

**African-American Male First-Time Freshmen  
Focus Groups, COMBINED Summer and Fall, 2009**

Challenge to Fulfillment of 5 Criteria	Knowledge/Action Needed to Navigate	What Can RSU do?
Recently \$200K allocated to specific staff in a secretive, egregious, unfair manner	Know that this feels unethical Some get stipends secretly People who received stipends determined who got them and how much \$200K is "nail in the coffin" for low morale - among <u>many</u> other things	Develop more stringent controls/ require transparency; develop policies around any allocations of money;
Lack of interal communication	Know you won't know what's going on	Invite president and vice presidents to be more visible; management by walking around; More university-wide events that bring us all together - picnics, food events
Lack of transparency	Know you may feel betrayed	Don't allow bad university news to be emailed at 4:55 on a Friday. Create an internal newsletter
Lack of trust	Know that \$200,000 to 19 staff members will feel like a betrayal. Know that your own hard work will feel unnoticed	Leadership should let the university community know that although all faculty and staff are being furloughed (4.6% pay cut), some staff will be rewarded for their hard work
Several positions added without transparency or approval in Budget Advisory Committee	Now that it feels like non-Academic departments are favored; know this has a detrimental effect on morale	Develop consistent policies and procedures; follow policies; hold everyone accountable
Lack of effective/ functioning HR office		Hire qualified HR staff
Lack of Employee Assistance Program	Faculty bullying other faculty issue - went to Student Affairs for resolution, not HR	Implement EAP for all faculty/staff
Some faculty/staff not doing their jobs	Know that it feels like 20 of faculty are doing the majority of the work.	Department heads should require accountability

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Lack of accountability	Know that some people won't be required to be productive	Department heads should require accountability
EX/LMS - system feels like it is constantly changing	Know that there are many videos online for training faculty. Know that if faculty call Center for Teaching and Learning and ask specific technical questions, they will be told to review the videos online.	Hire someone in the Center for Teaching and Learning who will answer course design and technical questions over the phone. Faculty don't call CTL much any more because they know they will be told to review the training videos online.
CTL department does not have a faculty perspective	CTL does not understand the online learning environment CTL not helpful: "it's online, go find it" you'll have to find another faculty member to help you Have to redo things over and over	Get faculty involvement/ input into CTL
LMS training is challenging	Time elapsed between training and teaching to use it too long to remember to use efficiently	Ensure availability of at least one Subject Matter Expert - show them how to train in departmental meetings
Lack of communication between CTL and branch campuses	Know that CTL staff are stretched thin	Hire a course designer
Computers not always functioning in Bartlesville	Computers in labs don't work; some have never worked	Replace computers!
Lack of faculty input in selecting LMS	Know that the Distance Learning Committee approved the selection of the LMS, but most faculty weren't brought into the decision process.	Hold webinars allowing LMS vendors to present their product. Communicate these to all faculty and facilitate discussion. To be forewarned is to be forearmed.

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Students having trouble registering/ EM not helpful/ rude to students and faculty	High turnover rate in Enrollment Management	Add more evening hours Develop a strong customer service mentality Train admissions and registrar staff effectively
Faculty don't have access to necessary advising tools in ERP		Change permissions strategy in EX
Enrollment Management makes significant changes to the student ERP/EX system without faculty input, leading to increased confusion (i.e. name change of buildings)	Know that computer programs will need to be rewritten or modified to accommodate field changes, and many other ongoing changes.	Enrollment Management to should discuss changes in the EX meetings. When a quick turn around is needed, EM should notify the university community of changes.
Lack of adequate/effective financial aid staff	Know that students may go to competitors	Hire needed financial aid staff
Catastrophic financial aid event last year	Multiple students told faculty that they were enrolling at NSU and TCC if they were freshmen or sophomores	This is an Enrollment Management leadership problem
Enrollment is declining amid declining state funding	Know that faculty and staff will need to continue to be furloughed one day a month for the foreseeable future	This is an Enrollment Management leadership problem. Contact students who've left Allow students to attend when waiting on transcripts from other universities
Furloughs = 4.6% pay cut	Know this is a hardship for many faculty and staff	Provide a fund for lowest paid staff who need financial help. Focus on ending furloughs as soon as possible.
Student access to MyRSU cut off if they miss a payment or have bursar hold		Allow students to come to class even if can't pay bills
High turnover in EM - looking for better job conditions, more pay/		Hire and pay these positions adequately
Not marketing all degrees effectively, fairly (e.g. environmental conservation)		Create an active Marketing Committee with RSU Marketing faculty on it.

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RSU is reactive; doesn't do proactive planning	Know we will be behind the 8 ball unless we are highly proactive	
Faculty committees not meeting/ not held accountable/ not communicating results	Committees that are meeting are not communicating results	Require attendance at meetings as part of performance evaluation/ deans/DH to attend
Disconnect/distance between mission and daily operations	Know you won't know what's going on	Create an internal communication system such as a monthly newsletter or website
Poor customer service in Enrollment Management	There is high turnover in EM. Admissions appears to be disconnected. Know that students report to faculty that they have been told in EM that Intro to Psych was not taught in the fall semester (many sections always taught each semester)	Create a customer service model
Poor customer service in Financial Aid	Not enough staff in Financial Aid	Hire more Financial Aid counselors
Poor customer service in Advising	Not enough staff in EM. Also it appears to students the EM is trying to blame faculty for declining student enrollment. Know that this creates hostility.	This is an EM leadership issue.
Degree audit in ERP often doesn't match	Know that data audit MUST be conducted	Hire a consultant who can help EM and the Registrar's office
Lack of (financial/budgetary) transparency	Lack of morale	

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Priorities out of balance - academics under-prioritized	It appears that Academic Affairs takes more budget cuts each year than Business Affairs, Athletics, Enrollment Management	Show a balance sheet with percentages of cuts by area
Furloughs are killing morale		Increase enrollment?
No salary scale (equity)	Know there is inconsistency in salary across the university for the same type of jobs	Conduct a staff and faculty salary compensation survey so that employees have something to look forward to when furloughs end. Update policies and procedures with the survey
Lack of staff	Know that staff are overworked	??
Lack of planning/urgency in hiring process; Lack of planning for filling vacancies; Some faculty hires made in August (JIT or later)	This contributes to overworked staff and faculty. Know that reappoints occur late.	Be proactive
No overlap in replacing employees (no opportunity for training, job handoff)	No that employees need training to learn a job	Use more part-time staff
Adjuncts and student workers still being locked out of accounts (doors for Radio?)	Know that the new process of not automatically cutting of adjunct faculty access to the LMS and emails is still problematic	
Student Affairs understaffed		Petition state for more funding
Back up in critical maintenance Physical facilities deteriorating		Plan for upgrades
Lack of customer service/ phone etiquette in Physical Plant	Know that the AA in Facilities is egregiously rude to faculty and staff as well as unhelpful	Hold her accountable

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Feelings of not being supported or understood by OU Legal team in legal situations	It feels like RSU administration follows OU legal advise without question	Consider all options
There is a perception that Academic Affairs is not a priority for university leadership	Know this affects morale	Show that areas other than Academic Affairs are taking budget cuts at the same rate.
Lack of online courses options	Know it takes time to build online courses	Pay faculty a stipend for creating online courses
Online course fees too high compared to other schools	Know that there is a perception among students that RSU's online courses cost more than NSU's and our competitors	Right-size this so that it doesn't look like RSU's online courses cost more.
Some online courses aren't as rigorous as onground courses	Know that there is a perception among students that RSU's online courses cost more than NSU's and our competitors	Right-size this so that it doesn't look like RSU's online courses cost more.
Marketing and branding committee hasn't met in last year	Know that it seems like RSU continues to be a well kept secret	Reactivate the Marketing Committee and include faculty
Not closing loop with assessment results	RSU requires extensive Student Learning Reporting each year. It seems like the focus for many faculty is on submitting the report rather than discussing the results	Leadership needs to re-communicate the importance of closing the loop.
Faculty still doing assessment manually		Purchase an assessment software that will lighten the burden on faculty to report
Upper administration not being evaluated: President, VP's, Deans, Department Heads	Know that Faculty Senate worked hard to get administrative evaluations implemented several years ago.	Reinstitute administrative evaluations.

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Skills gaps in students' preparation for college	Know that faculty will have a broad array of student skills to teach	
Strategic plan far removed from resources, processes, operation		Revisit the plan. Be active.
Slow migration of payroll to Jenzabar	Know that this means much computer programming and reporting reworks in the future	
"LMS is disaster/ train wreck" Slow, not conducive to academic excellence, lacks incentives for rigor		Not sure...
Insufficient travel funds		Encourage faculty to apply for internal Organized Research grants for up to \$30,000 per year
Bureaucracy in travel approval process cumbersome		Set up the process online
Travel reimbursements slow and unwieldy		Set up the process online
Travel claims delayed unnecessarily with "nitpicking"	Know that the new staff in Business Affairs changes reimbursement protocols without notifying staff and faculty until after they have submitted claims	Be consistent with state reimbursement policies. Do not institute stricter constraints in the state. For instance, denying covered parking for travel after employees have traveled is a poor system. Communicate in advance.

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Pcard reporting system still fraught with hiccups	No that Administrative Assistants will get requisitions and POs sent back multiple times before approved. There is a perception that the new Assistant Comptroller has control/power issues. This adds to employee frustrations.	Develop a strong customer service model.
Faculty tired - lack of morale - being asked to do more and more - can't offer course enrichment as before		Conversations with leadership are important.
The number of hours in some majors is too large (60 hour requirement)	Know this can contribute to low major enrollment	Faculty should review curriculum
Auditorium Media Supervisor/Specialist is stretched too thin	Know this position is greatly needed	



What Works?
Faculty and staff bonded as a result of stipends, and rallied to support students in time of crisis
Many faculty and staff trust each other
Student Affairs trying hard
Hard working faculty

What Works?
Training videos, if you have the time.
CTL staff know their content areas
At least the Distance Education Committee had a say.

What Works?
Many dedicated staff
When changes are clearly communicated via email, this helps
Communication
Many dedicated staff
Faculty experience

What Works?
Some new equipment to keep our offerings updated has been purchased (videocameras)
Accountability and Academics - very responsive, service-orientation

<b>What Works?</b>
Faculty mentoring/ family feeling/ support among faculty
Faculty and staff get a paycheck
Staff and Faculty
Student Affairs trying hard
All other Physical Plant/Facilities staff

What Works?
Online course creation stipends
Faculty evaluations of leadership provide important 360 feedback

What Works?
Internal Organized Research grants
There is travel money.

What Works?
Hard working employees
Auditorium Media Supervisor/Specialist