

DASNR Faculty Council
Questions for the Dean
November, 2017

1. Regarding selection of the selection committee for Dr. Trapp's replacement. Less than 1/2 of the screening committee was women. Why?

Of the 20 members, 9 are female. This committee makeup is intended to represent a broad range of programs and functions in OCES and within DASNR. Members representing DASNR administration, CASNR academic units, faculty, county and area extension staff, all three program areas: 4-H, FCS, agriculture & natural resources; the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation and DASNR human resources are included.

The entire search and screening process breaks out into three segments: recruiting, screening, and providing input to the final decision process. Ultimately, as Vice President, I encourage involvement by faculty and staff across the organization to assist in recruiting. Identifying potential candidates, encouraging candidates to apply, and answering questions of candidates are actions that anyone can take, whether they are on the search and screening committee.

I will rely on the search and screening committee members to help with the recruitment process, and they are the primary group involved in screening the candidates and advising me on the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate as a potential finalist. Everyone can participate in the final decision process by providing their insights and recommendations to me directly. I will receive input from the committee members and from any other faculty or staff who choose to participate and provide their input.

We are now in the final stages of the search process and I encourage all DASNR, FCS and interested parties to attend the seminar for each candidate and to provide feedback. Please encourage your colleagues to participate in seminars and take part in the feedback process.

2. What are the plans for the appropriated funds from the state for restructuring cooperative extension (~\$2M)? How can FCS help?

The special funds appropriated for DASNR in FY2017 are actually divided among OCES (\$1 million) and OAES (\$1 million). I asked for recommended needs for restructuring OCES and OAES so as to be better prepared to operate in our lowered budget reality. That is how I advocated for receiving the funding, and that is how I feel we need to use it.

I requested suggestions from DASNR administrators for improvements we could make with these funds and received a number of recommendations that would have cost more than \$2 million. With input from unit administrators and DASNR administrators, we narrowed the list down to 23 items that fall into several categories. Some, particularly for OAES, include facility and equipment upgrades and a few facility demolitions that will lay the groundwork for future facility consolidation and construction. Other items, including both OAES and OCES funding, focus on a strategic review and redesign of our web-based communications

and presence. It will include a study with an outside consultant to develop a plan that will include consistent architecture and design of web sites across DASNR that will allow for use of the same content management platform as the rest of OSU. This will also facilitate adoption of a single calendar system for posting events, and registration and on-line payment applications for events. It will also include upgrading teleconferencing equipment at county Extension offices. And it will include organizational support for using social media in marketing and communications.

3. Do we have a working model for monetizing services (i.e.: sessions) to generate additional revenues?

That will be addressed in part through the web platform strategic development and with leadership from the new Associate VP for Cooperative Extension.

4. What is in the works for investments to marketing and evaluation tools regarding extensions services?

We have a proposal on hold for a new Evaluation Specialist faculty position that will be reviewed with the new Associate VP for Cooperative Extension once she/he is on board and ready to move forward.

5. Is it possible to develop career ladders for departmental administrative staff, as is currently being addressed for non-tenure track faculty?

Yes, OSU has several career development plans for administrative staff that can be utilized. They are attached. Additionally, OCES has employed a career ladder approach for Extension educators.

6. We have had office staff in our department receive promotions over the last couple years. In fact, one of our staff members received 2 promotions. With these promotions came added responsibilities, but the staff members did not receive any pay raises to go with these promotions (unlike faculty who still receive pay raises with promotions). I realize we have a tight budget, but are there some ways that departments can still reward good staff with raises either through using some of block salary money, reallocating IDC funds, allowing staff to receive supplemental salary or 13 month salary, or putting salaries for office staff on grants. Our staff is one of the reasons we are successful and yet we don't seem to recognize their importance through compensation. Unfortunately, when we have really good staff, we often times lose them because we will not pay them what they are deserving.

The department head is responsible for and should absolutely be looking for resources to give an increase to an employee when appropriate while abiding by the compensation structure HR operates by to ensure we have pay equity across campus and within departments. The department heads should work very closely with HR when a position update is necessary.

For instance, if a position has some added responsibilities but it is not enough to reclassify the position, then we have a compensation structure that allows departments to provide up to

a 5% increase without Dean approval. This would be a demonstrated proficiency increase (DPI) The department needs to communicate the increase to my office by sending a justification email of the increase so that we can facilitate the process.

If approval is given for an employee to move up within a career development plan (CDP), the compensation structure allows for an increase up to 9.9% with no further approval beyond the Dean's office.

If an employee is being promoted, there is a promotion process we must follow and it may include getting approval up through the EEO office. But let's say an employee is approved for being promoted into another position outside of a CDP, then the employee would need to at least meet the hiring range minimum of the new position. This might mean that we need to increase the salary and if so, we would need to follow the compensation structure that states an increase up to 5% is allowed without Dean approval, 5.1% up to 9.9% needs the Dean's approval and anything above 9.9% needs the Dean, Provost and Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance approval.

In DASNR, it is common to provide DPI increases up to 5% per department head request. From the information in this question, it seems the department head would benefit from a discussion with the Dean's Office and Office of Budget and Finance to determine how they can appropriately finance this change in responsibilities. If the person would give the employee name that was promoted twice, I am happy to investigate and see if there is any trail I can find. The CDP's are fairly simple to work within and there is flexibility in the compensation structure to allow for increases.

7. I am very glad the OCES Associate Director will also be an Associate Vice President. That is more in line with the actual duties. Can you explain what you mean by transformative leadership with respect to the new OCES Associate VP Position?

Every organization is faced with changes in responsibilities and changes in resources. In the case of Cooperative Extension, our role has been affected by changes in information technology and the way people obtain and use information and educational resources. There is a need for our organization to continue adapting to new information resources and new ways of serving the needs of Oklahomans who seek information and education in our program areas. At the same time, we are faced with a more limited budget environment. Public funding for our work continues to decline, yet the need for it has not diminished. These realities mean we need to change the way we serve our Extension mission – at the county, area, and state levels, whether on-campus or off-campus. Cooperative Extension is more than 100 years old, which means it has many practices and cultural values that have been established for decades. Changing the way we achieve our mission – and doing so at the scale our current circumstances require – will require leadership that is capable of setting priorities, articulating a vision, and carrying out the needed changes in order to be well suited to delivering on our mission in our new environment. And all of that needs to be accomplished in a way that seeks input and contributions from faculty and staff from across the organization and mobilizes teams to plan and implement changes. In short, it will require

a transformation of the organization from being a late 20th Century model to a 21st Century model. A transformative leader is one who can lead and facilitate the kinds of organizational and cultural changes that will equip us for future challenges and opportunities.

8. I was pleased by the broad committee scope. Can you tell me where the committee is now on their deliberations or on the scheduling of interviews? Will there be an opportunity to nominate persons to serve as interim?

Interviews have been scheduled and will be complete on December 12. I will review the feedback and plan to offer the position prior to the December holidays. There could be a return visit by the candidate of choice at which time we will know more about a starting date for that person. We may need an interim, depending on the lapse between Dr. Trapp's retirement and the starting date for the new person. I intend to keep the term for interim leadership short and will rely on existing administrative staff to guide us through the interim period.

9. I am very hopeful that Chris Richards will bring back the open dialog among users of the research stations amongst faculty. Can you tell me if thought has been given to having formal advisory committees or other ways to include faculty in the management of stations and the decisions that are made which affect the scope of research? This has been missing since Dr. Westerman held the position.

Dr. Richards has been on board for a short time and I do think it would be beneficial for the DASNR Faculty Council to meet with him to discuss issues that you believe should be addressed. A recommendation from Faculty Council to establish such an advisory group is welcomed.

10. What's up with the State Board of Regents for Higher Ed making another money grab from endowed chair accounts?

As I understand it, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education has, for the second year, elected to withhold authorization to spend some of the carry forward that was present in endowed professorship/chair trust fund accounts. Last year they elected to withhold half of the carry forward in order to ensure they had enough funds to cover the spending policy for all endowments. They did the same for this year.

At the time we learned about this last year, I recommended that those with endowed professorships and chairs use the Regents accounts first for spending in FY 2017, and to focus on spending down the carry forward in those accounts. The same advice is appropriate this year as well.

It is important to recognize that these decisions only affect the state trust funds established by the State Regents as matching funds to incentivize private gifts for endowed professorships

and chairs. The private gifts, held by the OSU Foundation, and their spending accounts, are unaffected by this policy.

In FY17, the impact of the withholding of funds was \$704,825 for DASNR. In FY18, the impact is \$153,263, which suggests that faculty made some progress in spending down the carry forward that they were allowed to expend. In theory, the funds that were withheld should still be available, but whether they are ever authorized for spending in future fiscal years is up to the Regents.