UMR Staff Gathering

On August 12, 2015, members of the UMR staff community gathered to engage in a meaningful dialogue around the following goals:

- **exploring** best practices for managing change; that is, those practices that best support the UMR Vision in this state of development as well as our own flourishing;
- **enhancing** clarity and shared expectations regarding key priorities, initiatives, and challenges for the coming academic year;
- **optimizing** UMR Vision-driven interaction with intentional practices to enhance excellence, efficiency, trust, collaboration, critical reflection, dialogue, and problem solving; and
- **constructing** a shared understanding of the type of community we intend to create so that processes and habits of interaction can reflect that shared understanding.

"When you think of a fierce conversation, think passion, integrity, authenticity, collaboration. Think cultural transformation."

Schedule of the Day

8:45  Continental Breakfast  
9:00  Welcome and Overview of the Day  
9:15  Circle Check-in  
10:40  Resiliency and Self-Care During Change  
11:40  Governance at UMR  
11:50  Two Loops - A Theory of Change  
12:00  Lunch  
12:45  Cynefin Framework - Making Sense of Complexity  
1:05  Cafe Conversations and Harvest  
2:45  Individual Reflection  
2:50  Closing  
3:00  Adjourn

Facilitators

Rosie Barry and Jen Mein  
Leadership and Talent Development  
Office of Human Resources

Sponsor

Lori J. Carroll  
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Student Development

Letter from the Hopi Elders

You have been telling people that this is the Eleventh Hour, now you must go back and tell the people that this is the Hour. And there are things to be considered…

Where are you living?  
What are you doing?  
What are your relationships?  
Are you in right relation?  
Where is your water?

Know your garden.  
It is time to speak your truth.  
Create your community.  
Be good to each other.  
And do not look outside yourself for your leader.

Then he clasped his hands together, smiled, and said, This could be a good time! There is a river flowing now very fast. It is so great and swift that there are those who will be afraid. They will try to hold on to the shore. They will feel they are being torn apart and will suffer greatly. Know the river has its destination. The elders say we must let go of the shore, push off into the middle of the river, keep our eyes open, and our heads above the water.

And I say, see who is in there with you and celebrate.  
At this time in history, we are to take nothing personally, least of all ourselves. For the moment that we do, our spiritual growth and journey come to a halt.

The time of the lone wolf is over. Gather yourselves! Banish the word ‘struggle’ from your attitude and your vocabulary. All that we do now must be done in a sacred manner and in celebration.

We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.  

--Hopi Elders’ Prophecy, June 8, 2000
Circle Harvest Poem

Jen Mein

Sitting in circle to listen with attention
and speak with intention - weaving connections
by sharing taglines and stories of all kinds

UMR friends, this is a little story about us.

We value being...
   passionately curious,
   lovingly reliable,
   faithful,
   authentic,
   humble,
   and quietly efficient.

We are...
   problem solvers,
   compassionate hackers,
   student developers,
   policy and procedure navigators,
   sensitive interpreters,
   idealist realists,
   positive motivators, and
   swimmers…. or not.

You know we are UMR by how we do our work,
we...

   bring passion,
   get up and go,
   maximize relationships,
   do onto others as we want done to us,
   work collaboratively to achieve goals,
   embrace the future,
   don't judge because everyone has a story,
   help others find solutions,
   make a positive impact on student success,
   never let it rest until our good is better
   and our better is best,
   do what we say we will do,
   bring out the unlimited potential in others,
   and build positive relationships

... we are more than a tagline, Boom!
A Model to Help Understand Change

Models show us that change is a predictable process. This is a view of how our emotions are impacted by change. It outlines what to expect.

One thing to focus on is the vision – which helps to bring you out of the pit. It might be that there is no clear overall vision – then you have to clarify for yourself what your vision is for yourself.

*Adapted from Spencer, S and Adams, John A. (2002) Life Changes*

Your Brain Is Like a River

Think of the stream bed as the paths in your brain at birth. The water or the neural activity in your brain will follow the stream bed, but just as the water impacts the stream bed, so does your neural activity impact the circuits in your brain.

So this means that what you look at and what you think will impact the brain as it is develops. If you think about something all the time, that stream bed in your brain will be more firmly etched. Expect the worst and you’ll never be disappointed. We can build new paths by thinking new thoughts.

Applying Neuroscience Concepts

The S.C.A.R.F. (Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness, and Fairness) model captures the common factors that can activate a reward or threat response in social situations. This model can be applied in any situation where people collaborate in groups, including all types of workplaces, educational environments, family settings and general social events.
Two Loops: A Theory of Change

A model that is helpful in describing a living systems view of change comes from the work of Margaret Wheatley and the Berkana Institute. It tells the story of how systems die and new systems emerge. It happens at every scale so this model can easily be used as a map of ideas, of a community, an organization or large systems like the fossil fuel economy or higher education.

https://vimeo.com/17907928

Cynefin Framework: Making Sense of Complexity

Cynefin, pronounced ku-nev-in, is a Welsh word that signifies the multiple factors in our environment and our experience that influence us in ways we can never understand. This framework can help us sense which context we are in so that we can make better decisions and avoid problems that arise when we approach all situations the same way.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7oz366X0-8
What do we need to name in order to recognize how UMR is functioning as a community to support innovation in higher education?

- Student-centered
- Just Ask, Student Success Coaches
- Capstone
- iSEAL
- Involvement
- Community of support
- Integrated curriculum and teams
- Connection and collaboration
- Leadership accessibility
- Research
- Niche audience
- Alumni
- Challenging environment (collectively)
- Technology

How do we nourish UMR by illuminating what emerges, composting what no longer serves, and building bridges to our new future?

**Illuminate**
- Be positive
- Celebrate successes
- Space to publicly recognize and celebrate others
- Impromptu gatherings
- Connect Innovators — Strategizers — Do-ers
- Personal Space and Collaboration Space

**Compost**
- Negative attitudes
- Current communication channels - not working
- Acknowledge what worked, learn from the past
- Embrace change
- Context, want to understand why
- No b***h sessions
- Pretty old school for a new school - identify old school structures that do not serve us

**Build Bridges**
- Communication - two-way, people-focused, evidence of being listened to
- Cross-train
- Promote communication
- Have a collective voice, “We”
- Elicit input before decisions are made
- Take time to reflect, push reset

What possibilities - realized or potential - should we explore to foster stronger relationships to create a healthier community at UMR?

- Better communication, listen, trust
- Graceful change
- Overall wellness of employees
- Student-Staff connections
- Physical space to build relationships - staff lounge/break room, potlucks
- Bottom-up decision-making
- Support governance
- Assume positive intent
- Know to understand
- Connect idea people with those who can implement ideas
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Continue Your Fierce Conversations

1) **Master the courage to interrogate reality.** No plan survives its collision with reality, and reality has a habit of shifting, at work and at home…[Changes] require shifts in strategy.

2) **Come out from behind yourself into the conversation and make it real.** While many fear “real,” it is the unreal conversation that should scare us to death. Unreal conversations are expensive, for the individual and the organization…[we] will accomplish our goals in large part by making every conversation…as real as possible.

3) **Be here, be prepared to be nowhere else.** Our work, our relationships, and our lives succeed or fail one conversation at a time. While no single conversation is guaranteed to transform a company, a relationship, or a life, any single conversation can….Participate as if it matters. It does.

4) **Tackle your toughest challenges today.** Burnout doesn’t occur because we’re solving problems; it occurs because we’re trying to solve the same problem over and over. The problem named is the problem solved. Identify and then confront the real obstacles…

5) **Take responsibility for your emotional wake.** …there is no trivial comment. Something you don’t remember saying may have had a devastating impact on someone who looked to you for guidance and approval. The conversation is not about the relationship; the conversation is the relationship. Learning to deliver the message without the load allows you to speak with clarity, conviction, and compassion.