

Objective

To describe activities among faculty, staff, and students in the School of Pharmacy (SOP) at the University of Connecticut (UConn) that help encourage faculty and staff value and appreciation.


Background

- Since returning in person after the pandemic members of the School reported a desire to reconnect with each other.
- The SOP instituted activities to encourage faculty and staff to feel valued and appreciated.
- Several groups across the SOP recognized the need to boost faculty and staff morale.
- Changes in morale were identified through annual surveys and evaluated during faculty and staff meetings.

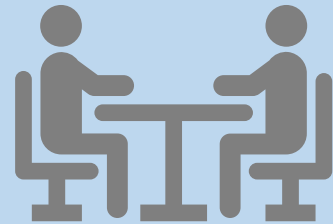
Methods

- The SOP supported committees to increase morale which included
 - Dean's Student Liaison Committee
 - Diversity Committee
 - Newly created Wellness Committee.
- The SOP Staff Enhancement Committee revised their Purpose to clearly define morale improvement events and growth opportunities for staff.
- The SOP leadership team placed a renewed focus on increasing engagement across all members of the School community.
- Information exchanged at Staff-Leadership monthly meetings.


Results

 During town hall meetings, students provide shoutouts to faculty and staff for going above and beyond.

 The Wellness Committee aims to provide events that interest ALL members of the community and brings us together. (Cornhole Tournament, Trip to the Dairy Bar, Teatime, etc.)

 Twice a year, faculty and staff gather to share in food and drink after the final faculty meeting of each semester.




 During Finals week, students can use their creativity to create a paper plate award which is presented to the faculty and staff.

-  Student – led Shoutouts
-  Wellness Committee Events
-  Bi-Annual Faculty & Staff Social Gatherings
-  Paper Plate Awards
-  Staff Enhancement Committee
-  Faculty & Staff Awards
-  Mental Health First Aid Training
-  Diversity Committee

 The Diversity Committee hosts events to celebrate the cultures of our students and staff.



 Faculty, Staff and Students have participated together in Mental Health First Aid Training.



 The Staff Enhancement Committee hosts an end of year employee recognition luncheon, facilitates professional development opportunities, leadership and team building workshops, faculty guest speakers and campus tours.



 Each year faculty and staff are nominated for a variety of School and University Awards.

Discussion

- Intentional focus on re-establishing a culture of support has proven to be successful.
- Successful activities require the engagement of all members of the School community, faculty, staff, students, and must be supported by the School's leadership.
- Providing variety of activities ensures that all members of the community are included.



Conclusion

- All UConn SOP members have been involved in a concerted effort to show faculty and staff they are appreciated.
- Value and appreciation of faculty and staff has become an institutionalized and enduring part of the SOP culture through
 - SOP's Strategic Plan,
 - Executive Leadership Committee,
 - A variety of standing faculty, student, and staff-led committees.
 - Ongoing elicitation of feedback from faculty and staff about SOP and culture.

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research presented.