FACULTY HIRING STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE INNOVATION

Case Study: Discovery Themes at Ohio State

Presented by:
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DISCOVERY AT OHIO STATE

- $500 million investment in four thematic areas where Ohio State can make its biggest impact on global grand challenges

- The university’s most ambitious academic effort, made possible by the depth and breadth of our faculty

- More than 500 engaged faculty and staff

Food Production and Security

Energy and Environment

Health and Wellness

Humanities and the Arts
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Eight Areas of Focus

- Chronic Brain Injury
- Food and AgriCultural Transformation
- Materials and Manufacturing for Sustainability
- Humanities and the Arts
- Infectious Diseases
- Foods for Health (Metabolomics)
- Sustainable and Resilient Economy
- Translational Data Analytics
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Guiding Principles

• Focus on critical societal needs in line with our mission as a public, urban, land-grant research university

• Promote and reward broad collaboration across disciplines.

• Build on current faculty expertise and increase tenure-track faculty

• Enhance diversity and inclusion

• Focus on partnerships – government, industry, service and private enterprise

• Promote innovation and economic development.
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Highlights of Progress

• 82 hires within first three years of 10-year initiative; 82 more positions authorized

• Programmatic support built into funding

• Engagement with industry drives programmatic support

• New hires inherently reach across disciplines, increasing culture of collaboration

• Positive effect on community engagement and student success
DISCOVERY THEMES: Faculty Engagement

What we did “well”

- Evolution of the initiative
- Theme Areas: defined by administration 2011/12
- Focus Areas: faculty, peer and industry reviewed
- End product = reinvesting in areas of strength

Opportunity to be “better”

- Once focus areas were defined ... perception of exclusivity
DISCOVERY THEMES: Diversity

What we did “well”

• Driving diversity conversation
• Implicit Bias Training for all search committees
• Training adopted across the university
• Tailored advertising – partnership with diversity officers

Opportunity to be “better”

• Diversity among new faculty did not meet aspirational goals
DISCOVERY THEMES: Collaboration

What we did “well”

• “Me” to “We" movement: balance local unit discipline (traditional model) with new approach – people who fit in units but work across disciplines.

Opportunity to be “better”

• Increase opportunities to foster collaboration formally and informally
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Specialization: intersection of geography and public health

Discovery Themes Affiliation: Translational Data Analytics
Story of Progress: Big Data for Good
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for Mathematical Medicine at Nationwide Children’s Hospital  
Story of Progress: Big Data for Good
“The Discovery Themes initiative is an investment in excellence and a commitment to help solve the global grand challenges that best align with our expertise.”
Additional Stories:
Ohio State lures Zika researcher to campus
https://vet.osu.edu/sites/vet.osu.edu/files/documents/about/Ohio State lures Zika researcher to campus | The Columbus Dispatch.pdf

Ohio State professor, teammates predict power outages caused by Hurricane Matthew
https://news.osu.edu/news/2016/10/06/hurricane-matthew/

http://nbc4i.com/2016/10/05/osu-researcher-says-hurricane-matthew-could-leave-millions-without-power/

Ohio State’s work in spinal cord injuries rewarded with $2.2 million grant
https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/mediaroom/pressreleaselisting/ohio-state-wexner-medical-center-awarded-spinal-cord-injury-grant