



IMPROVING EFFECTIVENESS, ACADEMIC GROWTH AND COLLEGIALITY AMONG FACULTY

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**Supporting Success and Productivity:
Practical Tools for Making Your University
a Great Place to Work**

Survey of Faculty Managers

- All faculty managers and other members of academic staff (16 respondents including the Director of Learning Design, the Librarian, the Editor of course content and exam drafts, and two Programme Executives) were invited to participate. Fourteen out of the sixteen persons responded to the survey.
- The faculty managers were almost unanimous that the working from home option is a positive step toward better productivity and creativity.
- The survey revealed that the new hires were quite comfortable working from home and did not face any problem of isolation.
- The performance appraisals of faculty managers based in India and USA revealed high output in teaching, research and administrative assignments.

Parameters used for performance appraisal of faculty managers

S/No	Competencies/Behaviors
1	Pedagogy
2	Research
3	Community/Professional Service
4	Student Relationships
5	Achievement Orientation
6	Teamwork & Collaboration
7	Cost Consciousness
8	Flexibility & Adaptability
9	Integrity & Credibility
10	Professional Conduct & Presence
11	People Management
12	Leadership

Ratings in the PA form

Rating	Description
N	Did not Meet - Did not fulfil the minimal expectation of the set objective.
I	Room for Improvement - Did not fulfil all aspects of the objective; there is room for improvement.
M	Met - Did well and met the objectives as a whole.
E	Exceeded - Did very well and exceeded expectation as a whole.
FE	Far Exceeded - Did exceptionally well! A star performance.

Survey of Faculty Managers

- Half of the core faculty felt that the work load at U21Global is extremely high.
- The faculty managers appeared almost evenly divided on the five-point scale on the issue of work environment at U21Global being conducive to research and other creative activities.
- Half the faculty managers saw flexi-working hours needed further fine-tuning.
- The employee well-being initiatives at U21Global received a major boost with a solid majority (almost 80%) of the core faculty agreeing that, “Overall, the work environment at U21Global is extremely good”, with nobody disagreeing/ strongly disagreeing to it.

Survey of On-call Faculty

- 52 of the 92 on-call faculty members (56.5%) responded to the online survey.
- Taking a cue from the positive response of the faculty for statement 14 in table 5, a faculty community Wiki was launched at U21Global on 15th May, 2007.
- The Wiki contains four broad sections, each containing numerous pages of relevant content. These are: “About U21Global”, “Learning Resources”, “Research” and “Management Disciplines”.

Preliminary statistics relating to the usage of Faculty Community Wiki at U21Global

Statistic	Value
Total number of Wiki pages	180
Total number of hits at all pages in the Wiki	16,954
Average number of hits per Wiki page	94
Total number of hits on the main (home) page	8818
Total number of edits on the Wiki	3227
Average number of edits per Wiki page	18

Survey of On-call Faculty

- A blog for all faculty and students of U21Global has also been launched to share their ideas through announcements, new articles/ books and other areas of their interest.
- Encouraging responses to statement 5 in the table 5 led us to invite our faculty to give real-time webinars. Professor B Mahadevan of Indian Institute of Management Bangalore delivered his webinar in July, 07, while Dr. Mohan Agarwal, Dr. Barry Spiker and Dr. Dimitrios Koufopoulos are scheduled to deliver their webinars in the coming few months.
- There are already a couple of instances in which some faculty members stationed themselves at the U21Global Singapore headquarters during their sabbaticals to conduct joint research on online education (for example, Dr. Shanton Chang, University of Melbourne).

- **Experiment Two is a qualitative case analysis.**
- **Participants were on-call faculty meeting asynchronously and virtually in a discussion board and during a monthly Skype conference call.**
- **Data were gathered from multiple sources to include observations and documents (such as discussion board postings, emails, and notes taken during and after Skype meetings).**
- **The data enabled themes to emerge and allowed the researchers to make assertions about the case study as did Stake (1995).**
- **Four geographically dispersed faculty members were observed during this mini-study. One of the researchers acted as a participant and observer in this study.**

Number of posts per discussion topic on the “Connected Communication” discussion board

Discussion Topics	Number of Posts made
Introduction	1
What is new at U21G	10
Best Practices – Ideas	5
Technology	13
Training	2
Research Interests	7
Webinar Topics-Share your knowledge	0
Social Café	15
Total Posts	53

Participants	Number of Postings
Participant 1	19
Participant 2	15
Participant 3	2
Participant 4	7
Researcher	6

- Participants greatly appreciated this inclusionary approach for faculty.
- The discussion topics related to Technology and Social Café on the Connected Communication discussion board had the majority of posts.
- After analyzing content from discussion board postings, rich topics presented themselves, such as taking their interest in conducting research and questions of funding back to the U21Global Research Committee, or advising Human Resources and the Pedagogy and Assessment Committee about receiving regular teaching assignments.
- This experiment was a success, however, in large part because the researcher was also a participant linking with the participants via email and postings on the discussion board.

What was learned?

- Technology has made it feasible to create a virtual faculty community, which can be geographically dispersed and still connected with each other.
- Work-from-home option can provide better productivity and efficiency for faculty provided the performance appraisal systems set clear targets for the faculty to achieve and the performance is monitored on “the achievement of these targets” basis rather than time expended.
- Work environment does not necessarily mean faculty coming in physical contact with each other in the office.
- The on-call faculty can be integrated in the main stream activities of institutions beyond the conventional role of being an “adjunct”.
- A “connected faculty community” approach works best when small groups of faculty are engaged in a continual dialog with an active presence of a moderator.

What is replicable in other institutions?

- U21Global has successfully demonstrated that it is no more necessary for the faculty members of an institution to be within a physical campus for contributing academically and otherwise.
- This opens new vistas for conventional brick 'n' mortar institutions to rethink their existing physical classroom models by blending the same with online learning.
- It is no more imperative to bring the on-call faculty to a physical campus for delivering specialized inputs to students.
- The on-call faculty (adjuncts in common parlance) can be more easily involved in to the mainstream activities of conventional institutions by providing asynchronous platforms like the Wiki or blogs.
- Many institutions facing challenges to expand their physical infrastructure due to unprecedented student enrolments can rethink their strategy by allowing the work-from-home/ flexi-working hours option to its faculty.



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THANK YOU!