Reframing Research and Compliance Communication at LU

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Project Aims:

With the support of the LLA, the aim of this fellowship is to assess barriers to communication in ethics, compliance, and initiatives for research, scholarship, and creative activity at LU. This self-assessment will be further explored through current research on organizational communication in higher education and exposure to alternative tools, resources, and processes.

Methods:

- Focus Groups with Faculty, Staff, and Students
- Structured Interviews with Faculty, Staff, and Students
- Review of research, literature, and innovation in organizational communication
- Delivery of new research-based tools, resources, and learning spaces (Fig 2)

Summary of Findings

Focus Group and Interview findings dovetailed well with common trends in research on strategic and organizational communication. Enhanced communication will entail shifting away from traditional compliance culture patterns to integrity culture concepts (Fig 1). Communication strategy in current research focuses on the following domains:

Engagement | Climate | Identity
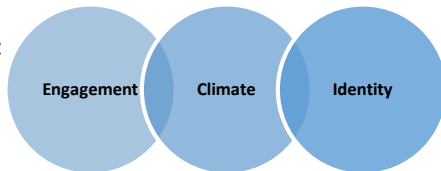
Common Themes in Focus Groups/Interviews

1. **Engagement:**
   - The "real experience" ethos should be a key element in framing our research, scholarship, and creative activity enterprise.
   - The added vocational value of navigating ethical review should be a the center of communicating opportunities.
   - Enhanced email digests, social media, personal communication are primary drivers in communication engagement at LU.
   - Stakeholders are more apt to access conversational and narrative resources than online, written guidance.
   - Student researchers thrive in personal mentorship and direct communication through high impact learning experiences.

1. **Climate:**
   - Many ethics and compliance terms, like "sponsored projects" or "dissemination" are not familiar to faculty and staff.
   - Change management issues inhibit awareness of and access to resources, especially for new faculty.
   - Thinking in terms of a "hub and spoke" compliance culture is not as effective as more direct, personal interaction.
   - LU would benefit from infrastructure for immediate response to emergent regional research, evaluation, and civic issues.
   - Faculty, staff, and students are looking for open access tools for sharing and communicating their work.
   - Faculty, staff, and students are looking for more support for poster and publication design, and data modeling for presentation.

2. **Identity:**
   - Students describe research experiences as a first encounter with their vocational goals and the broader implications of their degree programs.
   - If research experiences were better connected to LU aims, regional needs, and benefits to society, we would cultivate "a different type of student."
   - Prospective students have difficulty seeing the range of activities and experiences available at LU.
   - Students want our region to see LU research, scholarship, and creative activities in local reporting and social media.
   - Students see interdisciplinary communication barriers as an issue, as "we need to be able to figure things out together."

Fig 1: Adapting to Integrity Culture

	Compliance Model	Integrity Model
Tone	Adherence	Collaboration
Ethos	Efficient Compliance with External Standards	Internalizing Standards as Institutional Aims
Objectives	Prevent Misconduct	Enable Responsible Action
Leadership	Regulatory Administration	Ethical Management and Consultation
Standards	Regulatory Codes and Standards	Institutional Ethical Aims and Initiatives
Resources	Policy and SOP	Policy-Based Guidance and Project-Based Partnership
Education	Compliance Standards	Decision-Making, Resource Development
Monitoring	Auditing	Collaborative Review

Adapted from Paine, L.S. (1994) Managing for Organizational Integrity. *Harvard Business Review 72:2,* 106-17

Fig 2: Strategies/Workshops

- 2020-2021 Workshops and Panel Sessions
  - Intellectual Property and Innovation at LU
  - Open Access Scholarship Tools and CC Licensing
  - Crafting and Sharing Student Research Experiences
  - Tools for Remote Research/Evaluation Experiences
  - Strategic Planning for Research/Evaluation Goals
  - Embracing Diversity in Research, Data, and Evaluation
  - Communication Tools for Dissemination and Implementation

- Resources
  - New LU Innovation Hub Digest
  - Faculty/Staff Research and Evaluation Mentors
  - Centralized Initiatives for Community-Engaged Partnerships
  - Exhibition of LU Research and Scholarship History
  - Short Video based guidance embedded in Grants and Compliance applications