7)

Discussion revolved around two key recommendations:

1. **Activity Period for Campus Activity Engagement:**

* Provost’s Council –topic reviewed. RIT had an activity period prior to semesters (was on Friday afternoons 1:00-2:00), not well attended. This year there is no activity period and students are requested one.
* Chris Licata chairs the Student Success committee and this initiative would contribute to their goals
* Jim Myers chairs the Global Engagement committee and this initiative would contribute to their goals
* Time could also be used for interdisciplinary faculty/student work
* Time could be used for alumni engagement and interaction – must be sure to include Alumni in our definition and think of innovative ways to include them without always asking them to write a check to donate.
* Two schools we know of who use an activity period:
  + Princeton: no classes scheduled between 4:20-7:30 p.m.
  + Roberts Weslyan: BJ reached out to colleague for more details and will forward once obtained
* If an activity period is a priority, details (i.e. time duration, days, classroom utilization issues, recommendations for use during this time period, coordination with athletics, etc.) will be determined.
* **Initial recommendation**: Tuesdays and Thursdays for a 75-minute class-free time period.

1. **Inspiring a Culture of Appreciation @ RIT**

* Lynn circulated a report prepared on April 16, 2014 by Faculty Career Development Services
* Results of four surveys have been compiled:
  1. COACHE faculty satisfaction survey
  2. Alumni Attitudinal Study (conducted every 3-4 years) – Kim emailed the PowerPoint to the subcommittee
  3. Climate Survey
  4. Employee Engagement
* The surveys have led to the conclusion that faculty and staff feel under-appreciated. A culture of appreciation and recognition will lead to greater sense of community, trust, and respect.
* Many departments do not have discretionary income to award prizes or give rewards that carry a monetary value. But the report offers low and no-cost alternatives that would be immediately implementable to start creating that culture.
* Many departments on campus are very successful at recognizing employees and showing appreciation – no need to reinvent the wheel. Gather information across campus about best practices – build on what we do best in different areas.
* Consider an appreciative inquiry approach using a SOAR analysis: Strengths, Weaknesses, Aspiration, Results
* Who is doing things right and how do we build on that? Who could we appoint to gather that information?
* Implement current policies (e.g., recognition for length of service) consistently across divisions.
* Campus could do a better job of communicating the results of these surveys.
* Could we make the CPD (Center for Professional Development) session on workplace civility mandatory for all employees? Examine other workshops.
* **Initial recommendation**: appoint a committee to gather appreciation and recognition best practices and communicate implementable suggestions (using research already conducted in the April 16th report from benchmark universities) for departments of all sizes and budgets.

**Subcommittee To-Do’s:**

* Read minutes and edit as needed
* Read the Inspiring a Culture of Appreciation @ RIT report
* Read the article sent by Lynn called “Research Shows Professors Work Long Hours and spend Much of Day in Meetings)
* BJ: communicate to subcommittee once she hears back from colleague at Roberts
* BJ: find and forward HR policy on staff recognition (done)
* Kim: circulate 2011 Alumni Attitude Study (done)
* Lynn: once minutes are agreeable to all, post on Wiki

**Next meeting:**

May 14