

Skunkworks launch --

"I am pleased to announce a very special "trial" initiative this year. During our retreat a week or two ago whereby over 30 staff and faculty participated over the day, I reaffirmed the need for continuous improvement by increasing efficiencies, increasing enrollment and thereby revenue and making headway to 40/40/20, developing those collaborative initiatives and new programming modes that will, again, serve Oregonians well to compete in a global economy. The new trial initiative, broadly defined, is to provide availability of \$40 K which Eric Yahnke, VP for Finance and Administration, has now budgeted for skunkworks projects that can be used with a minimum of bureaucracy with the goal of developing window of opportunity initiatives. (Ever hear the term skunkworks? It's often used in private business research settings and refers to promoting innovation and change with a minimum of bureaucracy). Like a venture capital fund, some projects may fail, but some will succeed and yield great results for our students and Oregonians. That's what we are counting on. Provost Scheck and Deans Monahan and Girod will quickly establish the expectations and process for this and I wish you the very best in developing your ideas; particularly ideas promoting academic change benefiting Oregonians."

--President Mark Weiss, September 17, 2014

Dear faculty and staff,

As per President Weiss' announcement, the deans and I have drafted criteria for initiatives that will be considered for skunkworks funding.

To keep it simple,

- Proposed action(s) should directly link to one or more of the following:
 - Creation of new student enrollment streams
 - Increased impact on student retention
 - Improved efficiency of student progress toward degree completion
 - Long-term improvement of student learning outcomes
- Pre-Proposals are limited to a two-page maximum description of intended outcome(s) and budget justification. If approved, further supportive information, if necessary, may be requested.
- Proposed action(s) should lead to sustainable, long-term changes in university programs, practices or policies.
- Proposed action requires one-time launch funding and does not commit the university to continued funding in order to sustain said activity. If activity results in new students, costs of accommodating such students are outside the skunkworks initiative.
- Collaborative efforts across programs and departments is encouraged.

Pre-Proposals will be reviewed by the Academic Affairs Leadership Group (Monahan, Girod, McKiel, Stonecipher, McDonald, Clark, McGrew, Scheck) at its November 12th meeting. Proposals should be emailed to Kathy Hill no later than November 7.

Please direct any questions about the process to your academic deans or myself.

Steve Scheck, Provost

10/3/2014

Vice President for Academic Affairs
