# Presidential Search Input Session Notes

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<th>Date:</th>
<th>9.18.18</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group:</td>
<td>Comm Arts &amp; Sciences and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approx. Number of Attendees:</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Search Committee Members Present:</td>
<td>Byrum, Foster, Hult, Spray, Dagbovie, David, Rifiotis, Lipscomb, Finn, Wu</td>
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**Responses to 1st Question:**

What qualities, characteristics, and criteria are desired in a new president of MSU?

- Need more listening at MSU—that is the quality/characteristic. Sessions for f/s/s and open hours with new president
- How much do people really have a voice? Think of more ways to reach people. Listening and listens to a range of voices, sustained engagement and dialogue, different vision of U, healer is valuable characteristic, complexity of community, hard work in engaged, reshaping community. Embodies trust and trusting relationships.
- U leader who has demonstrated experience with issues of equity, inclusion and justice—they are interrelated, but not the same. MSU is in time period of expectations of just environment. Job desc include leader who has taken action on those things. Leader who can move us in a direction of land grant institution and define up front—what does it mean for us as a community. Forward thinking and ready to move MSU in that direction.
- Definition of a land grant moving forward—leader engage campus as whole, shared governance. Multiple missions at all levels. Engaging staff who have been disenfranchised in this time. Disorganized and fragmented as U. Issues of diversity, inclusion and justice are being played out in not collective ways. Leader to cultivate respect, integrity, understanding. Not just transparency. Communicate on many levels with diverse constituents.
- President who has strong knowledge of higher ed landscape—not that they have to come from a certain career path but strong background in higher ed to understand and address the challenges we are facing
• No attachment of affiliation with MSU. Easy to build loyalty to MSU. Important to have someone come in with new ideas and existing loyalties will not get in the way of important decisions. Clear perspective not clouded by loyalty.
• People need to walk the walk not just talk the talk. President willing to operate in that space. Sometimes uncomfortable but necessary.
• In last 10 or 15 years, MSU has become entrepreneurial university. Venture capital has moved away from what research should be. Missing education people who come from all ranks of life in Michigan. Future leader take us back to that space—strong emphasis on land grant. Reconsider the core mission of MSU. President should bring this and share with faculty and students. Organic bottom up leadership to strengthen university.

Responses to 2nd Question:
Higher education is facing many challenges today. What do you consider to be the major challenges facing MSU?

• Community is a challenge. Outside of current community for candidate. People are struggling—they feel alone or embarrassed, grasp at the rebirth of MSU. How do we reimaging the community and how do they feel included with voice. Building a better community.
• Reestablishing trust—esp. with donors. They do not want to invest. Difficult to do job in climate. Leader needs to help rebuild trust. We need to be able to articulate good things on campus. Who is running this place? Re-engaging our best advocates who have lost their trust in us.
• Rising tuition costs—higher ed facing in general. MSU touted most diverse class ever—but who persists, financial resources and how does that impact who persists. Keep tuition costs in line but do not sacrifice commitment to inclusions, diversity.
• Higher ed driven by corporate model, make students customers. How we engage and deliver work has been changed. Land grant distinctive but constrained by broader. New president needs to have vision of how to resist model. Market driven loses connection to our distinctive saga. Drop in number of international students—understood as income or dollars. Building trust and keeping human focus of university in sight. Chart course that resists market tendencies.
• One is financial in nature—debt to income ratio is not good. Cannot recover through tuition.
2. Trust—widespread sense of power structure at the root of problems from this year—need to look at the structure before meaningful moving forward.
3. Intellectual and civic mission of the U—goal to be best has forced more faculty to be middle of the road players. Easy to get grant funding if middle of the road. Need us to be risk takers and take chances that may not pay off immediately, but how do you balance that with funds needed immediately?
• Risk—how to think strategically and confront risks. How do we be willing to not succeed—own that we all may not succeed when taking risks. Not set up to encourage risk taking with instructional strategies, with research, outreach and engagement, of grants. Ways of
proceeding have not been bold or integrated. Bold in narrow sphere. Reality that this will not do it in the future. Allow leaders to make mistakes and own them when we do. Climate not set up for risks that need to be taken to move forward. Start at Admin. Bldg.

**Responses to 3rd Question:**
Focusing on the future, what do you consider to be important strengths and opportunities for MSU?

- Great capacity to be inspirational and inspire community, locally and globally. Tackle all kinds of problems. Combined resources, people, and knowledge. Capitalize on that—leader should know that we can still do that.
- Undergrad education—greatest strength has been pushed aside—we do not want to be like U of M. Being willing to own who we are and embrace who we are is—makes us different, unique. We constantly use U of M as the yardstick. Problem that we have to deal with is not much confidence in the Board—have to own it like everything else. Little faith in how Board will interact with new president may not attract talent.
- You don’t know how to stand tall until you have fallen badly. Can be sold as opportunity. Students, faculty are strong. Very strong interdisciplinary culture. Problems cannot be solved by one. Very diverse structure—strength comes from diversity of group. Leadership decisions have repercussions all over campus—we do not always look at big picture. Leadership think systemically, build on interdisciplinary structure. Make decisions based on whole and how it relates to society. Have to fall in order to stand tall.
- Rich culture at MSU, all facets of education we are all unique but cohesive and work together as one unit. A nominee should inspire the students. Yes, that happened and we are now at
this point. People person, community person. Not defined by events, but how we stand up from low time. Opportunity to rebuild.

- Teacher in the system, chair or director, dean or associate dean. Make hard decisions but palatable to community. Work your way up—understand ramifications of decisions on the way down. Knowing students, excitement, faculty ideas, helping future citizen being productive in global society. Campus, students, faculty are strengths.

- Taking things very hard. Hard to express the great things. Amazing research opportunities, community and people. Leader needs to be able to tell the stories and foster idea that so many things are good—not sweep under rug, but promote campus.

- Leader has to realize that strength is huge challenge. Large campus in little town in middle of Michigan. Have FRIB and other cutting edge of research and generating new knowledge. Ask community to join in. Very few U have distinctive things. MSU in crisis, have history of loyalty, inspired members of community developed over decades. Opportunity to chart new course—cannot be top down new course. Share in the moment of possibility. Creativity and exuberance, welcomes that.

- Challenge will be finding someone that does not feel the needs to come and pick out the top things of MSU and convince people that we are great. Need confidence to live with this a little more. Perception that we have not lived with it enough to learn—people will not believe us. Understand where we are and confidence to not try to fix things right away. Choose the right skill set for the right time. Ability and confidence that student and faculty will rise out of this—will not come from the top, the top needs to clear the way so that it can happen. You have suffered long enough let me fix this for you—that would be a mistake.

- Important that new leader be able to step outside of the most recent incident and understand that members have been wounded for a long time. we are trying to get past most recent issue with sexual assault, racism has existed on campus and there are wounds. Incident reopened wounds for marginalized groups on campus. Some people will not come to sessions because they believe they will continue to be wounded. Listening important to all sectors of community—this is a space that continues to wound difference members in various ways. Sensitivity to subgroups feeling like their issues are in the wind and not hot topic of the day.
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