

AEC AD HOC COMMITTEE

Executive Summary

The Faculty Senate approved the formation by the Executive Committee of an ad hoc committee of six faculty members in order to examine the administrator evaluation process as set forth in By-Laws 4.4 and University Manual sections 5.76.10 – 5.76.12 and 10.90.9 – 10.90.17.

The committee understood its charge to include:

- Review the processes currently used and examine for consistency
- Review manual language related to all aspects of the process (5.76.10-12 and 10.90.9-17 and By Laws 4-4)
- Examine the purpose of the Administrator Evaluation process, including issues of timing, oversight, committee instructions, and constituencies

In the course of its meetings, the committee engaged in particularly vigorous discussion concerning many issues, with particular attention paid to:

- Different categories of administrator (e.g., dean of degree granting college vs. non-academic deans)
- The nature of an administrator's "constituency"
- The relationship between a survey whose purpose is to elicit faculty perceptions vs. one that takes faculty input into account but ranges farther afield with respect to other (non-faculty) viewpoints
- Whether, given the power of Deans and some administrators over faculty review and promotion, "faculty" ought to include those who are not on the tenure track but now undergo formal performance review for promotion (e.g., Lecturers) or those whose professional advancement depends upon review by a Dean (e.g., clinical faculty)
- The timing of surveys relative to contract renewal
- The possible perception among some faculty that individual surveys are too time consuming or that surveys administered within any one year are too numerous.

The committee was unanimous in its judgment regarding two overarching considerations: one, that the current instrument (electronic survey) has measurably expanded the extent and efficiency of faculty participation in Administrator Evaluations; and two, that faculty participation in Administrator Evaluation functions as a critically important vector for harnessing the "faculty voice" in shared governance.

Discussions of protracted complexity, as well as working sessions that focused intensively on specific areas of the University Manual, led the committee to present the following items for consideration by the Faculty Senate.

(A) Changes to the University Manual (detailed in Appendix A) that reflect the need for alterations with respect to:

- scheduling, submission, and alignment with an administrator's contract renewal period
- consistency of terms and processes across reviews in different units, as well as flexibility for survey changes relative to different, specific units
- additions that reflect new configurations, and thus new administrator positions, within academic and other units at the university.

(B) Observations on two distinct but interrelated dimensions of the Administrator Evaluation process as it currently stands. Extended documentation related to these observations can be found in Appendix B of this report.

1. We conclude that the current model of eliciting faculty perceptions via electronic survey is a marked improvement, in both quality and quantity of input, over previous methods for gathering faculty perceptions through letters or other means. As a result, **the committee strongly recommends that an electronic survey instrument for gathering and assessing faculty perceptions be retained in future iterations of the Administrator Evaluation process.**
2. We observe that the Administrator Evaluation process has migrated beyond the borders of its original purpose, eliciting faculty perceptions as “only one element of an overall evaluation of administrators”; current processes function as “thorough performance reviews” of administrators. For example, recent and current survey iterations in practice clearly encompass far broader “constituencies” than tenure-track faculty as such, an expansion made possible and legitimate by language in section 5.76.12, where it is stated that “The constituent groups shall be defined as, but not limited to...” various faculty under specific deans and other administrators. The committee recommends that the Faculty Senate remove “but not limited to.” **The committee also recommends that the Faculty Senate examine the expansion of the Administrator Review process beyond its original purpose and determine whether future surveys ought to return to a function of gleaning faculty input exclusively (as a single part of a separate, more comprehensive review) or whether they ought to function more holistically as an instrument of comprehensive review (including but not limited to faculty input). Either option could include non-tenure track faculty; the second option only (expansion) might include in addition other possible groups (e.g., staff, external groups, alumni, other administrators, etc.). For clarity the committee recommends that (i) “usually” be removed, from the last sentence in 5.76.11. “All members of the committee shall usually come from the constituent group” and (ii) that constituent groups, if that term continues to be used, be precisely defined in light of whichever function (original scope of just faculty as one element in larger review vs. expanded through performance review) be precisely defined.**