

# Faculty Listening Sessions Debrief



**PHILADELPHIA**  
UNIVERSITY



**Thomas Jefferson University**  
HOME OF SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE

# Listening Sessions: Focus Groups



## ☆ focus group



### Definitions (2)

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1. **Market research:** Small number of people (usually between 4 and 15, but typically 8) brought together with a moderator to focus on a specific product or topic. Focus groups aim at a discussion instead of on individual responses to formal questions, and produce qualitative data (preferences and beliefs) that may or may not be representative of the general population.

2. **Problem-solving:** Idea generation or forecasting technique where several experts or informed individuals share their point of view on a specific topic or problem.

## What Is Listening?

*The process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken and/or nonverbal messages*

### International Listening Association (ILA)

The ILA promotes the study, development, and teaching of listening and the practice of effective listening skills and techniques.

## Listening Sessions

UW model, often cited as best practice, is based on 4 themes:

- **Honesty:** acknowledge that you don't have all the answers.
- **Outreach:** ensure key stakeholders are engaged.
- **Data Collection:** maintain consistent questioning among groups.
- **Follow-up:** communicate & clarify your next steps with participants.

*"Building Support for Effective Teaching: the Impact of the Public Will,"*  
United Way Worldwide



# Parallel Stories of Value and Tradition

## PhilaU

## TJU

Collaboration and collegiality

Collaboration and collegiality

Identity: an excellent small school with a sense of community and belonging.

Loyalty to and pride in history, legacy and brand.

Impactful teaching and learning practices.  
Meaningful relationships with students.  
Small class sizes contribute to student success.

Highly-selective admissions and outstanding students.  
Rewarding relationship with students.  
Competitive faculty-student ratios.

Teaching Institution

Research Institution

Philosophy of creative work with a direct connection to the real world.



# Common Perspective on the Opportunities



- A comprehensive university
- Collaboration within wider community of faculty colleagues in more diverse disciplines
- Expanded academic programs with even broader appeal to students and benefit to society
- Combined resources to achieve shared goals:
  - Physical space
  - Budget
  - Human resources / personnel

# Insights on Concerns



- Faculty would like more communication about the rationale for the merger and the planning activities.
- Faculty have concerns about HR/benefits as well as appointment, promotion and tenure.
- TJU faculty would like to know more about competitiveness of PhilaU students.
- PhilaU faculty would like to know more about TJU's analog to Nexus Learning.
- Is this a merger or a take-over?
- Campus system vs. satellite campus?
- Questions about geography—Where will I work? How will faculty/staff and students move between campuses?

# Insights on Concerns



- Name is important to the brands. Will one brand dominate?
  - The Jefferson name in health has a powerful legacy.
  - The PhilaU name in design disciplines is known internationally.
- Shared Governance vs. Faculty Governance
- Overlapping programs (OT/PA)—What is future?

# Next Steps



- Develop guiding principles from the feedback in the Listening Sessions for the work of the Faculty Affairs Integration Committee and its sub-committees.
- October: Extend invitations to PhilaU & TJU faculty to serve on sub-committees:
  1. Faculty Appointments, Promotion and Tenure
  2. Faculty Professional Development and Wellness
  3. Recruitment and Retention of a Diverse Faculty
  4. Faculty Governance
  5. Adjunct and Affiliated Faculty Affairs
- November: Begin the integration planning for faculty affairs.
  - The work has a 12-18 month window.