University Relations/Enrollment Management

1-1-2018

2018 Davis College Communications Survey Results_Faculty and Staff_FINAL.10.19.18

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University Relations, "2018 Davis College Communications Survey Results_Faculty and Staff_FINAL.10.19.18" (2018). University Relations/Enrollment Management. 19.
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DAVIS COLLEGE COMMUNICATION
SURVEY RESULTS: FACULTY & STAFF
Background: In 2017, the Davis College launched D-News, a weekly, internal e-newsletter written by the dean that is intended to keep faculty and staff informed. Nearly 300 employees subscribe to it – 177 of which are faculty or equivalent and 96 are staff.

Objective: The College wanted to understand how the faculty feels about overall communication within the College. They also wanted to explore if the e-newsletter is the most effective vehicle for information delivery, as well as if it’s effective in providing the right type of information at the right frequency. We developed an online survey to obtain feedback.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall, Davis College faculty members and staff believe the College does a good job informing them of what is happening within the College. They appreciate receiving communications that are sent from the dean and consider it important that they come from him. Additionally, while both groups are familiar with Dean Robison’s vision and feel connected to the College, faculty feel better informed, have a better understanding of the dean’s aspirations for the College and feel a greater sense of connectedness to the College than staff members.

Both faculty and staff believe it’s important to get information regarding strategic initiatives within the College, as well as collegewide events; however, this is true of far more faculty members than staff. Both groups also feel that leadership changes and faculty or staff news/achievements is valuable information. Both groups, though fewer faculty and staff members, showed interest in a number of other topics as well. The one exception is upcoming speakers/lectures; significantly more faculty than staff feel it is valuable information to have.

In terms of D-News, it’s thought by both groups to be the most appropriate vehicle for disseminating information. Both faculty members and staff believe it does a good job providing relevant, useful information, but more faculty than staff seem to benefit from it. Its weekly distribution and amount of content is well-liked, but several employees would prefer to receive it on Mondays.

*NOTE: Only those employees who read D-News responded to the survey.*
DETAILED FINDINGS
COMMUNICATION

Most faculty members (40%) and staff (37%) believe Davis College does a “good job” keeping them updated and well-informed. However, even more faculty (43%) than staff (32%) feel the College does an even better job making them aware of what’s happening in the College.

Q. Overall, how good of a job do you feel the Davis College is doing keeping you updated and well-informed about what’s happening within the College?
COMMUNICATION
Most (36%) faculty members and staff (45%) are moderately familiar with the dean’s vision for the College. However, more faculty (13%) than staff (5%) have a very clear understanding of Dean Robison’s mission statement for Davis College.

Q6. How familiar are you with Dean Robison’s vision for the Davis College?
COMMUNICATION

More than half of faculty members (58%) and staff (63%) believe it’s important that communications come from the dean.

Q. How important is it that the communication you receive regarding the college come from the dean?
AFFINITY

A greater percentage of faculty members (77%) than staff (63%) feel very or somewhat connected to Davis College. While just 13% of faculty feel little to no connection with the College, this is true of nearly twice as many (24%) staff members.
COMMUNICATION

Most faculty members and staff believe it’s important to know about faculty or staff news/achievements, leadership changes, strategic initiatives within the college and collegewide events. Far more faculty than staff want to know about upcoming speakers/lectures.

Q. What type of information is important for you to know about? (Check all that apply)
COMMUNICATION

When asked what other information might be beneficial to know about, faculty mentioned these things:

- More emphasis on advertising college events.
- Communication is not just a one way flow of information.
- Economic outlook for the university and WV, school closings due to weather, volunteer opportunities for faculty and students in the community.
- Facilities such as what is happening on farm.
- Faculty initiatives as potential collaborator.
- I don't feel like I know enough about what faculty in other Divisions are doing.
- I think it would be valuable to add a faculty member feature once or twice a month. A short intro (e.g., paragraph) summarizing a faculty member's research program with a picture to help us get to know what everyone across the college does.
- It would be nice to know what strategic plans other programs within the college in order to facilitate cross-disciplinary work.
- New course offerings, workshops for students and/or faculty.
- Overall budget and allocation for the college and related units.
- Possible future developments such as creamery, discussions re whether to retain vs sell vs rent some of farmland, discussions re whether to retain vs eliminate dairy farm, Reedsville beef herd, etc. I understand that sometimes it is better not to delve into hypotheticals and to raise concerns about potential issues that may not materialize. If we are at that balance point with communications, then present communications seem adequate.
- Recent research paper publications by the faculty members.
- We do not need repeated regurgitation of what's in ENews. Dates, policies, events, current initiatives in all program areas not just the farms.
Q. Is there any other information that would be beneficial for you to learn about? If not, please type "NA" in the text box.

When asked what other information might be beneficial to know about, staff mentioned these things:

• “Very little is mentioned about staff. The main focus seems to be as usual on faculty.”
• “Peoples’ names and what their job is, just a little basic info since meeting some of them is awkward or I don’t see them very often.”
• “Just don’t depend on your Division directors to pass on stuff that you tell them to because they don’t.”
• “Exactly how RIF affects everyone.”
Q. Regardless of the vehicle through which you receive communication, how often would you prefer that the College communicate with you?

COMMUNICATION
Faculty (70%) as well as staff (82%) like receiving weekly communications from the College.
D-NEWS

Faculty (100%) and staff (100%) overwhelmingly prefer to receive information from the College via D-News.

Q. What vehicle(s) would you prefer to receive information from about the College? (Check all that apply)
D-NEWS
Nearly eight in ten (77%) of faculty members and 74% of staff believe that D-News is extremely or fairly useful. About two in ten faculty and staff are indifferent about it; only a small percentage don’t find it very helpful.

Q. How relevant or useful is D-News, the weekly e-newsletter, to you?
D-NEWS

Just over half the employees (53%) believe D-News is directed toward faculty; nearly as many (47%) think it focuses on both staff and faculty.

The majority (83%) believe the amount of content in D-News is just right.

Q. Do you believe the content in D-News is more directed towards faculty, staff or both? Q. How do you feel about the length of the content in D-News?
RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions faculty made regarding how to improve internal communication include:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot of valuable information get disseminated sporadically, so much so that sometimes given our schedules, we cannot keep up. Perhaps condense these messages into one overall medium.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be more proactive to get news and less reactive. Make sure channels are known on how to submit content. More honesty and less beat around the bush. Fewer repeats of what has already been sent to Faculty listserv by others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-news should cover only important/critical events, activities, thoughts in the college. I can be offered on a monthly basis. Seminar and other announcements can be distributed to faculty and staff through channels.</td>
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<td>Emphasize faculty and student achievements. Check accuracy of information. I don't like to hear about accomplishments of faculty. There are a lot of people doing really good work so it seems to hint of favoritism when someone is highlighted. I think the electronic 'billboards' are useful but sometimes when something catches my interest and I turn back to look - it's gone. That's on me - still a good idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I think there is a lack of timeliness on some issues. More and earlier communication on pending changes would be useful.</td>
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<td>I would like to see the Dean attend more lectures, and perhaps occasionally attend the Graduate student seminar presentation. It would be nice to know the &quot;why&quot; regarding many of the decisions made by upper administration. I feel like we get told what is going to happen, or what has already happened, but our input/opinion is never sought. This place is administered from the top down and the communication is from the top down too. The &quot;ice cream socials&quot; and coffee and conversation gatherings are good ways to meet and talk with folks across the College. Nice ideas. Thumbnail bios of new staff-faculty might be nice to include.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Might have a newsy item each issue that highlights a significant accomplishment from our past or perhaps introduce new initiatives from across the College.</td>
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Q. Please share any other suggestions you have to enhance internal communication at the Davis College. Please type "NA" in the text box if you don't have any suggestions.
RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions employees made regarding how to improve internal communication include:

• Email D-News early in the week and in the morning
• Run reminders for key dates in D-News
• Segment the information in D-News
• Present information more succinctly in D-News
• Include all information in D-News that is shared on social media
• Ensure information is timely in D-News
• Strongly encourage directors to disseminate information to their staff

• “The "save the date" information is great but it would also be nice if upcoming events were again announced around a week ahead of time. For example: College Picnic scheduled on 9/12/18, please announce again on 9/7/18. We all are very busy so the reminders really help - just a suggestion.”

• “I would like to see speakers & lectures separated out from other communications. If the college could move towards two communications a week, one could be speaker/lecture/dissertation oriented, and the other could be more "news and update" centered.”

• “Try giving more bulleted points and less narrative.”

• “If social media is primarily used by some depts. to share information, it should also be included in D-News. Some people are not on social media at the workplace.”

• “Weekly email or more often as things happen. Perhaps a back up person to communicate since the Dean is never around.”

• “The Dean’s office is telling Division Directors to pass on items and they don’t.”

• “Social media is great for alumni, students and potential students, and it is great to highlight information about faculty achievements and research; however, I don’t believe that it is appropriate to communicate information directly to faculty and staff using these venues.”
SURVEY RESPONDENTS
Most of the faculty (60%) and staff members (66%) who responded to the survey have been employed at Davis College for at least ten years.

Q. How many years have you been employed at the Davis College?