



# **Administrative Professional Council**

**Action Plan / SWOT Analysis**

**APC Executive Committee**

**2011-2012**

# **Administrative Professional Council Action Plan / SWOT Analysis 2011-12**

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## Summary

This document presents the action plan for the Administrative Professional Council based on the SWOT analysis. Under the guidance of Lorie Smith, APC members generated lists of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Appendix I). Committee members were then asked to analyze the intersections of these characteristics to determine what and how to pursue (strength-opportunity), attack (strength-threat), mitigate (weakness-opportunity) and avoid (weakness-threat). The APC Executive Committee compiled the results which are presented below. For reference purposes, a compilation of general input from members is presented in Appendix II. The general input was gathered mostly from the completed planning worksheets received from members at the annual retreat. Many of the goals outlined within this document are already in progress or under consideration. Progress toward these goals will be continually assessed by the committees and reported once per year in the form of an annual activity report prepared by the APC Executive Committee.

## Pursue (Strength-Opportunity)

- 1) Two great award programs (Distinguished AP and AP Stars) already in place – great opportunities for recognizing APs. (Awards Committee)
  - Goal: Continue tradition with persistent pursuit of quality nominations by using our diversity of experience to think of new and different ways to promote the awards.
- 2) Rapid dissemination of information – boosting the image of APC. (Communications Committee)
  - Goal: Distribute a revised and enhanced APC newsletter.
- 3) Good membership representation, expertise, and commitment – working on a relevant and positive employment topic. (Employment Committee)
  - Goal: Proposal to Revise Flextime Policy
- 4) Influence to bring about change and avenues of influence – branding and boosting the image of APC. (Nominations & Elections Committee)
  - Goal: Since the APC spans across the university and has many avenues to reach people individually through its representatives, each representative will be tasked with a specific outreach type of event to educate constituents about the APC.
- 5) University-wide coverage and influence – opportunity to promote initiatives. (Service & Outreach Committee)
  - Goal: Promote “Commitment to Campus” opportunities for employees.

## Attack (Strength-Threat)

- 1) Two great award programs – loss of some credibility due to low number of nominations. (Awards Committee)
  - Goal: Leverage our big volunteer pool to help market and “re-brand” the awards (especially the AP Stars) to increase the number of quality nominations which will result in award programs gaining credibility.
- 2) Established organization – lack of awareness of APC. (Communications Committee)
  - Goal: Continue using email to advertise AP events and produce related printed material to be posted on bulletin boards by APC members in their areas. Expand advertising of "Commitment to Campus" opportunities.
- 3) Membership on university committees – unclear procedures as to how APC ought to propose and route new or updated policies. (Employment Committee)
  - Goal: Ensure vacancies on university committees are promptly filled with best candidates; establish communication link back to APC; identify and document avenues to affect change (e.g. Office of Compliance and Policy); and maintain rapport and communications with other councils and committees.
- 4) Influence to bring about change and avenues of influence – lack of awareness, credibility, support and/or legitimacy of APC from managers and supervisors. (Nominations & Elections Committee)
  - Goal: Since the APC spans across the university and has many avenues to reach people individually through its representatives, we would like to see each representative be tasked with a specific outreach type of event to educate constituents about the APC.
- 5) Capacity to elevate awareness on campus – limited brand awareness of APC. (Service & Outreach Committee)
  - Goal: Increase APC branding levels to elevate awareness of APC across campus in collaboration with other committees (i.e. Communications, Awards, etc.)

## Mitigate (Weakness-Opportunity)

- 1) Low number of award nominations – expand the nomination pool (Awards Committee)
  - Goal: Simplify the nomination process by creating an online nomination process; publicize nomination opportunities more; recognize all nominees in some way.
- 2) Lack of visibility – diverse experience. (Communications Committee)
  - Goal: Follow up the APC newsletter with an "AP Profiles" email to highlight an AP in action at CSU. Add a hover-over pop-up on the APC members web page that briefly describes the person's job and professional interests at CSU.
- 3) No clear screening mechanism on issues/topics to pursue and limited comprehensive knowledge – add more members on employment committee. (Employment Committee)
  - Goal: Add members to standing committee and/or create ad hoc committees to effectively address specific issues/topics; review Work-Life II Committee Report and the “Great Places to Work” to identify employment issues/topics; determine

current data/survey sources; design a specific survey for APC purposes; enhance method of documentation retention (e.g. Google Docs); enhance method of communication to provide status updates to other committees to avoid duplicate efforts and to pursue partnerships amongst committees.

- 4) Lack of investment (e.g. difficulty filling membership vacancies) – overall support of university administration. (Nominations & Elections Committee)
  - Goal: Since we have the support of University Administration, APC will encourage more explicit statements of support for APC participation in a public manner so that APC can reference it when trying to recruit new members.
- 5) Lack of committee integration – partner with other committees. (Policy & Procedures Committee)
  - Goal: Enhance method of documentation retention (e.g. Google Docs); enhance methods of communication to provide status updates to other committees to avoid duplicate efforts and to pursue partnerships amongst committees.
- 6) Minimal involvement and recognition of APC by research-based APs (Research Associates, etc.) – opportunity to tap into the expertise and experience of this large group of employees. (Service & Outreach Committee)
  - Goal: Use “Commitment to Campus” initiatives to increase dialogue with these APs.

### **Avoid/Seek Help (Weakness-Threat)**

- 1) Training of new committee members – delayed start of the award nomination process. (Awards Committee)
  - Goal: Leverage experience of senior committee members to orient new members long before the due dates for nominations.
- 2) APC power and effectiveness – perception of lack of influence. (Communications Committee)
  - Goal: Better publicize the annual APC Activity Report, council meeting minutes and "interesting metrics" that demonstrate the APC evolution (shared governance, SPARC committee representation, etc.)
- 3) No formal vote on changes to the Faculty/AP Manual and sometimes limited opportunity to comment – revisions to the Manual often directly impact AP's. (Employment Committee)
  - Goal: Request that any changes to the Manual or other policy that may affect APs be vetted by the Employment Committee or other standing committee prior to action by the Executive Committee or a vote of the Council.
- 4) Lack or non-existent supervisor support of APC participation and time commitment – job security, lack of time, doing more with less, guilt or threat of guilt for being part of APC. (Nominations & Elections Committee)
  - Goal: It is a fact of the times we are living in that many of us have been tasked with doing more with fewer resources as a part of our normal job. Thus, the employee and the supervisor may not feel that they can take on additional

responsibilities by saying yes to participation in the APC. The most we can do is educate those individuals about a realistic estimate of the time it takes to be involved with APC. We have to realize that we are going to lose people or get denials of participation simply because of the time we are in. A small step toward defeating this is to invite more people to serve in limited capacities (e.g. committee work only, helping work a booth, helping during an outreach event, etc.)

- 5) Question our overall power/effectiveness to influence and affect change – complacency. (Policy & Procedures Committee)
  - Goal: Direct efforts inward to draft proposed revisions to the APC Constitution and APC Manual Rules & Procedures.
- 6) Venting at APC meetings regarding lack of veto power of revisions to AF/AP Manual – threat of wasted time and effort engaging in counter-productive dialogue.
  - Goal: Redirect any negative discussion regarding the perceived lack of control to revisions of the AF/AP Manual.

## Appendix I: SWOT List Items Compiled from APC Retreat

### STRENGTHS

- Diversity of experience
- University-wide coverage
- University-wide participation
- Large number of APs @ CSU
- Big volunteer pool
- Established organization
- Credibility & reputation
- Influence to bring about change - avenues of influence:
  - Relationships with other members of APC, Faculty Council, Classified Personnel Council, other CSU employees, the administration
- Rapid dissemination of information
- Organized structure
- Balanced mix of new and returning members
- Fairly secure source of annual funding

### WEAKNESSES

- Lack of Visibility of the APC and who/what it does
- Lack of investment (e.g. difficulty filling membership vacancies on university committees/panels)
- Question our overall power/effectiveness to influence and affect change
- No veto vote on changes/additions to the Faculty/AP Manual
- Lack of continuity of leadership/members (e.g. brand-new Chair and Vice Chair vs. phasing in roles; 16 new members this fall)
- Lack or non-existent supervisor support of APC participation and time commitment
- Lack of representation of research-based and off-campus APs
- Lack of background among members on a variety of issues/concerns about ability to effectively interpret and vote on action items
- Lack of expertise in all subject matters at decision-making meetings (i.e. how would you know unless it was your job or you had direct experience with the topic?)

- Lack of committee integration (e.g. two or more committees working on the same issue or initiative without knowledge/coordination of efforts)
- Not willing to try again – we tried this before
- Communication within APC to campus constituencies and integration of new people on council/area

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

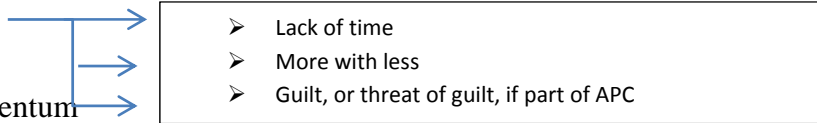
- Commitment to Campus – suggest ways to enhance this program. Opportunity to get upper administration buy-in
- Suggested that our budget for administrative support be redirected toward promotional expenses for the APC...table tents, advertising, marketing, etc.
- Encourage morale-building for employees across campus
- Pursue benefits to all CSU employees
- Provide grants for family benefit coverage for those employees who can't afford it. Funding could come from donations to the AP foundation account; offer payroll deductions
- Deliver a campaign to promote APs throughout campus. Suggest a toolbox of ideas that each rep or area could use for reaching out to constituents (e.g. potlucks, introductions at department meetings, profiles in Today@ColoState, profiles in the newsletters)
- Reach out to other Colorado AP Councils. Establish a statewide liaison council
- Branding – Boosting the image of APC
- Growing the APC relationship with Faculty Council even further
- Overall support of University Administration
- More formal assessment of AP needs/survey
- Review existing surveys on campus
- Value differences

## **THREATS**

- Lack of awareness, credibility, support, and/or legitimacy of APC from mid-management and supervisors
- Perception – lack of visible/invisible diversity (i.e. identities, roles and statuses)
- Institutional argument – “We tried this years ago and it didn't work.” (prototyping vs. not prototyping)
- Complacency – complicit in comfort
- Shared governance and possible changes - re: classified staff and faculty
  - Public shared identity as APC/CSU
  - Public perception of cohesion
- Lack of awareness from other APs about APC as a whole



- Soiled effects
- Consistency
- Funding
- Politics – state level (no to little support)
- Job security
- Recession
- Time and momentum
- Lack of awareness throughout university and larger communities
- Connected to communication which is typically very top down
- Lack of policy consistency (e.g. leave benefits, FLEX time, education and implementation of these)



## **Appendix II: Planning Worksheet Input Compiled from APC Retreat**

**What do you feel are top priorities for APC to address during the 2011/2012 academic year?**

- Support Green Transportation from main campus to foothills campus. Do you know how hard it is to get a parking spot if you go out to foothills and come back to main campus?
- More visibility of what we are and especially what we do
- Work toward more 'perks' for all faculty/staff in these times of low motivation
- Improved operations efficiency campus-wide – interdepartmental processes, centralization or no centralization, etc.
- Campus and community outreach
- Campus and community service projects
- Mentoring programs
- Morale
- Visibility and profile staff
- Leave bank
- Parking with construction
- Benefit meeting
- Checklist when you get hired

**What ideas do you have for increasing visibility of APC on campus?**

- Short sleeve polo shirts with APC on them
- CSU t-shirts with reference to APC on them
- Continue the coffee breaks but make them more visible by sending individual invitations rather than just putting the information in FYI
- Increase input in the new employee orientation
- Find ways to encourage people to attend APC

- Any kind of revamp to current marketing efforts would be beneficial
- Profiles of APC's - each member's work is so different. Could run in APC Newsletter, Today@CSU, etc.
- Unified (meaning all APC's working together) service projects
- Sponsor events on campus
- Host fun contests or booths at major campus events
- Help university plan events – create volunteer database
- Be present and involved in major university events (ask questions about where AP's can be most helpful)
- Welcome gift when start
- Anniversary acknowledgements

**What ways do you feel APC can work toward improving the role of shared governance on campus?**

- Meet as one group
- A lot has been done the last few years in this area – thank you Kathy and Courtney. I think this is very important but maybe we just need to make it more solid rather than taking on more right now
- Encouraging an atmosphere where all colleges and faculty/staff feel free to share information, resources, ideas, etc. rather than continuing in a bit of a silo
- Help reduce the unnecessary layers currently used with a variety of different processes – things have to run through entirely too many people and/or departments before moving forward; we need to encourage nimbleness
- Meeting regularly with other groups and on committees that might be doing similar work or have similar concerns
- Supporting the creation of a special and temporary faculty council. This may have been added in some capacity to Faculty Council?

## **What ideas do you have for making recommendations to CSU Administration regarding employment, benefit, and morale issues?**

- Allow Research Associates and Research Scientists to get their promotions and raises. Faculty/ AP's and State Classified are separate when it comes to Health Insurance. We are all CSU employees.
- Parking could be improved – whether in reduction for campus parking permit, or construction of a north-side parking garage with permits given to faculty/staff, or some other benefit
- Address campus inequities where they exist: in terms of facilities, salaries, staff, access to technology, terms of employment, etc.
- Self-regulation: understand more about internal concerns/desires of AP's (continue surveys)
- Co-host fun events to raise morale – something with Commitment to Campus? Golf tournament?
- Intra-college support systems
- Meetings of departments across campus (development, communications)
- Faculty tailgates

## **Miscellaneous (from flip chart sheets from retreat)**

- Change policy for Research Associates – re: structure, advancement (by college), \$ loss
- APC at level of Faculty Council by involvement and specific goals / commitment
- Technology to reach out to off-campus AP's (Land Grant Mission)
- Improve mid-level support for AP involvement – leverage Amy's support
- Actively pursue our informal opportunities to network. Tie initiating with stakeholder needs for leverage
- Find ways to get input from our areas – for better visibility and influence
- Pick an issue (e.g. flex time) and put support from all committees behind it
- Bring experts to decision making table
- Remote participation from off-site AP's

- Picture of representative to area
- Create a comprehensive communication plan (marketing and brand)
- Toolkit great idea to provide to reps, but they need to use it