

Purdue University Senate Special Advisory Committee Report

Submitted to the Presidential Search Committee of the Board of Trustees

Background: In September of 2011, at the request of the Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, Trustee Michael Berghoff, a Special Advisory Committee (SAC) of the Purdue University Senate was formed by the Chair of the Senate, Professor Morris Levy. The 24 members of the SAC included representatives from the University Senate leadership, as well as representatives from each of the regional campuses, the Administrative and Professional Staff Advisory Committee (APSAC), the Clerical and Service Staff Advisory Committee (CSSAC), the Purdue Student Government (PSG), the Purdue Graduate Student Government (PGSG), and the Diversity Staff. The chief mandate for the SAC was to formulate recommendations to the PSC regarding the desired expertise of the next President as well as strategic priorities for the next administration. The SAC solicited comments on these issues from the entire Purdue community via an on-line survey; additional information was gleaned from Open Forums conducted by the Search Committee and other entities at all Purdue campuses as well as other surveys conducted within specific constituent groups. This report reflects the SAC's recommendations based on our collective wisdom and using the totality of more than 6000 respondents whose opinions we have accumulated. The format of the report includes an Executive Summary, summaries or excerpts of responses from various constituent groups, and an appendix of supporting documents.

Executive Summary

The President of Purdue should focus the strategic missions of our land-grant institution and facilitate the productivity and wellbeing of the faculty, staff and students at all levels of the University. It is essential that the next President be a recognized scholar with academic credentials equivalent to a tenured Full Professor. A successful President must understand the culture of a successful academy in order to convey that perspective to the Board of Trustees for policy decisions that advance the academy. Those advances should include recognition and promotion of the contributions of all sectors of the Purdue community, including the regional campuses. It is also essential the next President have a scale of administrative experience and creativity necessary to lead Purdue in a new generation of fiscal management. A successful President must set the tone to sustain the economic vitality of future Purdue. Establishing wise spending priorities, developing new sources of income and modernizing operational costs should highlight the future Purdue business model.

Several dominant themes emerged from Purdue faculty, staff and student opinions on the major challenges facing Purdue and on desired improvements in the work and educational environment. The primary challenge is to provide sustainable resources for the preeminent research and teaching missions of the University. Recurrently, faculty (all levels) and staff advocate reducing excessive administrative infrastructure and costs as a fundamental necessity.

More resources have to be devoted to support faculty and staff productivity as well as to incentivize the teaching mission. Moreover, the President needs to change the atmosphere between the administration and all other sectors of Purdue's employees. Morale isn't where it needs to be, especially for staff and graduate students. The regional campuses feel largely ignored yet find their evolving aspirations diminished by West Lafayette directives. Many faculty and staff employees feel overworked, undervalued and disrespected. Students (all levels) are clearly concerned about rising costs of their education and new opportunities for financial support. But they also want Purdue to maximize the quality of their education and preparations for a successful career in the modern world.

All constituencies express great appreciation and genuine affection for the land-grant mission of Purdue. What they want is a clear and creative communicator to focus that mission and develop the resources that allow Purdue faculty, staff and students to achieve it. There are other important improvements desired (e.g., in facilities and services, and diversity). But the most important leadership quality the next President should have is to persuade, by his/her actions, that all sectors of the Purdue community are truly members of the same preeminent team. In capsule form, the next President's actions should serve to inspire, empower and recruit faculty, staff and students throughout the Purdue system.

Constituent Excerpts / Summaries

West Lafayette Faculty:

Distinguished or Chaired Professors: The primary challenges are to repair dwindling departmental budgets with new revenues; greatly reduce administration and focus management; attract and retain world-class faculty; improve visibility and trust via transparency and clear communication, including with Indianapolis; improve staff incentives and development; control tuition costs while maintaining employee benefits, especially health insurance. The highest priority work place improvements are improving facilities, services and support staff; providing greater incentives for faculty and staff including salaries; reducing wasteful expenditures and administrative costs; improve diversity; restructure departmental leadership; in short, inspire, empower and recruit.

Full Professors: The major concerns are the non-sustainability of the current funding model and an improved strategic budgeting; administrative bloat and its impact on faculty productivity and morale; the need for greater clarity in leadership with input from the faculty; improvement in fundraising for the educational and research missions; improvements in infrastructure and facilities for teaching and research; and improving undergraduate student quality.

Associate Professors: There is a strong and repetitive belief that the administration has grown to excessive and detrimental levels to the point of being a hindrance to effective implementation of teaching and research initiatives. Faculty are overworked, underpaid, lack support, and unappreciated. There are deep concerns on monetary issues at the university, department, and individual levels. They desire an updating and renovation of spaces across campus, and express a general dissatisfaction over building support services. Along with demand for more research

support and funding there was an almost equal need for greater emphasis on teaching; better teaching, balanced teaching loads, more teaching faculty. The associate professors are concerned about rising tuition costs, student retention, and retaining high quality students. An underlying theme across many of the comments is a subtle crisis in morale. The associate professors believe that Purdue can achieve great things, that they are conducting valuable research and providing valuable instruction to students. However, they do not feel that the administration is fully behind them and that the next President needs to come in and be willing to carry their banner with strong dynamic leadership. The President needs to lead and to listen.

Assistant Professors: Assistant Professors recognize the following priorities for improvements: budgets, undergraduate teaching support; diversity; research funding; reducing administrative bloat; improving fund raising for academic and research purposes; reducing tuition; improving faculty retention with higher salaries and improving interdisciplinary programs, including the criteria for evaluation in tenure and promotion considerations.

Other Faculty: The individuals in this category included non-tenure track faculty such as research faculty and clinical faculty. The most frequent concerns were about the university budget, including fund raising, research funding and the endowment. Student-related concerns included increasing the quality of applicants, the technology available for students, diversity, scholarships and educational value while lowering tuition and grade inflation. Innovation and/or Business Development were also mentioned. Administrative bloat was not a major concern for this group. In summary, at least for this small group of faculty, money-related issues and student-related issues seem to be the most important issues for our next President.

West Lafayette Staff:

Clerical and Service Staff: The overall consensus of the clerical and service staff is for a President with a strong academic background, experience leading a complex organization, as well as the ambassadorship to represent Purdue University. The President should communicate a clear vision and direction, lead by example and set the tone for all interaction at the university. The President should have a demonstrated ability to handle complex institutions with fiscal responsibility. The President should find creative ways to make staff at all levels feel appreciated in a difficult economy. The President should be committed to reducing administrative bloat and raising wages with special consideration given to those who are earning below poverty level. The President should understand the land grant mission and effectively work with state legislatures. Survey results indicate the following common themes: there is low morale with an abundance of red tape, lack of empowerment and disrespect; total compensation is low; staffing levels are inadequate to maintain support to the university mission; and there is a strong desire for more professional development and educational opportunities (many peer institutions offer 100% tuition reimbursement).

Administrative and Professional Staff: More than eight hundred survey responses reveals a certain consistency in the leadership qualities AP staff would like to see emphasized during the selection process. The specific words and phrases repeated include: fair, balanced, connects with all stakeholders equally (students, faculty, staff and alumni); humble, common sense approach, mid-western roots, conservative; accessible, egalitarian, leads by example; experienced fund

raiser, understands legislative climate; strong, effective communicator, someone who inspires confidence, listens. The voice of the AP staff is loud and clear on one point – they do not want a President who is seen as a “hit and run” administrator. With regards to workplace issues, AP staff expressed several concerns in common with our clerical and service staff coworkers, including recruitment and retention (i.e., compensation issues), inadequate staffing and unrealistic workloads, and a desire for senior administrators to demonstrate appreciation for the contributions made by support staff to the university’s success. Among the most frequently cited issues is a perceived lack of respect for staff.

West Lafayette Students:

Undergraduate: Above all, students believe the next President must demonstrate a profound understanding and appreciation for the culture and mission of Purdue University. There also is sincere desire to see a President who is “student focused.” Students believe the best candidate will strive to improve the fiscal state of the university through responsible use of resources and lowering or maintaining the cost of attendance. While slightly less important, students wish to see a President who values inclusion and diversity as well as interested in helping establish “real world” relations and career opportunities for graduates. Students do not place an especially high value for an individual of a particular background, whether it is academic, political, or business, nor an emphasis on locating a candidate specifically experienced in the STEM fields. They are also opposed to the idea of a President being strongly supportive of Purdue athletics over academic programs. Other strategic priorities of the undergraduates include: maintaining highest quality faculty, improving the academic reputations of many degree programs, and expanding fellowship and financial aid opportunities.

Graduate Students: The next President should: come from an academic background and have a PhD or equivalent degree; maintain an internal focus—working closely with students, faculty and staff to make decisions at the University; prioritize building the infrastructure of Purdue in order to create a more sustainable and efficient University; promote global collaborations to expand the reach of the Purdue brand; focus on expanding and incorporating the Liberal Arts and Humanities along with STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Agriculture Math); increase the graduate student population by improving and creating resources and attracting the highest quality graduate students from around the world; remain in residence for more than four years in order to grow programs, infrastructure, and projects. The most important improvements for graduate students include higher stipends, lower fees and improved research support opportunities.

Diversity & Inclusion Forums: Participants want a President who: holds fast to the land grant mission of the university, has demonstrated success with diversity and inclusion and is sensitive to the importance of both symbolic and material acts in this arena. Highest priority is for a President who embodies the belief that diversity and inclusion are integral to academic excellence and implements an aggressive diversity agenda supported by measures of accountability.

Regional Campuses:

Calumet: All constituencies strongly believe that it is essential that the new President have academic credentials equivalent to a tenured full professor. In addition they strongly believe that it is essential that the new President have administrative expertise in leading a large and complex institution, taking into account all of the regional campuses. A continuing message from all Purdue Calumet constituencies is the concern regarding budgets and lack of resources. These range from too few tenure track faculty members to upkeep of facilities to not enough support for regional student athletics. The new President of Purdue University should: expand regional campus governance input to system wide governance based upon total student enrollment; improve student retention with resources/support to enable student persistence and graduation; improve the ability to attract, retain, and support outstanding faculty in their teaching and scholarly activities; hire more tenure track faculty; enable more autonomy of regional graduate programs; provide more support and funding for student athletics at regional campuses.

Ft. Wayne: The most common challenge listed by all constituents is the increasing cost of education vs. decreasing state funding. Clearly this is a challenge that will pursue higher education for years to come. Faculty and staff are concerned about the rising cost of fringe benefits, while students' main concern is the rising tuition cost. Another important trend is maintaining the academic excellence the Purdue system is known for. The effect of technology on the education process is understandingly at the forefront of challenges singled out by the IPFW constituency. Of particular importance for IPFW, being a local campus is the "building of a positive rapport with all regional campuses".

North Central: All constituencies strongly believe that the new President must meet the standards established for a successful faculty member at Purdue (excellence in scholarship, teaching and engagement) and must be a proven, effective administrator. Both sets of skills are essential; neither is sufficient by itself. The President should provide a coherent vision of Purdue as a system and provide effective leadership to maximize its system-wide effectiveness. A new balance between autonomy and cooperation is needed. The President should restructure fund-raising and resource allocation to better serve Purdue as a multi-campus System. The President must deal effectively with State, business and other non-academic entities to ensure a healthy future for the University as true academic leader. The President should seek to contain the cost of education to Purdue students. The President should reduce the top-heavy administration and bureaucratic inefficiencies and channel the savings into improved instruction. There is a strong perception, likewise, that regional campuses have been neglected and underappreciated. The new President should provide appropriate leadership for the Purdue system, including reevaluating the evolving missions, and distinct needs and accomplishments of regional campuses.

IUPUI: Purdue faculty (37) and staff (5) from this Indiana University governed campus responded to the survey. Their most frequent comments concerned regional campus issues, especially the need for better collaborations (especially for Engineering) and less bureaucracy between campuses; increased financial support for faculty, research and teaching programs; and improvements in faculty-staff relationships. There also was a strong desire for more effective leadership at all levels and for improving the rank/reputation of programs at IUPUI.

Respectfully submitted by the Special Advisory Committee: Morris Levy (Chair), David J. Williams, Joseph W. Camp, Alan Beck, Natalie Carroll, J. Stuart Bolton, Felica Ahasteen-

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Appendices

1. New Presidential Criteria (Qualtrics) Survey Results: Response distributions and Importance of Academic credentials and administrative expertise.
2. West Lafayette Distinguished/Chaired Professor Response Summary
3. West Lafayette Full Professor Response Summary
4. West Lafayette Associate Professor Response Summary
5. West Lafayette Assistant Professor Response Summary
6. West Lafayette Clerical and Service Staff Response Summary
7. West Lafayette Administrative and Professional Staff Response Summary
8. West Lafayette Undergraduate Student Executive Summary
9. West Lafayette Undergraduate Students Executive Summary
10. West Lafayette Graduate Student Survey Results
11. West Lafayette Graduate Student Executive Summary
12. West Lafayette Graduate Student Report
13. Purdue Calumet Response Summary
14. Purdue Fort Wayne (IPFW) Response Survey
15. Purdue North Central Executive Summary
16. Purdue North Central Response Summary
17. West Lafayette Other Faculty Response Summary
18. Summary of Search Committee Listening Sessions
19. Summary of Diversity & Inclusion Forums
20. Wordle Diagrams (Students)
21. Wordle Diagrams (Associate Profs. Challenges; Work Environment)