



Cannoli and Case Studies

COACHE Strategy Workshop August 2024

Case Study 1

Story Street University recently made the decision to become a partner in the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Study. Prior to joining COACHE, the university only collected data through an in-house instrument implemented by the faculty collective bargaining unit. The old survey was designed by Professor Q who is active in both the collective bargaining group and the University Senate. The Provost initially invited Professor Q to serve on the committee that made the decision to partner with COACHE, but he declined the invitation. Professor Q argued that the university would lose its ability to compare results with their historic data. While the Senate was included in the deliberations about COACHE, Professor Q opposed the decision to partner with COACHE.

The Senate is divided on the issue with younger faculty arguing that the in-house survey does not ask enough questions about issues like departmental collegiality and departmental leadership. Instead, it focuses on senior leadership and aspects of compensation. Younger faculty also see the importance of comparative data for driving better discussions about institutional priorities. Senior faculty in the Senate feel the old instrument is adequate.

Case Study 1 Discussion Questions

- What risks and concerns do you have about this situation?
- How would you approach messaging to faculty about the decision to change instruments? Who are your messengers? What is the message?
- Develop a few talking points for the Provost to defend the decision. How might you adjust the messaging for the different perspectives of younger and more senior faculty?

Case Study 2

Your institution just completed their first administration of the COACHE Faculty Job Satisfaction Survey. Response rates were quite high because the communications team repeatedly focused on a commitment to data transparency.



After receiving the reports, the university team began reviewing the open text responses from a custom question drafted by the committee. The question asked faculty to share their perspectives on their deans. Because it was a custom question, COACHE does not review or redact the open-text responses. The outcome was a series of responses indicating that the Dean of Arts and Sciences frequently makes inappropriate comments about faculty including one respondent who said, “When the Dean learned I was pregnant, he suggested that I should have waited until after I received tenure.” Another faculty member reported that the Dean referred to a person of color as the “DEI rep for the committee.”

The COACHE Team is concerned about sharing anonymous comments about a Dean without any sort of due process. At the same time, no one doubts the Dean made the remarks. In fact, the Provost began an investigation into the Dean’s remarks earlier in the year. The investigation is ongoing.

Further complicating the issue, the comments were specific enough to identify the respondents who shared them. The Team wants to honor its commitment to transparency but worry that these comments will distract from the process.

Case Study 2 Discussion Questions

- If this occurred on your campus, who else would you include in the deliberations (Office of General Counsel, Communications, etc.)?
- As a group, debate and decide whether the risks of sharing these comments without redaction outweigh the benefits of transparency with faculty.