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Academic Affairs Update September 1, 2017

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Academic Affairs Weekly Update | September 1

Office of Academic Affairs

Fri 9/1/2017 4:18 PM

To: Campus Communication <campus-communication@plymouth.edu>;

Dear Colleagues:

Compared to where we were at the start of last year, it's amazing to hear the conversations we're having around cluster leadership teams! Following University Days, which engaged over 300 of your colleagues, Cluster Day brought together faculty and staff to make connections and move us forward. We've collected a brief update from each cluster on how Monday went, what was accomplished, and future meetings. While each cluster is at a different point in development, we thought it important to share a view of each:

- **Arts & Technologies:** With 32 attendees, a plan for the academic year ahead was developed with an action list and several working groups. As a team, the cluster gathered a list of helpful information about what folks are thinking related to clusters and implementation. Goals were explored for the year ahead and working groups were organized around communication, leadership design, and cluster engagement with potential for future groups, as needed. The cluster will be meeting on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 4 p.m.
- **Education, Democracy & Social Change:** At the end of the last academic year, ED&SC realized that though a cluster vision statement was written, the majority of members did not have a clear operating vision as a cluster or the type of work to engage in. For Cluster Day, ED&SC engaged in a series of tasks to articulate personal strengths and collaborative preferences, ways of effectively engaging with a group, possibilities for cluster work, and how to understand the name of the cluster. These activities helped establish a shared understanding of identity and how to work best together. Attention was then directed on the strengths, priorities, and aspirations of individual programs. This activity deepened the vision of the type of work to engage in and ways to support one another. A great deal of data was collected as well as clear next steps. Meetings will be held the 4th Wednesday of each month from 3:30-5 p.m.
- **Exploration & Discovery:** The E&D cluster reviewed a new leadership structure proposal that was prepared over the summer and came to consensus on elements of the cluster administrative organization that were most important to members. A small team is taking the results of the group discussion and improving on the emerging plan. In addition to work on E&D leadership and administrative structures, members also engaged in a short exercise designed to explore different research, teaching, and service interests in order to facilitate future interdisciplinary collaborations across the diverse cluster.
- **Health & Human Enrichment:** The day began with sharing of cluster project stories and experiences followed by a conversation of HHE moving forward; attributes, challenges, synergies, student experience, and success. The group brainstormed strategies for essential needs of cluster leadership, accreditation, and communication systems and who would be responsible for cluster administration in the immediate future.
- **Innovation & Entrepreneurship:** The I&E Cluster was attended by 40 faculty and staff members. During the day, the group dedicated time to developing community by learning about each other as individuals and how they work within a team environment. As a result, they drafted a set of norms that will be further revised based on the group's feedback and input and began to examine the mission statement and what it means to them. Armed with input from the group conversation, a representative sub-group will continue to work on the mission with hopes of returning to the larger group with a mission that resonates with all cluster stakeholders.

- **Justice & Security:** The goal for J&S was to establish the Cluster Leadership Team based on the members' review and revision of roles and responsibilities through collaborative activities. The day included exercises to better understand the talents and interests of faculty in the cluster. After reflection on the meeting's activities and results, members self-nominated or nominated other FT faculty members for the leadership roles based on the talents, qualities, reactions, and interests of the cluster members. Overall, the cluster worked to collectively foster an understanding of the bigger picture, transitioning from departments to a unified Integrated Cluster. The next cluster meeting is set for October 3rd at 8:00 a.m.
- **Tourism, Environment & Sustainable Development:** Cluster Day was well attended and began with a review of the draft leadership team design (Conceptual Schema). A portion of the day was spent discussing release time for various positions, aiming to reduce the net number of course releases, down from the current 8 for the two chairs of the two departments: Environmental Sustainability & Planning and Social Science. The cluster also disseminated a draft of the bylaws, which explain the details of the Conceptual Schema, and asked for comments before sharing with the full TESD membership by September 20th. The cluster will meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. in Bradford Room, beginning September 27th.

Finally, as the campus migrates to campus.plymouth.edu, so does the [Clusters Website](#), with a new look, and improved content flow. More information on the sections of the website will be explored in the Transformation Update in September.

Sincerely,

The Academic Dean Team