2020 School of Public Health Faculty & Staff Survey Results

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES
The School of Public Health was established about eight years ago. In the recent past, the School has not conducted any communications surveys. They want to understand how faculty, staff and students receive information, if/how communications are working, how members prefer to be communicated with and how they use the SPH website.

METHODOLOGY
An online survey was developed and emailed to faculty, staff and students at the School of Public Health. This is a report on the results of the latter faculty/staff.

SURVEY RESULTS
There are 277 faculty and staff members at SPH; 37 responded to the survey. Due to the small number of survey responses, this report is qualitative in nature and directional. It does not reflect statistically valid data.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clearly communicate all aspect of SPH’s business plans.
The vast majority of faculty/staff members believe they are well-informed about what is happening in the School and, thus, also feel a relatively strong connection to the School. That said, they admittedly lack a thorough understanding of SPH’s current policies, strategic plans, and issues facing the school.

Consider changing the focus of eNews.
Most faculty/staff identified both SPH and WVU eNews as their primary means for obtaining news about what is happening in SPH. However, they receive and read a variety of other sources as well. Given that, a few have noticed SPH eNews may feature the same news they have read elsewhere.

When faculty/staff were asked about the topics they would like to hear about on a more regular basis, the vast majority choose events and opportunities. Other aspects they want to learn more about are the comings and goings of leaders, faculty and staff, as well as faculty/staff achievements and, to reiterate, details related to the School’s strategic plan.

Considering researching this area further.
A notable number of faculty/staff claim they could perform their job better if they received even more information. Unfortunately, very few indicated what specific information would help them to be more effective. The aforementioned information might suffice.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Revise the website’s content.

The website has room for improvement, given that the majority of faculty/staff do not feel that the website excels in addressing these topics:

- Past and ongoing research activities: 59%
- Program information: 57%
- Recent awards and publications: 50%
- Unique selling points of SPH: 50%
- Community-engaged approaches to research, education and service: 48%
- Professional development and hands-on practice opportunities: 28%

Improve website navigation for easier usage, including adding a search bar.

Most faculty members have some level of interaction with students and, in fact, have used SPH’s website for recruiting both prospective students. While it has proved an effective tool in this recruitment, as well as in recruiting potential faculty, internal users struggle with the website. They find it difficult to navigate, which prevents them from easily finding information.

Consider creating a research repository, including faculty presentations/awards.

Considering the frequency of daily and weekly news faculty/staff receive, complaints about the proliferation of emails, and faculty/staff’s desire to know about past (and ongoing) research activities, creating a research repository that they can visit, as needed, might make sense.
DETAILED FINDINGS
Q. Please check all the ways you currently acquire news about the School of Public Health (SPH) and/or your specific program, as well as how you'd prefer to get your news.
Q. Overall, what kind of a job does the School of Public Health do in keeping you well-informed about what’s happening in the School?

COMMUNICATION

Just over one-fifth (22%) of faculty/staff think SPH does an excellent job keeping them informed as to what’s happening in the School. Over half (54%) acknowledge it does a very good job. Another 25% said it does a good or fair job.
FREQUENCY

About eight in ten (78%) believe the frequency at which the SPH communicates with them is “just right.” Another 11% would like more communication; 11% prefer less communication.
Most faculty/staff members (60%) indicated that most times they find what they need in SPH News. In fact, 3% said that’s always the case. However, 31% say this is only true some of the time, and 6% can hardly ever find what they need in SPH eNews.
Q. Is there any information you are not currently receiving that could help you do your job better?

**DOING THEIR JOB**

About one-fourth (26%) acknowledged they could do their job better if they had more information.

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"Comings and goings of faculty and staff. Also, information about who is taking on their roles and responsibilities when they leave." – Staff

"More information on grants, especially with a broader collection of funding sources cited." – Faculty

"During COVID-19, it feels like employees haven’t been given the stability about when they would be forced to return to work. Even issuing a statement such as "We will not be returning to the office until January 2021 and we will update you at least 4 weeks before any potential return to the office" would take a lot of stress from employees." – Staff

"I would rather see information in the SPH enews that is different from what is available to read in the WVU enews or the Health Sciences Weekly. I don't understand the point of seeing the same news article in two or three news threads. I would like to see information in one message about new publications and grant awards; who's research is in the news; faculty, student, and student achievements; important events; policy and guideline updates and so forth. I'm interested in the research we conduct at the School but do not read the SPH Research emails. I would think that the research emails would be for funding opportunities and research workshops and the publications, awards, and news would be included in the SPH enews. I would rather have multiple reminders about School related events then a calendar invitation and a brief mention buried in the SPH enews. Sometimes a separate announcement would be beneficial." – Staff

"More about policy changes and new requirements." - Staff

"P&T Process." - Faculty

"Who is responsible for doing what." - Staff

"Current direction of SPH." - Faculty
TOPICS OF INTEREST

Over eight in ten faculty/staff members (84%) would like to learn more about upcoming events and opportunities on a regular basis. Most also want updates on new/departing leaders, faculty and staff (73%), well as issues facing the School (65%), policies/procedures (62%) and the achievements of faculty/staff (62%) – among others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upcoming events and opportunities</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updates on new and departing leaders, faculty, staff</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues facing the SPH</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPH policies and procedures</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPH faculty and staff achievements</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student stories, including achievements/honors</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic direction of the SPH</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial/budget updates</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni updates</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Which of the following aspects of the School are you most interested in hearing about on a regular basis? (Check all that apply.)
Q. Thinking about your relationship with the SPH, to what extent do you feel connected to the school?

**CONNECTION TO SPH**

About one-third (31%) acknowledged feeling “very connected” to the SCH, and 42% feel “somewhat connected.” Another 19% are indifferent, and 9% feel somewhat or very disconnected.
Q. How would you rate your knowledge of the SPH — (e.g. strategic direction, policies, accomplishments and issues facing the school)?

Q. Do you understand how your role helps the school achieve its mission and goals?

**KNOWLEDGE OF SPH/JOB**

One-third (33%) extremely or very knowledgeable about the strategic direction, policies, accomplishments and issues facing the School. Another 44% indicated they are somewhat knowledgeable. However, another 23% have little or no knowledge of these things. On the other hand, all but 8% understand how their role helps the school achieve its mission and goals.
**EFFECTIVENESS OF WEBSITE**

Just about half of faculty/staff think the website does an excellent or very good job conveying five of the following six topics. Few believe it is effective in addressing professional development and hands-on practice opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program information</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development and hands-on practice opportunities</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent awards and publications</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past and ongoing research activities</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community-engaged approaches to research, education and service</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique selling points of the SPH</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q. Now let's talk about the website. How well do think the SPH's website conveys the following?
ENGAGEMENT WITH STUDENTS

Just 12% of faculty/staff members or often engage with prospective students. Another 35% occasionally do so. Over half (53%) rarely or never have contact with them.

Q. About how often do you engage with prospective students?
RECRUITMENT TOOL
Over half (54%) of faculty have used the website to help them recruit students and/or faculty. The majority (86%) believe the website is an effective tool in helping to recruit prospective students and/or prospective faculty (75%).

When asked, no one offered any suggestions for making the website a more effective tool for recruiting students and/or faculty members.
SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

“I would like to see a monthly or bi-weekly newsletter versus weekly e-news. I’d prefer to get updates on upcoming events weekly but stories of faculty presenting at conferences or awards they have won could be compiled in a monthly newsletter. I realize the website is designed as a recruiting tool but it would be nice to have a portion of the website that hosts information pertinent for current students, staff, and faculty as well. This could help reduce the emails if we were conditioned to check one location for the type of information that often comes in e-news or one of the many other weekly updates. Sometimes the e-mails become overwhelming and are easily overlooked.” – Faculty

“I think our school has an excellent communication platform with the frequent newsletters that go out through email...those are extremely helpful to me feeling like I know what is happening at SPH!” – Staff

“I’m not a fan of email (I get way too many emails from the University, Health Sciences, WVU Medicine, and SPH that have redundant information). I prefer meetings, supervisors, and social media highlighting current and former students, and faculty. I would be more interested in email or the website if I was not highly involved with the school. Plus, the website is not easy for me to view. I can't view anything with white text or white backgrounds.” – Faculty

“I think we would benefit from communication outside our direct line supervisor. I miss the all-hands meetings to hear from Dean Coben and other leaders. As a non-Morgantown employee, I rarely have a chance to hear from school leadership.” – Staff

“I rarely look at the SPH website; and sometimes feel the SPH news comes out "after the fact." – Staff

“I think the Health Sciences website stinks. You have to dig around to find anything. Plus there is no search bar.” – Faculty
SUGGESTIONS FOR COMMUNICATIONS (continued)

“I find the website difficult to use. When looking for program information or student policies, funding opportunities, or student forms, it's not easily accessible. I have to click multiple times to find what I'm looking for.” – Staff

“I wish there was a more direct way to learn about continuing education opportunities, lectures, panels, etc. The eNews component is wonderful, but I would love to have access to a more comprehensive list.” – Staff

“One suggestion is to consolidate communications more when possible so there is less emails. I appreciate the updates, but we receive a lot of emails on updates from different sources throughout the week.” – Staff

“Especially now that most things have moved to a virtual format, I feel overwhelmed with the amount of news/emails I receive.” – Staff

“Perhaps a web-based brown bag lunch series where faculty and SPH members have opportunity to present on their current work and help build out partnerships, or at least awareness of the work happening. OHSR had the opportunity to do this in-person in the Fall of 2019 and it was very beneficial.” – Faculty
DEMOGRAPHICS
About six in ten (58%) of respondents are staff; 42% are faculty. They are employed in the following departments.

- Academic and Student Affairs: 26%
- HSC-SPH Health Affairs: 14%
- Social and Behavioral Sciences: 14%
- Office of Health Services Research: 12%
- Central Administration: 11%
- Epidemiology: 9%
- Biostatistics: 9%
- Occupational and Environmental Health...: 9%
- Health Policy, Management & Leadership: 6%
- Division of Occupational Medicine: 3%
- Health Research Center: 3%
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute: 3%