

2023 ACOR FELLOWS REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the 2023 spring semester, the ten members of the 2023 ACOR Fellows class visited nine different campus units. After deliberating as a Fellowship class, we elected to utilize a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis as a way to better understand each of the departments visited and to analyze trends across units. This approach allowed the departments to provide their direct observations about what has – and hasn't - been working well for them, what they could improve upon, and changes that they would like to see implemented.

To accomplish this in a systematic and uniform manner, we created a questionnaire (Appendix A) that was handed out to each department before our visits. Each department chose to answer these questions differently – some submitted their responses prior to our visits, some submitted them after, and some preferred to answer them in real time. Regardless, each unit's response to the questionnaire was unique and valuable.

To assess information learned, findings, and key takeaways from each visit, the ACOR fellows scheduled a separate weekly meeting to collaboratively discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing each unit. We also used this time to discuss similarities and differences between units and to assess common themes and trends across the University as a whole. By breaking down what we learned from our questionnaire and analysis, we were quickly able to deduce the following trends across units:

- 1) Strengths:
 - a. Leadership Support
 - b. Culture
 - c. Shift Towards Remote Work
 - d. Professional Development
 - e. Internal Unit Structures and Processes
 - f. Increasing Numbers of Proposals, Awards, and Invention Disclosures
- 2) Weaknesses:
 - a. Understaffed
 - b. Lack of Formal Training Strategy
 - c. Recruitment and Retention
 - d. Decentralization of Systems
 - e. Lack of Automation
 - f. Knowledge Loss due to Retirement/Turnover
- 3) Opportunities:
 - a. Hybrid and Remote Work
 - b. Training/Knowledge Transfer
 - c. Staffing
 - d. Process Improvement and Increased Automation
- 4) Threats:
 - a. Talent Recruitment
 - b. Excess Workload

- c. Understaffing
- d. Budgetary Concerns
- e. Outside Forces

Based on this SWOT analysis (see full report for more details), we proposed several recommendations to address concerns surrounding knowledge transfer, employee retention, and workload management/administrative burden across the University. We also outlined positive takeaways and suggested changes related to the ACOR Fellows program in hopes of improving the program in future years. Recommendations based on our SWOT analysis and suggestions for the ACOR Fellows Program are both outlined in more detail in our full report.