

What we heard:

What we liked about past administrations and what we want in our next president

- Appreciate the bold statement about anti-racism and commitment to try to achieve the goal of an anti-racist university. The antiracist agenda was very brave.
- James Madison's president came from a background in student affairs, I would like to see the next president have a greater knowledge of students' struggles.
- We appreciated the double minority of our past president and her international connection.
- We liked the past administration's vision of the university being a leader in business, the community and in education with other institutions like JCPS. A connection to the community and the state of Kentucky is essential.
- We liked the enthusiasm of the past administration and the ability to connect to faculty/staff/students on an individual level; to be receptive.
- It is important that the past president was more accessible than other university presidents.
- I appreciate the fact that the past administration was less scandalous.

How would you like to see our administration support diversity and racial equity?

- What are we doing to accomplish the statement, we are an anti-racist university? Are we recruiting/hiring more minorities? We need the next university president to do more than just say it. Need to push the needle more.
- Want the next president to put a line in the budget for CARA
- We want the next president to look at the CARA report and hold people accountable for negative actions "Don't just give lip service", "be willing to ruffle some feathers".
- Push for more minority faculty and staff in leadership positions. Push for diversity.
- Robust funding for the incoming VPDE in the way of staff and budget as well as other diversity initiatives.
- We need to continue to explore the idea of our identity; we have forgotten our mission statement and access for students. We need to be the school for the community, moving the student body to more diversity, with more access for local students.
- Diversity is more than race issues and economic issues, understanding the university's place and [student] loans crisis. Are we serving our population that is coming from different backgrounds? Keeping tuition low and helping first generation students.

- Black female colleagues need to be supported. Compensate and recognize them. Let's do it boldly and proclaiming it. Embrace our identity, define it clearly and build it robustly.
- We need to provide the staff that is needed in the cultural center. As well as to provide finances.

Long term goals for the next president

- How will the next president look at other ways to compensate employees, besides higher salaries? More flexible schedules? Or true work from home positions? If you support the bottom of the university then all will rise. We are top heavy in our administration.
- A process for conducting exit interviews that captures authentic feedback (not the safe answers people tend to give so they don't burn bridges) so that problems can be addressed. Or perhaps a way for people to anonymously give a reason why they are looking in the first place. (MS Forms)
- Examine the grievance and formal complaints process, to be sure that people are taken seriously
- If CARA is not funded, it will not be possible to carry out the goals. There must be a commitment to fund CARA and to implement it.
- It is great to talk about being a great place to work but find ways to make it so. Making sure that the person who is chosen has the vision to make it real.
- The new leadership needs to move us into the transformative shift. Changing the culture of this institution.

Discussion around retention

- On the subject of retention – “listen to what we have to say” We have told you what it takes to make us a great place to work. “People don't go looking for a new job if they are happy in their current job”. (Toxic environments need real change) real change is in the CARA plan.
- Retention, listen to the employees who have left, hear them. We have heard some horrible things.
- The new leader needs to understand what is happening in the units. People are not looking [leaving] for a better institution, or another job when they are happy and are compensated properly. It is about low funding for research, inadequate compensation, toxic environments. Real change is needed.
- Retention, we have testimonies that employees are leaving for lack of compensation and support.

- The top administration is not focusing on keeping people safe. We are at the point of exodus of black faculty and staff but [they are] not listening people in the front line. Our physical plant is really tired of the decisions from the administration.

Discussion around compensation

- We see surveys about compensation studies, we want more transparency about the surveys and the feedback. Nothing is happening.
- If you support people in the bottom magic happens.
- I can also tell you that people will donate when somebody wants to do great things. I will support it myself.
- Junior faculty are more likely to stay if they get support and salary.

Questions to include in the search for the next president

- How would you make change in male/white dominated fields? (Law School, Speed School) What can these programs do to make sure women are supported as students and faculty? Is the SLP program working towards diversifying their student body, as the field is 90% white
- How do you plan to increase enrollment numbers in underrepresented minorities?
- Can we have a question about how they have improved retention at their institution in the interview and do they have a plan to improve retention?
- Compensation is woefully inadequate and needs to be addressed, not postponed until the Compensation Survey is completed. How does the next university president plan to address this disparity? We have spent a lot of money for getting rid of higher ups or giving admin annual bonuses, but we can't pay staff equitable wages.
- How does the next university president plan to support and advocate for our international student needs?
- Include questions about a retention plan [of the incoming president] in the interview process
- Ask the leaders who have taken on this task (CARA) what they need to feel that their labor has been supported, honored, and compensated.
- One more thing in the search for the president, can we say "this is done in other places, and it works we want to do it here"
- In the process to select the president; I think it is important that the community is invited. The search committee needs to be diverse.

Fears around the next presidential search

- Fear of returning to the status quo, traditional white man system of oppression and discrimination.
- We don't want to be a short stop along someone's career path

If there is one thing that CODRE should do as a result of this conversation, what would it be?

- More representation/input in the selection committee/transparency in that process
- Can there be more representation in the search committee?
- How can we have some influence?

Anonymous Posts from MS Office form

- If possible, can CODRE create an option to receive the newsletters via email?

Links to concerns that were shared

- [Another Educational Challenge COVID Has Revealed](#) Inside Higher Ed (Many caregivers—and single mothers in particular—have been forced to balance college, work and childcare in relative isolation with little support and few resources)
- [The President's View: Supporting Today's Students.](#) The Chronical of Higher Ed (how colleges can support first-generation students and others.)
- [More High-Profile College Presidents Are Leaving Office](#) Forbes We are not the only university having turnovers in upper administration. What can we learn from other universities facing the same challenges?

Are there other topics you would like to see discussed at future listening sessions?

- Understanding single parent students/faculty/staff during time of COVID
- Keeping student debt low
- How to address campus climate issues