BACKGROUND
The Strengthening Our Community Engagement (SOCE) task force was created in March 2016 at the recommendation of the President’s Executive Cabinet in concurrence with Academic Council and the Academic Governance Chair. The work of the Task Force was to begin in Spring 2016 and to be completed by the end of Fall 2016.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE
• SOCE has met five times: April 11, April 22, April 29, June 23, July 12 and conducted numerous interactions via email.
• SOCE began by generating themes of inquiry for the Task Force to consider.
• SOCE agreed that a “one and done” approach will not work. Ongoing, systematic gathering of feedback from the community on workplace satisfaction, student satisfaction, and campus climate is essential.
• SOCE established a goal to generate and distribute a short scoping survey by end of Spring 2016.
• SOCE researched and reviewed survey instruments from other institutions, which served as points of discussion for developing a scoping survey appropriate for ESF.
• SOCE developed a scoping survey that invited respondents to comment on various aspects of the campus workplace, to express concerns, and to offer suggestions for improvement. The survey included Likert-scale questions with opportunities for further comment.
• The scoping survey was distributed via a link to an online survey site (Qualtrics) to faculty, administration, staff, and students on May 09, 2016. Closing date for responses was May 29, 2016.
• SOCE Co-Chair Doug Johnston presented a progress report to Academic Governance on May 12, 2016.
• SOCE Co-Chairs Doug Johnston and Benette Whitmore presented a progress report to the Board of Trustees on May 13, 2016.

SCOPING SURVEY
The scoping survey was designed to provide the ESF community with an opportunity to express perspectives on various aspects of the campus workplace. Survey results would provide a starting point for further work of the SOCE. The intention was to create a simple survey that would be easy to complete while addressing topics raised in the original charge to the Task Force.

Questions from the scoping survey focused on:
• Communication
• Trust
• Collegiality
• Responsiveness
• Suggestions for improvement

The scoping survey is not intended to draw conclusions but to inform the campus community. The Task Force encourages the ESF community of students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees and others to review the survey response and discuss them with peers, colleagues, supervisors.

The scoping survey was developed as a single survey to go to the ESF community of students, faculty, and staff. As such, different topics may have different levels of importance to different groups within ESF. Therefore we have broken out the responses and generated separate reports for undergraduate students (full and part time), graduate students (full and part time), staff (UUP, CSEA, and others) and faculty (tenured, untenured, non-tenure track, emeriti). A small number of responses (11) did not indicate their affiliation and are included as a separate group.

The scoping survey had 453 completed responses. When looking at the responses it is important to recognize the significance of response rates. For example, of the 1658 undergraduate students registered in Spring of 2016, 179 completed surveys, or 11%. We cannot say whether the responses are representative of the views of ESF undergraduate students in general. This needs to be taken into consideration when interpreting responses. There were a total of 1,547 discrete comments and suggestions from the survey. Synthesis of these comments is ongoing and will be reported later. The number of comments and suggestions recorded for each question is reported.

CURRENT and FUTURE PLANS

• SOCE is currently processing a voluminous amount of written comments from scoping survey and will report back to campus in August 2016.
• SOCE will determine next steps, based on results.
• By the end of Fall 2016, SOCE will make recommendations on actions and report to campus community.

Other Possibilities for Inviting Input from Campus Community:
- Administer focused survey(s) in Fall 2016.
- Hold listening sessions in Fall 2016.

CHARGE TO THE TASK FORCE
The purpose of the Strengthening Our Community Task Force is to identify existing concerns within the ESF community, design opportunities for input and communication, and gather and generate ideas for solutions and positive steps forward. The overall focus of the SOCE initiative is to heal divisions within the College, and to find common ground on which the future success of ESF may be built. The Task Force will be an essential component of this initiative.

The Task Force is not expected to carry out engagement activities, but rather to develop a plan of action that identifies the number and kinds of engagements that hold promise to directly address concerns, to build bridges of understanding, and to improve relationships. For instance, the Task Force could recommend to the President and College specific meetings, events, or activities by which concerned individuals and groups may be constructively engaged in dialog and communication.

Suggested areas of inquiry for SOCE include:

- Communication
- Decision-making (including shared decision-making, shared governance, and role clarification, and in conjunction with other governance and decision-making bodies within the College)
- Diversity and inclusion (in conjunction with new College Diversity Committee and others)
- Financial needs (includes engagement with other College groups working on this issue)
- Leadership
- Morale
- Planning
- Recognition (of faculty, staff, and students)
SOCE TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP
Composition of the 15-member SOCE Task Force includes representatives from various constituencies at ESF (i.e., faculty, administration, staff, and students). Members are:

Co-Chairs
Doug Johnston
Benette Whitmore

Executive Cabinet
Brenda Greenfield
Mark Lichtenstein

Faculty
Neal Abrams
Margaret Bryant
John Castello
Jack Manno

Graduate Student
Helene Rainville

Physical Plant and Facilities
Andrew Criss

Quality of Work Life Committee
Thomas LeRoy

Professional Staff (UUP)
Laura Crandall
Dave Kiemle

Staff, Other (CSEA)
Teri Frese

Undergraduate Student
Erika Sykes