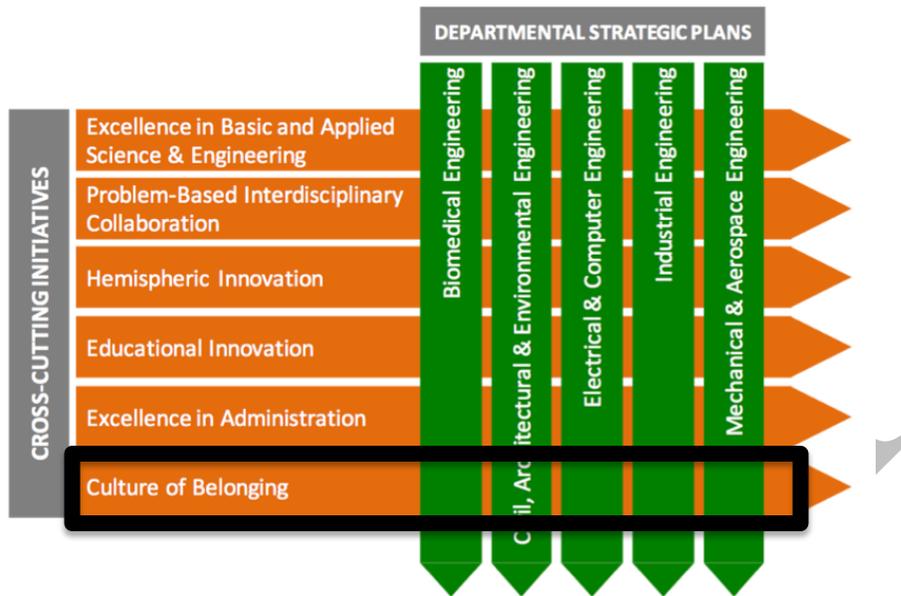


Building together the CoE Roadmap

Group 6 - Culture of Belonging



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Goal:

Develop interdisciplinary perspectives and deliver recommendations/plans on how to contribute to an environment of inclusion on campus i.e. culture of belonging to complement the strategic plans of our five departments. Our recommendations will help build a culture where all members of the University community feel valued and have the opportunity to add value. Therefore, we have divided our recommendations by target university members.

1. Students

Our goal is to improve the student's perception on how well they are treated by their advisors, how much do they want to get involved in our community, including their willingness to provide feedback on teaching, and how to improve their perceptions of university support (financial, moral, academic). These strategies intend to stem the drop out rate of minority students at the end of their second year.

In order to increase students' involvement, we need to change the infrastructures to improve student/faculty communication and to make the students feel better supported.

This can be accomplished by

- *Developing metrics* to quantify students' involvement at the beginning of their career. One suggestion is to compare student organizations' membership to CoE metrics on student body composition. Another metric is the number of students signing up for national organizations.
 - *Increasing the faculty support to the students* by
 - Improving the faculty advising process (see faculty section)
 - Organizing advising lunches and /or advising weeks at the beginning of the semester to induce closer relationships with students.
 - *Provide CoE ombudsperson*, in addition to academic advisors that the feedback would not appear to have direct repercussions on the student's grades
 - Minority students' organizations need an active full time faculty either at the university level or for the college. And more visible organization programming.
 - *Improving students information* and encouraging students' *utilization* of the university resources (Ex. Financial support for books and full scholarship opportunities, support for rental of professional clothing) and the career support (Ex. Internship, career fairs) by
 - *Improved website*
 - *More content, resources and better organization and navigation*
 - *Create a central repository of information and resources that are easily accessible for student faculty and staff that need to be collected and disseminated. Include internships.*
 - *Better trained and informed faculty advisors*
 - *Improving students' networking skills* by organizing monthly dinners with the dean for a few selected students, in addition to the coffee with the dean.
 - *Improving students communication with the faculty* by
 - Providing new opportunities for the student to offer feedback (on advisors, lecturer, and curriculum). This can be done by
 - Increasing the frequency of students/faculty *seminars and/or round table discussions*. Improve scheduling to give advanced notice.
 - Establishing Open Lines of Communication/Electronic Suggestion Box – method to express concerns or problems without fear of repercussion
 - The CoE ombudsperson can accomplish this as well.
 - Providing *more academic support* by increasing the tutoring services, especially for higher levels students (juniors and seniors)
 - Currently students are not committed to provide feedback through course evaluations because they feel that (i) their feedback may negatively impact their final grade in that class, and (ii) their feedback is not taken to heart to implement changes. To address these important points we suggest an *action plan that addresses both the student's evaluations and their consequences*.
To address (i) we propose:
 - *Evaluation after the grades are released* so the students do not feel they would be penalized.
 - *Evaluation during class* but surveys are not collected by the teaching faculty but by the TA or other administrative personnel.
- To address (ii) we propose improved faculty support (section 2.3 below).

2. Faculty

We agreed that to change the mentality of faculties we cannot change the attitude but we can change the behavior by providing specific trainings and increasing the mentorship/feedback.

2.1 Increase the faculty support to the students

Create a formal program to *train advisors*. More robust training and support Faculty Advisors

- *Small seminars* with Faculty Advisors to discuss academic issues, channel student issues

Training will need to be focus on

- *Improving the faculty customer service*: become welcoming to the students and treating the students with respect.
- *Creating a sense of responsibility* for the faculty that their advising is important.
- Eliminating the *potential disconnect* between freshmen/sophomore advisors and department advisors.

2.2 Increase the faculty communication with other students and with other faculties

To improve university communications we need to improve the web-based and social media because the current weekly newsletter run by students' associations is not sufficient.

To improve faculty intercommunication monthly social events may be organized (Ex. Happy hours)

2.3 Provide support for teaching faculties to address the students' feedback

- *Reinforce* in the tenure and post-tenure review process *the review of the student's feedback*. The departments' Chairs should review the feedback during the year evaluation process and should plan for corrective action if necessary. For post-tenure faculties, improve the post-tenure review.
- *Provide specific teaching training from other departments* (Ex. Education).
- *Organize yearly discussion panels* where the best teachers are selected and provide suggestions to other teaching faculties on how to make teaching more effective.
- *Select a committee with the best teachers sitting in other faculties' classes* to evaluate the teaching and provide feedback.
- *Promote participation to the faculty learning community (FLC)* where faculty from different departments on campus discuss and practice innovative and inclusive teaching.
- *Setting up mentors or mentoring committee* to provide support for junior faculties.

2.4 Provide mentoring for pre-tenure faculties

All faculty should receive purposeful mentoring. Especially young minority faculty, when hired would benefit immensely from a purposeful mentoring strategy.

- Teaching mentoring (see above)
- Advising mentoring (see above)
- Education for no-English speaking properties.

2.5 New faculty hiring

We agrees that we need to hire the right mix of people to address all these important points:

- *Diversity* of gender, race, culture. To be successful at fostering a sense of belonging, the recruitment of minority faculty has to be intentional. The college should identify qualified faculty and intentionally recruit them. The open application process would not achieve this goal.
- Demonstration of empathy. We suggest to implement
 - an *attitude assessment test* developed in collaboration with other departments (education, psychology...) during the recruitment process
 - Lunch or dinner with the students
- Demonstration of teaching skills. We suggest to implement a '*teach a class*' test during the recruitment process where students will be allowed to provide feedback
- Identify the faculties: Improve the start-up package to attract more successful and/or senior faculties that could provide mentorships to non-tenure track faculties
- In addition to tenure-track faculty, hire educators that enjoy teaching and know how to teach for freshman and sophomore years

3. Administrative/Operational

Better communication of available resources:

- Financial Support: Book Scholarships-offered informally within CoE; MCS offers but not widely known; better advising on scholarship and grant opportunities
- Academic support-tutoring from CoE honors groups; family advising services for 1st generation students; focus on connecting students with academic support within UM
- Career support-additional support for preparation including creation of resumes, networking skills, use of UM resources such as Sebastian's Closet for interview/career event clothing

Faculty-staff relations

Extend happy hour also to staff

Training to faculty done by the dean

Round table for staff

Retreat

Recognition: identify ways/suggestions for recognizing the staff

Define line of expectations: staff for faculty and faculty for staff

So that faculty and staff don't continue to feel overwhelmed, more people should be hired that can address the action items.