

DEAN'S PRESENTATION – FSS-REACH FACULTY BOARD, MAY 2 2019

I am especially pleased for the continued strong attendance to our Board meetings, and I am happy that the Principal has agreed to stay on for this discussion, so that he can get a sense of where our mind-set is as a Faculty.

In the next 20 minutes, I will offer:

- A proposed vision for the FSS
- A proposed structure and methodology to achieve the vision
- And then open the floor for dialogue

Colleagues, I want to focus today on transformation. As our Principal continues to reiterate, both in speech and action, a transformation of the way we do things as a University is a clear and present need.

I want to speak to you today about a vision for transforming the way we do things in the FSS. This dialogue must begin with a recognition of our strengths. The FSS is THE faculty with the expertise to execute successful change. We are THE leaders for social, political and economic thought, and for understanding human behaviour and human systems. We are the key advisors to the government and private sector on matters of policy and practice.

The FSS is the largest faculty in the UWI, and our presence and influence across the region is undeniably strong. So we need to pause to appreciate all our hard work and accomplishments.

Note, though, that our successes do not make us blind to challenges and opportunities for improvement. Colleagues, let us look into the future, imagine the FSS in the next 4 years, and put things in place to realize even more of our vast potential. Reflecting on my tenure over the past 9 months, and learning the breadth and depth of the faculty, it became clear to me that there are areas for improvement.

The university is facing undeniable financial constraints. The urgency to address our financial stability is clear. We urgently need to address resource conditions that impact our ability to be productive, to be comfortable at work, and to increase our efficiency and effectiveness.

Being in this role also allows me to hear the legitimate cries of students and staff. Data from past employee engagement surveys indicate that disengagement is higher than desired across the campus overall, and in our faculty as well, in areas such as co-worker relational environment, workflow efficiencies, performance management, leadership skills, trust and integrity, and growth opportunities including training opportunities. Colleagues, I propose to you that treating with engagement is an urgent matter.

Other reports indicated that leadership should be strengthened, that there should be more accountability, and that some administrative sections on the campus should be overhauled. We urgently need a new approach to talent management, performance management and human resource development.

Colleagues I am mindful of the urgency of these challenges but yet also hopeful, because WE are the faculty with the expertise to influence change.

Over the last semester and into the current one, the FSS has worked feverishly to understand some of the challenges, and to put measures in place to address them. Starting at Faculty Day 2018, we Dove In to the issues and out of that came an agreed set of initiatives, targets and implementation plans. Our strategic planning process was reinvigorated such that we have been able to present draft RAG reports to the Faculty Board on a monthly basis. We continue to refine our M&E process as we proceed.

Many accomplishments are to be celebrated since Faculty Day 2018:

General

- Strategic initiatives decided (some implemented)
- IR-SP Unit designed
- RAG reporting framework implemented - Monthly report on progress in implementation of Strategic Plan
- Operational Plan reporting template designed
- Faculty Office Restructuring commenced

More specifically in line with the objectives of the FSS Strategic Plan, under efforts to build:

Staff Morale

- Space Audit completed, repairs continuing, bathroom project being planned
- ATS Staff Recognition Project designed
- Inaugural Seminar for Professional Standards held
- Greater inclusion of WJC and CHTM
- Progress made towards standardization of service delivery across Main Campus, WJC and CHTM
- Increased transparency with respect to E&P – Lecturer rep on committee, documents circulated
- Response to Brereton Report and amendments thereto being prepared
- Monthly lunch for Standing Committee

Student Experience

- Research Student Refresher Series implemented
- Undergraduate Academic Advising Programme designed
- Increased access for students with disabilities
- CAPP Pilot Project in progress
- Tracking System for Research Student Progress partially designed

- FSS Public Square launched
- Seminar for Student Financial Literacy conducted
- 60 Computers received – 46 for labs
- Expansion of number of staff trained in FSSFO to support students' requests
- ASRS Process Work Flow completed

Research and Advocacy

- IR Project on Factors Affecting Research Productivity designed and submitted to Ethics Committee
- Financial support given to colleagues for research projects
- Departments have held numerous public forums
- Colleagues continue to participate in public discourse

Notwithstanding these achievements colleagues, that we all worked together to achieve, we can push harder, we can do more. I invite you to envision with me what the Faculty could look like in the next 3 years.

Imagine with me not just implementing solutions, but implementing a SYSTEM that allows us to detect problems better, and to anticipate problems, so that we can head them off, so that we can equip ourselves to be more aware of our environment, so that we can see from points of view that are commonly neglected or ignored.

We want to move beyond simply fighting fires. Why not increase our ability to systematically deal with problems, and even better, to deal with root causes rather than symptoms? Why not be more inclusive and far reaching in our search for new ideas, solutions and innovations?

Colleagues, I also put to you today that one of the root causes of some of the disengagement and siloed behaviours we observe in the FSS and across the campus is that we don't all buy in to a common vision that guides our daily work life, and operations, a common script if you will, that says how we all wish to DO our work and what we all wish to BE as employees.

Without us all strongly holding to shared core values and principles, and without modelling, measuring and reinforcing these principled behaviours, we are at risk for incoherence, poor collaborative efforts and inefficiencies. FSS REACH is a vision that can help us achieve sufficient commonality, without stifling diversity of perspectives.

I'd like us to consider REACH as a vision of where we could see the FSS in the next 3 years, and how we will get there in our day-to-day work life.

FSS REACH envisions a faculty that excels at:

- R – Realizing impact through research
- E – Exceeding the expectations of our students
- A – Actively advocating for inclusive, sustainable development
- C – Committed to be caring professionals

H – Harnessing our skills through continuous improvement and empowerment

With REACH we will all agree on who and what we value:

- We value our students – this means that we will strive to offer the very best services and programmes, and customer service
- We value knowledge and value creation – whether through high quality publications, presentations in the public sphere or programme interventions
- We value ourselves and those we work with – so that we feel inspired and supported in the presence of our colleagues, we count on each other to hold and be held accountable
- We value our region and our country – as we seek to contribute to sustainable development, to be actively engaged in enhancing the human experience
- We value efficiency, and adherence to policies and processes – knowing full well that there are too many silos, unstandardized and un-adhered to processes, and loopholes

With REACH we know who we want to be when we step unto the campus:

- Processional, respectful, caring
- Accountable and resourceful
- Motivated and engaged
- Innovative, creative and adaptable
- Leaders, facilitators and ambassadors
- Team players
- Continuous learners
- Prudent and ethical resource managers

None of this negates the mission, vision and values of the campus and university. Rather it reinforces them, and demonstrates how we in the FSS will align with the systems in which we are embedded.

When we all are REACHING, then we become even more professional and caring, we are happier to come to work because we know we are adding value, are appreciated and recognized, and part of a larger purpose. When we REACH then as a collective body, we strive to be better together, and as individual agents. When we REACH, it means that despite hierarchical structures, each voice is heard and valued, that we include all stakeholders, and we co-create and own our reality and future.

My call today is for us to REACH for a better, stronger FSS.

Having explained what the desired end state could look like, I'm sure you are curious as to how all of this can and will be achieved. Much thought has gone into drafting implementation plans to

achieve the desired change, while acknowledging that these will all be adjusted through an extensive and inclusive consultation process.

So the idea is that while the Strategic and Operational plans guide the Faculty as to what we are to be doing at those levels, REACH gives us a shared vision as to HOW we should be doing it.

In a nutshell, what is being proposed to help us achieve the FSS REACH vision includes:

- A newly established unit within the SSFO, called FSS CORE, for continuous improvement, organizational effectiveness and institutional research, led by a new position for Associate Dean for Strategic Planning and Institutional Research
- A reinvigorated approach to institutional research in strategic planning and decision-making, which integrates design thinking methodologies
- Operational improvements at the level of the DISCs – including strengthening of standard operating procedures and establishing workflows and processes
- Restructuring of the SSFO
- Talent management initiatives – including voluntary 360 degree leadership assessments, succession planning, leadership capacity building programmes, recognition and award system for ATS, and establishment of performance standards
- A culture change plan to entrench the new vision

Why are we emphasizing some of these areas for urgent attention?

Why design thinking for example? Design thinking from my layman perspective, is a problem-solving strategy with methodologies that help you to think outside of the box, to view different perspectives, and to put the user first. By its nature, it will facilitate more collaborative problem solving and more innovative strategic initiatives.

Why strategic planning infused with institutional research? Take for instance the challenge we have with classroom space and an increasing number of applications to our programmes? Better institutional research data on trends in applications and interests of applicants can help us to plan our resources and design innovative ways to offer programmes. Take other examples. What could make staff more engaged? What is the biggest obstacle to increasing research productivity? Without more than anecdotal evidence and suggestions, we might be limited in creating solutions.

We are proposing FSS CORE that has a specific mission and vision:

- The Vision is to transform the FSS into a congruently capable entity with a thriving culture of self-driven learning, collaborative inquiry and deep concern for humanity.
- The Mission is to drive the organizational and institutional effectiveness of the FSS through research and design-driven continuous improvement. We aim to provide relevant information to the FSS in the service of human-centered decision making, problem-solving, strategic planning and operational performance management.

FSS CORE's functions include:

- Managing the organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement process (O-CIM)

- Managing the institutional research process and ensuring that planning and decision making is informed by relevant data (I-RES)
- Preparing and disseminating all reports and research findings (FSS-REP)
- Managing the electronic database supporting institutional research and strategic planning (D-REP)

Organizational effectiveness and continuous improvement will inform the strategic planning process. However, and this is very important, we are currently not satisfied that enough voices are heard in the planning process.

We know there are many valuable ideas out there, and that many innovations are unrealized because some persons with the ideas don't see a means to get their ideas across or believe that 'the system' cares to hear. We therefore are building our strategic planning process to be more inclusive, and we are infusing design thinking methodologies to achieve this.

Not only does it encourage inclusivity, it breeds innovation and creativity. This kind of approach allows us to become more aware of different points of view, to step outside of our own mental models, and better meet the needs of our stakeholders.

While doing this, we do not abandon the value in also collecting data in more traditional ways, and therefore the institutional research findings will be integrated with the findings from design challenge explorations, and out of all the findings, the faculty can better determine its strategic initiatives. We are therefore 'Designing to connect continuous improvement with the human experience', through a Continuous Improvement by Design Model.

The FSS CORE OFFICE will be resourced with:

- Associate Dean for Institutional Research and Strategic Planning
- Planning Officer
- Administrative Support
- Opportunities to get involved – be associated with CORE for research, creating policies, conducting training, student volunteer system

It will be governed by:

FSS STANDING COMMITTEE

FSS CORE COMMITTEE

All of this will be achieved through a set of implementation plans and working groups. So it is envisioned that we will have a:

- TALENT MANAGEMENT FOR FSS REACH PLAN
- FSS CORE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
- FSS REACH CULTURE CHANGE PLAN
- OPERATIONAL IMPROVEMENT FOR FSS REACH PLAN
- Supported by Implementation Teams and working groups
- Timeframe: 4yrs overall

At the end of it all, if the vision is achieved, what would our reshaped FSS look like?

- The agreed on values, principles and identities are part of our lived reality
- DISC operations are improved through development of core process maps, and workflow diagrams
- A systematic procedure exists to prepare monthly operational plan reports for HODs
- Faculty Board and Standing committee receive regular, standardized reports that allow better tracking of performance
- The redesigned SSFO is more efficient and effective
- DISC office managers use Agile methods more regularly and frequently to manage operations and projects
- Leadership capacity in the faculty is enhanced by leadership development and succession planning programmes, 360 degree leadership assessments, and more collaborative interactions
- All staff benefit from participating in annual appraisals, performance conversations and individualized professional development plans
- Institutional research is embedded into our decision making processes

So, if we agree to carry this proposal forward, what are the critical next steps?

CONSULTATION is critical. We have already met with all the ATS staff on Feb. 14, then Standing Committee on April 23, and now with Faculty Board today.

Next is to conduct the DISC consultation, wherein the Dean and Heads will meet with individual departments and special stakeholder groups.

After we get the widest possible feedback and adjust the proposal accordingly, then we will have to establish the TEAMS, COMMITTEES and CHANGE AMBASSADORS to develop and execute the implementation plans. This, of course, will involve selection and training of key change ambassadors to facilitate implementation.

Determining resource needs will also be a critical step that we have to take in the near future. There needs to be a massive retraining effort in several areas: change management, SP, project management, agile methods, leadership and succession planning, performance management, design thinking, radical collaboration, programme evaluation, data base management, skill bank inventory, research methods.

Clearly therefore we will need to have a training budget. We will also have to make adjustments in the Faculty Office to ensure that the REACH effort receives adequate administrative support.

So, if we agree on this proposal, what are some of the milestones for you to look out for?

- FSS CORE established by June-July, 2019
- Begin strategic planning and design thinking workshops in July 2019
- Begin accepting IR proposals in July 2019
- Launch FSS REACH and Culture Competition, Faculty Day 2019

There is a lot more information to share, and details will be provided through a repository as well as during the consultations.

COLLEAGUES, I end with a few questions: Why not jump forward? Why not systematically equip ourselves to be better? The alternative is not acceptable. We must REACH for better.

I look forward to your feedback and crave your support.

Thank you.