Spring 2014 Faculty Discussion on the Search for the New Chancellor

Two sessions were held in spring 2014 to gather faculty input regarding the new Chancellor. Discussions included comments about UWT’s current and future identity, critical needs of the campus and community, and unique characteristics of the Chancellor position, as well as desired attributes of candidates for the position. The following statements summarize key ideas expressed, listed in the order in which they were raised.

**UW Tacoma is an urban-serving university**
- The language shift from “metropolitan” to “urban-serving” due to Debra Friedman
- Expresses social change, understanding, and focus on families and community of the city
- Drives higher education to be accessible and transformative
- Leads to long-term relationships, partnerships, and community-based learning and teaching, realizing that there is expertise inside and outside of campus.
- Necessitates working with military and veterans
- Being embraced by community and seen as integral part of Pierce County
- Questions remain about what “urban-serving” means for faculty – how they approach teaching and research, what kinds of scholarship are valued
- How to keep regional focus and influence while trying to achieve international recognition

**UW Tacoma is unique in structure**
- Connected to Seattle and Bothell campuses: dependent and not autonomous
- The Chancellor of UW Tacoma reports to the Provost, who is the Chief Financial Officer
- Well-positioned with resources of Seattle campus and its connections
- Dependent on legislature in Olympia for resources
- Small-scale and ability to do what is impossible at larger institutions
- Commuter campus, so engagement is different
- Faculty take pride in all that is being accomplished

**Faculty expectations and challenges**
- The COACHE survey displayed that faculty are dissatisfied with senior leadership and are struggling with constant growth and change.
- Faculty are concerned about “7 in 7” growth plans, including how to keep pace with the service load and understanding why growth needs to continue
- Faculty are not getting communication from administration about plans; sometimes finding out about plans from the local newspaper versus leadership. Faculty leadership are left out of some discussions with the Academic Council
- Faculty expect to be consulted on changes because they came with the mission to build UWT up and out. Faculty want to drive curriculum and program creation
- Faculty are experiencing fatigue from leadership changes and increasing demands on them, leading to low engagement
- Faculty have concerns with being a state-supported school and expecting students to pay high tuition rates
Faculty are concerned with the status of the campus. Ph.D.’s aren’t offered at UW Tacoma, and the interdisciplinary concept is being lost and departments are becoming more and more siloed.

What faculty want in the next Chancellor
- Good communicator: has a track record of collaborating, partnering, and communicating with faculty and community
- Can navigate the system of UW and advocate for UW Tacoma
- Full professor or significant academic experience and credentials
- Concerned with the dismantling of interdisciplinary concept and will work to repair that
- Supports current work and creates future vision
- Values collaboration with faculty

Questions to ask Chancellor interviewees
- What work or track record do you have in engaging faculty into decision-making and processes?
- Have you ever had to back down on a plan because of faculty push-back?
- What knowledge or experience do you have managing negotiating issues such as our chancellor needs to with Seattle and throughout campus?
- What skills do you have and are looking to develop that would make you a good fit for our campus?
- What would coming to UW Tacoma do for you and your career?

UWT should demonstrate leadership in social justice and labor issues
- UWT has highest % non-tenure-track faculty in UW system (how does this relate to faculty governance? What’s the plan?)
- UWT is only campus of UW system that has contracted out labor on campus. The company chosen pays low wages and no benefits.
- We have the most diverse student body in UW system, but we aren’t doing well on faculty diversity.
- The new Chancellor should be willing to address these issues and have a demonstrated record of increasing faculty diversity at all levels (for example, promoting women to full professorship).

Teaching and research are our core missions
- The new Chancellor should have a proven record of improving excellence in these

UWT has a unique identity
- The campus is not trying to be an R1 university and we have a unique student population
- The new Chancellor should understand the points of distinction and points of parity, and be able to sustain the initiatives that get launched
- The Chancellor should understand Tacoma’s relationship to the UW system, be excited about UWT in particular, love Tacoma, and understand and commit to the mission
- UWT should not be a stepping stone to some other position
- The Chancellor should have a vision about what we are growing to be that aligns with our current trajectory

Faculty are concerned about shared governance
- Faculty are partners in implementing the mission
The Chancellor should hold administrators at unit level accountable for faculty governance
A fine line exists between the autonomy of units and strong governance at all levels

Campus climate
- Some faculty feel less engaged and connected and protective of their own “fiefdom.” Morale is in freefall. This is especially a problem for faculty of color. Some of this is a reaction to slow or no action to improve the situation on diversity.
- Some faculty do not feel this pessimism and see things improving
- A leader needs to push for us to work together on mission; an internal focus is needed
- Clarity is needed about what scholarship means in an urban serving university
- Transparency at the unit and campus levels needs to improve.
- Climate has worsened around racism and sexism. Candidates should have a record of working with these.

Leadership qualities sought
- Someone who “walks the talk” and knows how to implement vision
- Listens and respects all
- Good decision maker
- Partnership builder
- Experience with multi-campus system in public higher education
- Understands financial aid problems and has been successful at tackling this issue
- Should be an inspiration, committed to community, willing to be a community leader
- Able to lead in time of growth
- Be a quick study to understand the unique value we have at UWT
- Able to communicate effectively across all constituencies on campus including lecturers, in the UW system, and in the Tacoma community
- Able to listen to diverse voices on campus, open up critical dialogues
- Have a vision and able to make hard choices.
- Must be realistic as well as optimistic. Can we count on growth in students that our growth goals are based on? Needs alternative ideas in case things don’t pan out.
- Committed to the campus values of Excellence, Diversity, Community and Innovation

Candidate qualifications
- Someone from outside higher education would have to understand it well and have a strong track record. Hard to see someone who doesn’t come from academia understanding academic issues, tenure issues
- Would a person outside Higher Ed be perceived as legitimate within the UW system?
- In some schools, the leader is simply a fundraiser and others run the school. UWT’s Chancellor needs to be an internal leader, to represent UW Tacoma externally, and to be leader in Tacoma and the region.