

# EFFECTIVE PRACTICES

## FOR ACADEMIC LEADERS

A Sty/US  
Briefing®

### Faculty Performance Reviews

by *Theodore H. Curry*

Volume 1/ISSN 1554-0464

Issue 2/ISBN 1-57922-151-3

February 2006

#### CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	1
Introduction .....	2
Institutional Enunciation of Goals, Visions, Values .....	3
Unit Establishment of Equitable Workloads .....	5
Faculty Career Development Plan ....	6
Faculty Self-Appraisal .....	6
Appraisal of Faculty Performance .....	7
Performance Feedback Session .....	9
Using Performance Review Results ...	10
Diversity Considerations .....	15
Post-Tenure Review .....	15
Role of the Dean .....	15
Conclusion .....	16
References .....	16

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Theodore H. (Terry) Curry* is Director of the Graduate School of Labor and Industrial Relations of Michigan State University, a position he has held since 1999. He is a professor of human resources management, having joined the faculty of the School and MSU in 1976 after receiving graduate and undergraduate degrees in business administration with concentration in human resources management from the University of Kansas. In 2000 he was elected president of the University Council of Industrial Relations and Human Resources Programs.

#### EDITORS

**Timothy J. Delmont**  
Center for Human Resource Development/  
Office of Human Resources  
University of Minnesota  
t-delm@tc.umn.edu

**Robert Secor**  
Vice Provost Emeritus for  
Academic Affairs  
Pennsylvania State University  
rxs2@psu.edu

**Sty/US**  
PUBLISHING, LLC

22883 Quicksilver Drive, Sterling, VA 20166 • www.Styluspub.com

#### Executive Summary

This briefing is intended primarily for department chairs and other unit administrators responsible for regular faculty performance reviews. It offers an overview of faculty performance reviews in the broader context of faculty development at the unit level and provides guidance for academic administrators on conducting reviews and writing appraisals.

The role of the faculty performance review has been elevated in recent years for a number of reasons. Increasingly, colleges and universities award salary increases on the basis of merit or performance, which requires an accurate assessment of performance relative to some standard. In a resource-challenged environment, aligning the efforts of faculty with unit and institutional goals becomes more critical; performing well in important areas becomes more important. Standards for earning tenure and promotion seem to rise constantly. A record of excellent performance is usually necessary for a favorable tenure and/or promotion decision. In the face of public criticism and/or institutional self-examination, many institutions have initiated post-tenure review to ensure that tenured faculty are performing at acceptable levels. The annual faculty performance review, especially when it has a developmental component, helps to ensure that faculty perform at high levels year in and year out.

While a variety of organizations use performance appraisals, the unique culture of higher education must be considered in order to provide effective faculty performance reviews and development systems. Important aspects or underlying assumptions include (1) faculty independence and self-direction in the light of the unit and institution's vision and objectives, (2) faculty expectations of involvement individually and through the governance process, (3) the importance of process and procedural fairness, and (4) the need for the system to be legally defensible.

This briefing provides a framework for the faculty performance review process that includes, ideally, six components: (1) institutional enunciation of goals, vision, and values; (2) unit establishment of equitable workloads, performance criteria, and standards; (3) faculty career development plan with annual update as basis for review; (4) faculty self-appraisal through the annual activity report; (5) appraisal of faculty performance by peer review committee and/or chair; and (6) performance feedback session and written performance review.

This briefing also offers specific guidance on writing the faculty performance review, along with sample reviews for faculty at different performance levels and career stages. It provides strategies for dealing with the "problem" faculty member and for using the results of the review for faculty development, as well as diversity considerations in the review and development process. Finally, it offers comments on post-tenure review and the role of the dean.

## INTRODUCTION: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS, PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL, AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

That “faculty are the most important resource of the university” is not simply a cliché. Higher education institutions, like other knowledge-driven organizations, find human capital the core component of organizational success. The knowledge creation and dissemination activities of faculty—their research, teaching, and service endeavors—are the principal products of the academy and the reasons for its existence. Activities related to helping faculty members excel in these duties, such as faculty performance reviews, are essential to individual and institutional excellence.

Performance review or appraisal as an informal process has no doubt existed among employers since the first employee began working. In higher education, students and administrators have provided feedback—whether requested or not—about faculty teaching, research, and service. Faculty receive outside feedback about their research from:

- Agencies and foundations that provide funding for faculty research
- Referees who make decisions about publishing faculty research in scholarly journals
- Conference organizers who choose presentations for professional conferences
- Publishing houses and presses that publish academic books

The formal process of periodically (most often annually) appraising employee performance started to grow in use in public and private sector organizations in the 1940s. It can be defined as “the process of evaluating how well employees perform their jobs when compared to a set of standards, and then communicating that information to those employees” (Mathis & Jackson, 2003). In higher education, periodic formal assessments of faculty performance during the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process have long been a normal part of the human resources process. Deciding whether or not a faculty member should be reappointed to a second probationary appointment, promoted to associate professor, awarded tenure, and/or promoted to full professor, have all routinely involved an assessment of faculty performance, over some period of years, relative to standards, with at least some minimal feedback to faculty (if nothing more than whether the decision was yes or no).

During the 1990s, as calls for accountability in public higher education grew (as well as for other public sector institutions), formal processes for annual faculty performance reviews or appraisals were re-emphasized, if not revised. Additionally, increasing rigor was often added to the reappointment, promotion, and tenure process; for example, requiring outside review letters, creation of college-level committees, increased expectations for external research funding. At the same time, accountability concerns led some institutions to establish formal processes for post-tenure review for tenured faculty.

## EFFECTIVE PRACTICES FOR ACADEMIC LEADERS

A Stylus  
Briefing®

### ADVISORY BOARD

**Trudy W. Banta**

Vice Chancellor for Planning and Institutional Improvement, Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

**Carole J. Bland**

Professor and Director of Research, Department of Family Medicine, University of Minnesota

**Betsy E. Brown**

Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Executive Director of the UNC Leadership Institute at the University of North Carolina

**Theodore H. Curry**

Professor and Director, School of Labor and Industrial Relations, Michigan State University

**Walter H. Gmelch**

Dean, School of Education, University of San Francisco

**C. Kristina Gunsalus**

Adjunct Professor, College of Law, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**Val Miskin**

Director of Graduate Programs, College of Business and Economics, Washington State University

**Daniel W. Wheeler**

Professor, Ag Leadership, Education, and Communication, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

---

### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

ISSN: [Print] 1554-0464  
[Online] 1554-0472

Editorial & Marketing: 703-661-1504  
StylusInfo@StylusPub.com

**Customer Service:**

1-800-232-0223 / 703-661-1581  
StylusMail@PressWarehouse.com

**Subscription Rates:**

Annual hard copy subscription: (12 issues): \$90.00  
Individual issue price: \$13.95 plus shipping  
Online annual subscription (includes hard copy, site license and right of unlimited single copy reproduction)\*: \$250.00  
Reproduction for course use: Contact Stylus  
Online subscriptions hosted by MetaPress

Copyright © 2006 Stylus Publishing, LLC  
Reproduction by photocopying or other any means, and all forms of digital storage, are strictly forbidden without license

\*Excludes copies made for courses for which students pay enrollment fees.

At a minimum, *performance appraisal* or review relates to a process of comparing performance to standards and providing feedback to the faculty member about that performance. More fully, the performance review process begins with the identification and enunciation of institutional goals, vision, and values, and with unit establishment of equitable unit workloads, performance criteria, and standards. The process continues to include data collection and reporting so that faculty performance can be compared to those standards (the appraisal or evaluation). Feedback is then provided to the faculty member, orally and/or in writing.

*Performance management and development*, by contrast, can be defined as all of those organizational and administratively driven processes designed to help faculty perform as effectively as possible. Institutional goals, vision, and values, of course, again set the context for performance management and development. Additionally, defining responsibilities, setting expectations, providing the necessary resources, giving ongoing feedback, periodically appraising performance, and using the resulting information are included. Uses include

- Making human resources decisions (e.g., merit pay, post-tenure review)
- Solving individual and organizational problems
- Developing people and organizational systems

The review or appraisal is but one aspect of the broader process of performance development. Performance review looks back and asks the question, "How well was the work done?" Performance management, by contrast, asks a future-oriented question: "What can be done to help faculty perform as effectively as possible and

make a maximum contribution to the mission, vision, and strategic initiatives of the unit and institution?" (Curry, 2000)

#### INSTITUTIONAL ENUNCIATION OF GOALS, VISION, AND VALUES

##### **Faculty Performance Reviews: Underlying Assumptions**

Colleges and universities are knowledge-driven institutions, but with a history and culture unlike other organizations. This culture and character lead to a set of underlying assumptions and principles that must be recognized when considering faculty performance reviews and development questions for higher education.

##### *Faculty Goals and Institutional Direction*

Faculty drive university teaching, research, and service with a level of self-direction and independence foreign to employees in most other organizational settings. An important challenge for the institution is the need to balance that faculty self-direction and independence with the institution's mission, vision, and strategies. It is not enough for faculty to perform well; in a resource-limited environment, faculty must perform well on the "right" things, including the "right" things from the institution's perspective. Potentially this presents one of the greatest challenges for academic administrators. Independence and self-direction, guided by personal interests and aspirations, as well as the values and incentives of the global professoriate to which the faculty member belongs, are usually the principal drivers of his or her research. Increasingly, funding opportunities also provide drivers directing the activities of faculty. There are no easy solutions when such conflicts arise. Wise leaders strive to minimize such conflicts by involving faculty in the creation of the unit's vision and by

ensuring that the vision reflects the global direction of the discipline or professional field. Where a faculty member's interests diverge only slightly from the unit's direction, and she or he performs at a high level, the unit administrator may decide to accept this slight divergence as part of the nature of the academy, with the faculty member understanding that performance may not be appraised at the highest level. Where such divergence is substantial, and where positive efforts at communication and coaching have failed to bring the interests or behaviors of the faculty member in line with institutional and unit direction, consequences can include poor performance reviews, related poor merit increases, and post-tenure review.

##### *Faculty Involvement in Setting Expectations*

While employee empowerment and involvement are relatively new concepts in much of the private sector, they are woven into the historic fabric of higher education. Faculty have historically been major contributors, if not leaders, on issues that are the purview of management in other industries; for example, hiring, promotion, tenure, and merit pay. This level of involvement has served the institutions well because of the nature of the product of the academy—knowledge generation and knowledge dissemination. Therefore, for cultural and practical reasons, effective faculty performance review must include the involvement of faculty in setting and clarifying expectations, as well, perhaps, as in assessing performance. This includes the collective involvement of faculty through the governance and peer review processes, as well as the individual involvement of each faculty member with respect to his or her performance.

### *Giving Feedback*

The assumption that faculty members deserve some formal feedback from their institutions about their performance warrants explicit enunciation, rather than implicit acknowledgment. Some would say that faculty receive plenty of feedback—teaching evaluations, acceptance or rejection of their publications and grant proposals, the size of their merit increases. This feedback is deficient in two respects: It is not developmental; it does not talk about improvement or alignment strategies. Also, it does not address the faculty member's performance relative to expectations of the unit and institution. Both individual faculty as well as institutions benefit from faculty members receiving feedback on how they are doing relative to the unit and institution's expectations, and from the faculty member receiving feedback and engaging in dialogue on how he or she can be more effective in performing his or her duties.

### *Merit Pay and Assessment*

As long as colleges and universities continue to use compensation as an incentive and reward tool, faculty performance appraisal and reviews will continue to serve as essential ingredients for academic human resources. While institutions frequently use monies budgeted for salary increases to deal with multiple compensation challenges (e.g., salary compression, as newly hired faculty earn nearly as much as more senior faculty because of rising market hiring rates; market changes resulting from supply and demand of faculties in certain disciplines; inequities arising over time, etc.), usually the major stated purpose of merit pay is to reward exemplary performance.

### *Transparency*

In faculty performance reviews, as with other human resources transactions, both outcome and process are important. Procedural fairness relates to the faculty perception that the process used by administrators is handled in a consistent way, following pre-specified rules and guidelines and conforming to minimum due process requirements. While faculty pay attention to the outcomes of performance review processes, procedural justice research indicates that they will often support negative outcomes if they perceive the process to be just and fair. The words and phrases that characterize this fifth assumption are "transparency" and "no surprises."

### *Legal Protection*

Finally, in our increasingly litigious society, employer human resources decisions are more frequently challenged. The many exceptions to the employment-at-will doctrine, the explosion of fair employment practices statutes (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, etc.), and defamation lawsuits have brought employers into courts to defend their decisions. Because performance appraisals are often the only tangible evidence by which a jury can determine the employee's worth, appraisals potentially provide either a devastating weapon for the employee or an impenetrable shield for the employer (Davidson, 1995).

The design of the performance management and appraisal process, as well as its implementation and use, provide critical indicators as to whether the performance appraisal will be an employee weapon or a university shield supporting the institution's performance-based decisions about merit pay, reappointment, tenure, and promotion. To prevent and to defend allegations

concerning an adverse personnel decision, the written performance review and other documentation should provide support for the following concepts:

- The faculty member received clear communication concerning the expectations for her or him in the faculty role.
- The expectations set and communicated were reasonable and fair and were consistent with general University guidelines.
- The process used by the unit was fair and consistent with its (and University) policies.
- The faculty member was treated consistently relative to other similarly situated persons.

Where guidance is needed in this area, particularly if dealing with a difficult faculty member or if sanctions are anticipated, chairs should not hesitate to seek guidance from the offices of the dean, human resources, or, if necessary, the institution's legal counsel.

### **Performance Review and Career Development**

Finally, while assessing the performance of faculty and documenting that performance in written performance reviews is usually an annual occurrence, its most important purpose is as a part of an ongoing process of faculty career development. This includes, first, the use of reviews to assist in the guidance of junior faculty in the years leading to reappointment, promotion to associate professor, and tenure. Afterward, the awarding of tenure leads to colleges and universities having a faculty composed of professors with many years of service. Training, mentoring, appraisal, and feedback are all critical in helping to ensure that faculty continue to be productive and contributing scholars

who help the institution fulfill its mission and achieve its vision.

### **UNIT ESTABLISHMENT OF EQUITABLE WORKLOADS, PERFORMANCE CRITERIA, AND STANDARDS**

There are three prerequisites for effective faculty performance reviews: setting expectations, establishing clear guidelines, and establishing performance criteria and standards

#### **Setting Expectations**

First, ideally the university and unit must enunciate their mission, goals, objectives, and values. This sets the context for faculty performance expectations. Without these, faculty risk performing successfully on low-priority criteria. A unit or institution that values the earning of top rankings for research is more likely to define faculty research excellence as publishing in top tier refereed journals and receiving large external funding grants (depending, of course, on the discipline). Another unit or institution with less research focus might define faculty research excellence as simply publishing in refereed journals with less concern for journal rankings, number of publications, and external funding.

#### **Establishing Clear Guidelines**

Second, the unit must establish and enforce clear guidelines concerning fair and equitable faculty workloads. What is the teaching load? What percentage of faculty effort should be devoted to teaching versus research versus service (and in some institutions versus outreach)? Under what circumstances does the workload differ for faculty within the unit? Some institutions/units have employed differential workloads for faculty, in which some have greater teaching or research responsibilities relative to others. The advantages of such assign-

ments include (1) better use of faculty talent, as a faculty member may have greater strength in one dimension—for example, teaching or research, than in others; (2) accommodating the changing interests and strengths of faculty, especially as those evolve over the life cycle of the faculty member; and (3) better resource utilization as some faculty may have funded research that may allow them to “buy out” of some teaching, while others may not have as active a research program. These potential advantages can be especially useful in large institutions and units where a wide mix of initiatives, strategies, and activities are in place (e.g., expectations that faculty and/or units engage in outreach or engagement with the broader community and stakeholders). Disadvantages include (1) the perception that some are not fulfilling the full faculty role and (2) a possible excuse for some who choose not to perform the full faculty role at a time of limited institutional and unit resources. Challenges include determining how merit is determined and how rewards are allocated. If a faculty member’s assignment does not include the full mission of teaching, research, and service, can performance be considered fully meritorious?

#### **Establishing Performance Criteria and Standards**

Third, and most important, after defining equitable workload, the unit must establish performance criteria and standards. Performance criteria relate to the relative importance of teaching, research, and service. Some units apply weights as a mechanism for specifying relative importance. While a unit might typically use a 2/2/1 weighting (40% research, 40% teaching, 20% service), a research-oriented institution or unit might use a weighting of 50 percent research, 30 percent teaching, 20 percent

service, or some similar variant. Additionally, such weighting may apply differently to faculty members within a unit, either because the nature of assignments for faculty in that role is different (e.g. an outreach orientation) or because the individual faculty member has been given a different assignment.

Performance standards relate to the determination of excellence on each criterion. How is excellence defined in teaching and how will it be assessed—student evaluations at a certain threshold level, assessment of a teaching portfolio, in-class observations by trained assessors? What is excellent research—articles in top tier journals, books published by elite publishers, research grants received, dollars awarded, presentations made? What is excellent service or outreach and how will it be assessed—service to the unit and institution, service to the profession, alumni activities, development and fund raising, service to the professional community, teaching non-traditional students and/or in off-campus locations? Performance appraisal requires comparing performance to some standard.

Each academic unit must establish faculty performance expectations and standards if it is to appraise faculty performance fairly. If the unit cannot establish and articulate performance criteria and standards for and with faculty, the unit cannot fairly hold faculty accountable for attaining the standards. The absence of such agreed upon criteria and standards leads not only to individual performance appraisal problems, but also to unit and institutional level problems concerning reappointment, promotion, and tenure. Ultimately, the faculty member must be on the same page as the unit (through the chair), college (through the dean), and institution.

## **FACULTY CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN WITH ANNUAL UPDATE AS BASIS FOR REVIEW**

### **The Faculty Career Development Plan**

Assuming the prerequisites are in place, units should consider a process that begins with the establishment of an individual career development plan for each faculty member. This plan recognizes that while administrative cycles for merit pay and performance reviews are usually annual, faculty work activities, especially in the research and creative arena, often extend over a period of years. Research-active faculty have projects that extend over longer periods of time and have pipelines of work at various stages of development at any one time. Career development plans ask faculty members to describe their plans in research, teaching, and service over an extended period of time, usually three to five years. The thought process required to develop such a document is in itself developmental for faculty members, forcing them to crystallize thinking about the various research projects and activities in which they are engaged. The discussion of this document with the chair, administrator, or relevant mentoring committee is also developmental, providing the opportunity for critical questioning, further review and refinement, and necessary revisions. Not only is the career development plan designed to help faculty succeed, it is also the responsibility of the chair/administrator to ensure that the plan includes expectations that meet the rigorous requirements of the unit for building and sustaining an excellent unit.

While career development plans may be most valuable for junior faculty members, especially as they lead to articulation and agreement on the activities that are likely to result in reappointment, tenure, and promotion, these plans can also prove beneficial

for faculty at more senior ranks. The process of thinking through, reducing to a document, and discussing work plans may improve the choice of activities in which the faculty member is engaged, and the discussion can provide improvements through suggestions, support, and networking. Career development plans provide the vehicle for discussion with all faculty about their activities vis-à-vis unit and institutional priorities.

There may be hesitancy, if not resistance, in some units to using career development plans. The potential benefits of career development plans may be great enough that a unit might consider encouraging their use on a voluntary basis first. Alternatively, they could be instituted as a part of a mentoring or developmental process only for newly hired faculty, or they could be used with those faculty not yet tenured. Figure 1 shows a sample career development plan.

### **Using the Career Development Plan in the Annual Performance Review**

The faculty career development plan, when updated annually, provides the template against which the annual activities of a faculty member are compared. The agreed upon set of expectations for the year must reflect unit workload standards and definitions of excellence. The performance evaluation question, whether asked by a chair or committee, then becomes, "How did you do last year on those things that we agreed were your expectations?" This approach maximizes the hoped for assumption of "no surprises" in the review process. If faculty members know clearly that their career development plan's annual set of agreed upon activities forms the basis of the review, they will be more likely to direct their activities in that direction.

Even with annual updating of the

career development plan, reviewers, whether an administrator or a peer review committee, must recognize the rapidity with which the world of an academic can change. Government and foundation funding priorities change. A major collaborator becomes incapacitated in the middle of a project. A special opportunity arises to submit something unplanned that would impact the unit, institution, or profession. You are suddenly asked to teach XXX 400 because Professor YY is hospitalized. When these and situations of similar significance arise, either party can initiate updating the career development plan. The administrator should ask the faculty member to draft proposed changes. If they are minor, the changes should simply be acknowledged. More significant changes may warrant discussion.

## **FACULTY SELF-APPRAISAL THROUGH THE ANNUAL ACTIVITY REPORT**

### **Self-Appraisal and Input**

Every unit should develop a faculty activity report for the systematic reporting of data and information about the year's performance by each faculty member. Relevant teaching, research, service, and outreach data should be captured in a consistent manner for each faculty member. The expectation that they will collect such data, and complete and submit the report, should be communicated to faculty as part of orientation and reviewed periodically.

In addition to simply reporting data, the process is improved when faculty are required to provide supporting documentation (copies of publications, citations, awards, recognition letters, grant information, etc.) and context information. This provides a more complete picture of faculty performance during the review period and increases the likelihood of accuracy in the assessment. The process is further enhanced



when faculty are asked to provide commentary on their performances relative to the expectations set in their career development plans (or other statements of objectives for the period). This allows for faculty self-appraisal, a powerful tool for perceived fairness and procedural justice. Finally, many units require that faculty members submit updated curricula vitae.

Figure 2 presents an annual activity report form for faculty from one department. In adapting this form, departments should consider the culture and expectations of the department, institution, and discipline, as well as the most appropriate timeline for the reporting of data (e.g., the department might want to use the academic rather than the calendar year.)

#### **APPRAISAL OF FACULTY**

#### **PERFORMANCE BY PEER REVIEW**

#### **COMMITTEE AND/OR CHAIR**

#### **Process Considerations**

The annual faculty performance review can include both the process during which faculty performance is initially “judged or reviewed,” as well as the dialogue between the faculty member and the relevant administrator. In many academic settings, peer review is required as input to the unit administrator. In other settings, the chair alone makes the decision. In either case, the chair or review committee examines the paperwork submitted by each faculty member—career development plan or other statement of goals, annual activity report, updated curriculum vita, and supporting documentation. The faculty member’s performance is then assessed. In an absolute approach to performance appraisal, the assessment is made relative to the expectations that have previously been communicated through department standards and/or the faculty career development plan. Some depart-

### **Figure 1. Career Development Plan**

**Kim Johnson**  
**Department of Adult and Continuing Education**

#### **Research/Scholarship**

Write Chapter for The 200X Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education

- Complete final draft by September 20, 200X

Publish chapter in the 200X Team and Organization Development Sourcebook

- Submit chapter by March, 200X

Publish book review on Mentoring Dilemmas in YYYY Journal

- Submit for review by April 200X

Present research on E-mentoring

- Brownbag to be held in Spring semester

Plan data collection procedures and collect data on Marysville project

- Fall semester
- Assistance will be needed from graduate assistant, as well as secretarial support for transcribing results of field interviews

Initiate study on women’s experience in learning organizations

- Frame key research question in Fall semester, followed by search for possible funding sources
- Teaming with A. Brown

Initiate learning organization research at Zenon Manufacturing

- This grew out of the departmental external review
- Research plan to be completed for submission to chair by January 1, 200X

Developmental Objectives

- Attend university workshop on grantsmanship
- Attend workshop on advanced statistical methods

#### **Teaching**

In addition to teaching three undergraduate and one graduate class, develop PPP 412 into an online course

- Contact virtual university staff by September, 200X
- Meet with Mike Vandyke who has PPP 345 online by September 200X
- Develop a project plan for the remainder of the year by October 31, 200X so that the class can be up next fall

Developmental Objectives

- Attend faculty development workshops on hybrid learning strategies
- Explore collaborative teaching opportunities with other departmental faculty
- Apply for Newman Teaching Fellowship

#### **Public and University Service**

Serve on departmental admissions committee

Co-chair Commission of Professors of Adult and Continuing Education Conference

Serve as department representative to College research committee

Developmental Objectives

- Begin to work with student groups

## Figure 2. Annual Faculty Planning and Performance Summary

### School of Labor and Industrial Relations Michigan State University (Due January 1, 2005) January 1, 2004–December 31, 2004

#### 2004 SELF ASSESSMENT

Please provide a **statement of your 2004 goals** and your performance relative to those goals. How did your teaching, research, service and outreach have an impact—on the School's reputation and visibility, on the profession, on our field of study? Explain or amplify any aspect of your performance or put your achievements into a more complete context for our review.

#### 2004 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

##### 1. Teaching—Credit Courses

- A. **Listing of courses taught:** Please provide course number and title each term, number of students, copies of course syllabi, and other materials you believe will be helpful in assessing the quality of your teaching.
- B. **Please provide any evidence of teaching excellence** and one paragraph regarding anything about your teaching in 2004 about which you wish the performance review committee to be aware.

##### 2. Research and Other Creative Accomplishments: (Please indicate if publications are refereed and provide any available evidence of the impact of the work.)

- A. Publications that appeared in print during 2004: (Give complete citation including page numbers. *For each publication, please indicate if the publication was listed in previous years as accepted for publication. Provide one copy of each publication that will be returned.*)
- B. Accepted for publication but not yet published: (Give publisher or journal and scheduled publication date. *Please indicate if the publication was listed in previous years as accepted for publication. Provide a copy of each publication that will be returned.*)
- C. In Progress (Describe content and status of progress.)
- D. List papers presented at professional meetings or similar venues.
- E. Other Evidence of Scholarship, e.g. grants submitted and grants funded (including nature, amount, and funding source), other creative accomplishments.
- F. Please comment on the **impact of these research activities** on the school's reputation, field and profession.

##### 3. Outreach Accomplishments

- A. **Teaching:** (Non-Credit Courses, Conferences, Other Programs, etc.) Give as much detail as possible including titles of courses or conferences taught and number of teaching hours. *Provide teaching evaluations for each presentation and other evidence of teaching quality. Where evaluations are not available, please indicate.*
- B. **Program Development:** Courses and conferences developed for new client groups; new program formats; new special materials. Give program title, client group and nature of new materials.
- C. **Program Coordination:** Administration of courses and conferences of a relatively routine nature with established client groups. Provide specific information for each course (name, date, program length, location, instructors, number of participants, evaluation).
- D. How did these outreach activities have an impact on the School's reputation and visibility, the field, our profession?
- 4. Please describe School, College, University committees and other MSU activities in which you were involved. What special accomplishments did you have or contributions did you make?
- 5. Please provide evidence of other service, outreach, and/or engagements to the profession and community.
- 6. Other Relevant Accomplishments: (e.g. radio or TV appearances, news media, awards received, etc.)
- 7. What are your goals for 2005 in teaching, research, outreach, and service?
- 8. In what specific additional ways can the School support you in accomplishing these goals?
- 9. Do you wish to identify any issues/concerns that can be addressed by the salary administration process?



ments choose a relative approach to performance appraisal, comparing each faculty member to other faculty members. This is the performance appraisal equivalent to “grading on the curve.”

Many alternative approaches are taken for “finalizing” the appraisal. Some department chairs simply communicate to the faculty member the result of the appraisal in a performance review letter. Others hold a performance review or appraisal meeting with the faculty member to discuss the prior year’s performance, areas of accomplishment and needed improvement, progress toward tenure and/or promotion, and other developmental issues.

To maximize accuracy of the appraisal and to enhance faculty perceptions of fairness of the process, ideally chairs should meet with the faculty member to discuss the review and finalize the appraisal. This also allows for reaping the possible developmental benefits of the process. It is helpful to prepare a draft of the written performance review to share with the faculty member before or during the meeting. The chair should listen openly and be prepared to answer questions so that, if possible, agreement can be reached on each aspect of the review. If agreement cannot be reached, the chair retains responsibility to assess the faculty member’s performance accurately, given the information available.

#### **PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK SESSION AND WRITTEN PERFORMANCE REVIEW** **The Feedback Session**

The following suggestions can help lead to an effective performance appraisal and feedback session:

- *Schedule an appointment with the faculty member.* This allows time for both the chair and the faculty member to prepare for a productive session. Ideally, the chair has

talked with the faculty member numerous times during the year, and the career development plan is current so that there will be no surprises during the session.

- *Give the faculty member a draft copy of the letter or appraisal before or at the beginning of the meeting.* Some argue that gives the faculty member an opportunity to prepare defenses. However, if the purpose is primarily developmental, perceptions of fairness are critically important. If the faculty member has the chance to see the draft letter, she or he is more likely to feel that her or his input is actually meaningful, and that the chair and process are fair.
- *Conduct the meeting in a private place.* Usually no one else should be present at a performance review session. The exception might be in a unit with associate chairs or program leaders who share some administrative responsibilities with the chair. Make sure that telephone calls are held and interruptions avoided.
- *Focus on performance, not personality.* Concentrate first on specifics with respect to teaching, research, service, and/or outreach, relative to individual and/or unit goals and expectations. Discuss strengths and areas that need improvement. Stick to what was done or not done, said or not said. Focus on outcomes and behaviors—things that can be changed.
- *Be specific, discuss results.* Especially with respect to areas in need of improvement, offer specifics—number of publications, ranking of journal, specific teaching concerns, and so on. Focus on outcomes or results for purposes of describing merit, but discuss methods and strategies when

working on development and improvement.

- *Ask questions.* A good review session should be a two-way conversation with the faculty member doing most of the talking. This requires the use of good open-ended questions: “Tell me about your research progress and status.” “What ideas do you have for correcting that?” “Are there ways in which your colleagues or I could be helpful to you on this?”
- *Serve as a coach and a helper.* Faculty performance reviews are difficult because administrators must do two things that can be in conflict. On the one hand the administrator needs to evaluate the work effort of the faculty member; how meritorious was it? On the other hand, administrators should help faculty grow and develop personally and to better help the unit, college, and university accomplish its mission and objectives. Administrators should remember both roles during the review process.
- *Close positively, with a plan.* If some areas need improvement, administrator and faculty member should agree on what improvement is needed, by when, and with which strategies. If major changes are needed or if others must be involved (e.g., advisory or mentoring committee), the agreement may be to schedule a time for follow-up meeting(s) to develop a plan.

#### **The Written Performance Review**

There is no one correct format for writing faculty performance reviews. Ultimately, a chair or administrator must find a format that fits her or his leadership and communication style and the culture of the department or program. Some administrators prefer a letter

style; others prefer to send a memo. Either method can work.

The following outline provides a model that can serve as a checklist in writing review letters. The chair/director can vary the order in which teaching, research/scholarship, outreach, and/or service are discussed to reflect the relative importance of each, given the mission of the unit and assignment of the faculty member.

#### *General Format*

1. *College/unit/university procedure.* Many administrators find it helpful to incorporate boilerplate language at the beginning of each review letter that describes the unit procedure for conducting faculty performance reviews. Consider referencing the relevant unit bylaws and university procedures.
2. *Teaching.* Assess the faculty member's teaching performance, relative to unit and individual expectations and standards of excellence. Such activities can include instructing, advising, and mentoring students and curriculum development. Wherever possible, cite specific evidence of teaching merits, including student ratings and comments, evidence of teaching awards, information from student exit interviews, publication of teaching materials (e.g. cases, software), innovative teaching methodologies, and the teaching portfolio (Seldin, 1993).
3. *Research/Scholarship.* Assess the faculty member's scholarly research and creative activities, relative to unit and individual expectations and standards of excellence. Such activities can include writing proposals, leading funded research, producing and editing scholarly works, and other accomplishments. Wherever possible, cite specific evidence of research merit, including publications;

funded proposals; presentations or performances; exhibits; editing outcomes; and development of manuals, software, and videos. Where possible, specifically describe such evidence of merit in terms of its impact.

4. *Service.* Assess the faculty member's service relative to unit and individual expectations and standards of excellence. Such activities include contributing to the department, college, university, discipline, professional associations, and community. Evidence of service merit should include some assessment of the quality of service activities. For example, evidence could include honors and awards, organizational leadership, and written appraisals from various sources. Where possible, describe evidence of merit specifically in terms of its impact.
5. *Outreach.* At some institutions, outreach or engagement activities constitute an additional area of expected faculty accomplishment for some if not all faculty. Where this is the case, assess the faculty member's outreach activities relative to unit and individual expectations and standards of excellence. Such activities include knowledge extension and/or instructional extension activities. Evidence of outreach merit can include such activities as projects and proposals funded, revenues generated, the successful integration of teaching and research into outreach, and leadership in outreach activities. Where possible, describe evidence of outreach merit specifically in terms of its impact.
6. *Summary.* It is often helpful to summarize the discrete assessments of teaching, research, service, and outreach. For junior faculty, consider including language about progress toward reappointment, tenure, and/or promotion.

7. *Overall classification or rating of performance.* Provide the performance descriptor used by the unit that best describes the performance of the faculty member for each individual performance area. In some units this is a verbal descriptor. In others, it may be a numerical rating. To arrive at an overall rating, appropriate weight must be given to each of the performance areas—teaching, research, service, and/or outreach—depending on the faculty member's assignment.

8. *Next Steps.* Describe the next steps in the performance feedback and development process. At a minimum, faculty members have the right to dispute the information contained in the letter. In some departments, faculty are expected to acknowledge in writing their receipt of the review letter. Some departments have mentoring or personnel committees that work with faculty in certain stages of their careers or whenever the need arises.

Figures 3 through 5 show examples of performance review letters for different faculty situations. Some departments require the signature of the reviewed faculty member to acknowledge receipt of the letter, while others consider this unnecessarily legalistic.

#### **USING PERFORMANCE REVIEW RESULTS**

##### **Recognizing and Rewarding the Exemplary Performer**

While performance review letters for exemplary performers are usually easier (and certainly less anxiety provoking) to compose, you still need to be careful in writing them. Here are some suggestions.

- In every area of the review where appropriate—for example, teach-

**Figure 3. Evaluation Letter—Untenured Assistant Professor, Prior to Reappointment**

Dear Untenured

It is my responsibility to annually evaluate the performance of each faculty member, taking into consideration input from the department advisory committee. The following assessments follow the expectations identified in the letter of offer you received prior to your appointment.

*Teaching:* Your primary assignment has been to teach the first year theory sequence and two sections of XXX 151, as well as a graduate seminar. Teaching the theory sequence has been a considerable challenge. We have talked about the student evaluation forms in which your composite overall rating for these courses is 3.5 out of 5.0. This is below the department threshold for being considered excellent, which is 4.5. The examination of your teaching portfolio does indicate that you have put considerable effort into your courses. However, student comments indicate that your lectures seem to lack variety in teaching techniques and could be better organized. The large class setting posed particular difficulties that you continue to work to overcome. Your willingness to consult with others who have experience teaching large required undergraduate courses seems to have been helpful, and I noticed an improvement in the student evaluation scores in the spring semester. It was clear from them that you know the material very well and that you are a dedicated teacher. I suggest that you examine closely the comments made by the peer review teaching committee. Members of this committee would individually welcome a dialogue with you about these issues. I would also encourage you to continue videotaping class sessions in the coming academic year. With respect to the graduate seminar, all indications from student evaluation forms suggest that you did an excellent job. You should consider whether any of teaching strategies that work so well in this seminar could be adapted to your other courses, different as they are in level and class size. Your teaching performance has been rated as acceptable.

*Research:* With regard to research, the advisory committee and I agree that you are making good progress. Your article in Journal of MMM and the one accepted in the Journal of RRR are a good start. These are Tier One journals in our department listing of journals, and you should continue to publish in them. In looking ahead, however, you need to establish a thematic focus and a research agenda that will be cumulative in building your national reputation. I will ask the mentoring committee to help you in this process. The development of a career plan that includes a statement about your research direction would prove helpful here. Your research performance has been rated as excellent.

*Service and Outreach:* You participate actively in faculty meetings and on the department's admission's committee and you were a panel member at this year's major outreach conference. This is a good level of service for a beginning faculty member. Your service performance has been rated as excellent.

*Summary and Suggestions, Progress Towards Tenure:* Overall you have made a good start. As indicated, you will have to continue to work to improve your teaching in the theory sequence; good teaching is required for tenure within the department. Because the tenure decision takes a cumulative look at the total body of your work and its impact on the field, it is imperative that you articulate your research focus and theme more clearly. The mentoring committee and I will be glad to help. If this letter does not accurately summarize our discussions, or if you have additional questions or concerns about any of its content, please let me know as soon as possible.

ing, research, outreach, and service—cite specific examples of noteworthy performance.

- Reinforce the behavioral skills that contributed to effective performance; for example, “Your creativity in bringing practitioners into the classroom and encouraging students to challenge their assumptions with the real-life experts . . .”
- Reinforce appropriate behavioral skills even if the desired result has not been achieved. There may be factors interfering with the faculty member's performance (e.g. organizational changes, changes

in funding priorities, resistant colleagues, economic or market changes). Be prepared to provide or facilitate additional support to help the faculty member overcome such barriers.

- Be careful not to reinforce actions or behaviors you do not want the faculty member to use, especially when an accomplishment has been achieved by use of less than desirable behaviors or strategies.
- Praise must be sincere to be effective in reinforcing positive performance.

- While the performance review and review letter are excellent for recognizing exemplary performance, reinforcement is most effective when provided as close to the event as possible.

If the merit-based reward system, in place at many institutions, works as it should, exemplary faculty members receive the obvious formal rewards:

- Larger merit salary increases
- Reappointment
- Tenure
- Promotion

**Figure 4. Professor (Any Rank) Performing Well**

Dear Professor:

As required by our department bylaws and university policy, this is your annual written performance review, taking into consideration input from the department advisory committee, and our conversation on February 12, 2XXX.

*Teaching:* Your teaching portfolio excellently presents the philosophy and accomplishments of your instruction over the past year. Your graduate and undergraduate teaching has again been very strong. Students continue to sing your praises during the exit interviews that I conduct with graduating students. They comment, and the student evaluation forms confirm, your creative approach to presenting subject matter in ZZZ 301 that many undergraduates, especially non-majors, find difficult. Your use of case studies with visits from practitioners is frequently singled out. Your student evaluation ratings are once again near the top of faculty in the department.

You have done a very good job as thesis advisor to Mary Smith. Because I was also on her committee, I have observed firsthand the guidance you have given her in her work. Her defense clearly demonstrated the research skills you have honed in her. Your work as a student advisor and advisor to the student chapter of the Association is also acknowledged and appreciated by me and important to the department. The departmental advisory committee has given your teaching a rating of 1.0, the highest rating, placing it in the top quartile, and I concur.

*Research:* You continue to be research active and successful. Your NSF grant was a major accomplishment and the grant proposal submitted to the state, while not funded, was creative and well done. Your publications are aimed at the top tier outlets in our discipline, and our citation review indicates that the two that appeared in the Journal of zzzzzzzzz last year have already been frequently cited. You are progressing well and along the lines that you discussed with the mentoring committee and included in your career development plan. My only concern is with the two articles that we thought would be published and were not. I understand the changing editorial board of the Review, but we need to consider how that work can be refocused while the data is fresh. With the NSF grant you should have a new stream of data to keep your work moving for the next few years. Let me know if I can be of further help. I will continue to pursue leads with the state and will keep you informed of my progress. The departmental advisory committee has rated your research performance last year at 2.0, in the second highest quartile, and I concur.

*Service and Outreach:* Your department service has been very good. Working with the student association is an important contribution. Your active participation in the search committee, including personal requests to encourage minority and female candidates to apply, was especially helpful.

As you know, outreach is an important new initiative in our department. While we have not expected much from faculty in the past, for next year you need to find outlets for the fine work you do among practitioners. Having had more experience in this area than anyone else on the faculty, I will be glad to help you. Let's meet in about a month to discuss some strategies. In the meantime, give some thought to ways your aaaaaa research could be the basis for a workshop at our annual alumni conference. The departmental advisory committee has rated your service/outreach performance as 1.0.

*Summary and Suggestions:* Your performance this year has been very good. You are progressing well, along the lines that you described in your career development plan and discussed with the mentoring committee. Keep up the good work. I will have Pat call you to schedule a meeting about outreach.

*Overall Rating:* Given the department's weighting 50% research, 35% teaching, and 15% service/outreach, the advisory committee recommends and I concur that your overall rating is 1.30, in the department's first quartile.

*Conclusion:* If you have any questions about any of the issues addressed in this letter, please let me know. Thank you for another fine year.

Other informal rewards are also used in many academic units:

- Greater access to graduate teaching and/or research assistants
- Differential assignments, such as more time allocated to areas in which the *overall exemplary performer* has performed well (not one who has performed excellently in

one performance area but poorly in others)

- Travel funds
- More generous support for laboratory equipment, special teaching materials, profession- or discipline-related activities, etc.
- Appointment to prestigious assignments, such as chairing a special committee or college or

university level high-visibility task force

- Requests to mentor junior faculty

Many other such possible informal rewards should be considered. However, remember that some faculty members will find a particular informal reward motivating, while others may have a different preference. At the same

**Figure 5. Full Professor with Performance Problems**

[Note: It is assumed that this faculty member has had prior conversations with the chair about her/his performance. A letter with this tone should not be the first time that a faculty member hears of such concerns.]

Dear Full:

As chair, it is my responsibility to evaluate annually the performance of each faculty member, taking into consideration input from the department personnel committee. Following my meeting with the committee, I prepared a draft performance review letter that I reviewed with you on March 1, 2XXX. This letter reflects this combined input.

*Teaching:* Your undergraduate and graduate teaching performance has been rated as minimally acceptable. Your Student evaluation ratings are 3.0, well below the department mean of 4.0. A review of course syllabi indicates little initiative; they have not changed in the last five years. Despite our new computer lab, you have not incorporated computer assignments into your teaching and have no web page for your class. Student comments indicate that your case studies seem dated. Different methodologies should be considered, including discussion panels, guest lectures, and simulations. Students have also remarked negatively about your extensive travel, the use of teaching assistants to cover classes and lack of accessibility. As I said in last year's review letter, your teaching performance must improve and I am prepared to help. Moreover, our faculty development office offers individual consultations as well as workshops. I will arrange a contact for you with that office. Additionally, I am willing to help faculty to develop their teaching skills by sending them to outside workshops related to instruction, but I must first see an interest, commitment, and faculty effort.

*Research:* You have not written the articles you had planned to write this year and you have no research project underway. There have been no proposals submitted, research funded, or papers presented at professional meetings. Our department guidelines require that to be considered research active you must engage in at least one of these activities. In fact my review of your annual activities reports over the last five years indicates neither publications nor funded research. Again, I will be happy to talk with you about ways to turn some of your activities into publishable materials; I can also suggest some of your colleagues with whom you might make valuable research contributions. Your research performance has been rated as unacceptable.

*Service and Outreach:* Your public service has been acceptable. You have been involved in technical committees, in reviewing papers and in patent activities. However, your institutional service has been modest at best. Last year I identified concerns with respect to your "department citizenship duties." There has been no improvement on this front. Your visibility within the department is still poor, and it is still difficult to contact you when necessary. It is important, that as a senior faculty member, you contribute to the well-being of the department. Additionally, given your consulting experience, devoting some of your efforts to department outreach programs would benefit you and the department. I would like to talk to you about a conference we could bring to campus that seems to link nicely with some of your experiences. Your overall service rating is minimally acceptable.

*Summary and Suggestions:* The advisory committee and I agree that your overall performance this year is rated as unacceptable, given our stated requirement that "a faculty member must be at least acceptable in every performance area (teaching, research, and service) or she/he will receive an overall rating of unacceptable." You must improve your teaching quality and accessibility, and the Department must see you producing research in the form of publications and/or grants. Your departmental citizenship must improve, and we must explore outreach activities as a possible mutually beneficial contribution you can make to the department.

If I have failed to mention or consider accurately any of your activities or have misrepresented our conversations, please feel free to contact me immediately in order to correct the situation. I will call you within the next two weeks to schedule a meeting to discuss your plans for the upcoming year and beyond, what the department needs and expects from you, and how we can work together to help you to make important contributions. I welcome your input and suggestions before or during that meeting.

time, the need for consistent and perceived fairness requires that when multiple faculty members perform at the same exemplary level, the unit must be prepared to offer the same rewards to all—formal and informal.

### **Dealing with the Underperforming or "Problem" Faculty Member**

Few situations are more challenging for chairs than dealing with the "problem" faculty member. Whether the is-

sue is substandard performance or dysfunctional behavior, chairs may face difficult review sessions with such faculty. These issues are particularly troublesome when they are continuing. Fortunately, many institutions offer resources to assist the chair, including the academic human resources office, employee assistance program, or university physician. Early advice from these resources can be critical in reaching a favorable outcome for prob-

lem faculty member situations. Additionally, in such situations the chair should consider using the following six steps.

*Step 1: Opening the meeting—state what you've observed.* It can be helpful here to explain the purpose of the meeting in terms of the specific performance or behavior concerns at issue. A non-accusatory way of starting the meeting might be to use an

opening statement such as one of the following:

- “I have noticed that . . .”
- “I have a concern that . . .”
- “I need to let you know . . .”
- “I want to discuss . . .”
- “I have some thoughts about . . .”

*Step 2: Wait for a response—make sure that the faculty member understands the existence of a problem and its consequences.*

A key concept here is getting faculty member agreement. If she or he does not agree that a problem exists, it is unlikely that there will be a change in performance. To do so, consider

- Citing specific examples, using phrases like
  - “I’ve noticed that . . .”
  - “I’ve observed this problem several times.”
  - “As discussed in our last performance review meeting . . .”
- Clarifying consequences (both natural and imposed)
  - Natural (help faculty member to understand the results or outcome of what he or she is doing wrong or failing to do right)—“If this continues, you will continue to have high turnover of your research assistants.”
  - Imposed (help faculty member to understand the consequences if there is no change)—“If your performance record continues on this trajectory, I will not be able to recommend you for promotion.”

*Step 3: Remind the faculty member of the goal: Refer to past reviews, unit criteria, or individual career plan.* Referring to previously communicated expectations can be very useful. Additionally, many units discuss unit values or behavioral expectations for themselves as professional colleagues. These provide powerful forewarn-

ing when the faculty issue being addressed is behavioral.

*Step 4: Ask for specific solutions. Discuss alternatives.* Get commitment to act. Explore with the faculty member alternative causes for substandard performance—for example, analyzing the cause(s): (a) Lack of knowledge or skill; (b) Lack of motivation; or (c) Lack of clear expectations.

- Ask the faculty member to suggest possible solutions, and suggest alternatives as appropriate.
- Get a commitment to act—What actions will be taken? (Specify actions, not just desired results.) What is the person going to do to change the performance?

*Step 5: Agree together—close the meeting.* Summarize all agreements that have been reached. Thank the faculty member for his or her participation, and review how and when you will follow up. Finally, offer encouragement wherever possible.

*Step 6: Prepare a written summary of the meeting, including any agreements.* While the meeting is fresh in your mind, document the meeting, both from a substantive perspective as well as an affective one. This will be useful if the performance or behavior does not improve.

### **Using Performance Review Results for Faculty Development**

Ideally, performance appraisal or review is only a part of a broader process of faculty performance development. The chair and unit must ask “How do we use this information to help faculty members perform as effectively as possible?” While each institution will have formalized resources available to help, depending on the nature of the problem (e.g. faculty development offices, teaching improvement programs, grant writing

workshops, employee assistance programs), chairs should also consider general and unit-based strategies.

The most important general strategy is to use “early warning” indicators to identify potential problems before they become intractable. Such indicators can be behavioral (e.g., curtailed attendance at faculty meetings or other departmental events), or performance based (declining publication rate or teaching evaluations). It is helpful to work with the faculty member in developing a detailed description of the problems to be overcome and articulating the specific outcomes expected. Finally, the chair should explore cross-department and cross-college experiences and exposure to introduce new options and possibilities to the faculty member.

Specific unit-based strategies for improving teaching, research, service and outreach include the following:

- *Teaching.* Have the faculty member:
  - Pair with an experienced, respected faculty instructor in an assignment
  - Consult with respected instructors in the department or college
  - Attend disciplinary workshops or national meetings on effective teaching
  - Investigate competitive grant programs for instructional improvement funds
  - Consider publication of scholarly papers on pedagogy in the discipline
  - Use sabbatical leave to develop new instructional skills or new courses
- *Research.* Help the faculty member to
  - Become involved with existing research programs led by other faculty



- Identify potential research collaborators on campus or at other institutions
- Use sabbatical leave to develop new research skills and directions
- *Service.* Discuss with the faculty member
  - Selective appointment to key unit committees
  - Involvement with faculty who hold leadership roles in professional associations
- *Outreach.* Suggest that the faculty member
  - Become involved in existing outreach programs led by other faculty
  - Identify potential campus collaborators for outreach activities
  - Use sabbatical leave to develop new outreach skills and directions

#### DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

A sound process of faculty performance review and development can help to foster a unit's and institution's efforts toward building and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment. Widespread involvement of faculty in the process of developing departmental standards and broadly communicating those standards through sound mentoring and other means builds a sense of faculty ownership for the process and a sense of fair process and support from the department chair. Furthermore, meeting with the faculty member before finalizing a written performance appraisal can help to eliminate unintended and unintentional problems.

At the same time, special issues sometimes arise in units with few diverse faculty. One issue is the common practice of over-involvement of minority and women faculty in service activities. At times this is caused by the

institution's policies or practices, such as requiring that every search committee have minority and female representation. At other times it is caused by the natural tendency of minority or female students to seek out faculty members like themselves for mentoring, counseling, and feedback. The cause may be the self-motivation and direction of the faculty member who wants to "give back" to his or her community. Chairs and units administrators have a responsibility to monitor these activities so that they do not interfere with the faculty member's research and teaching. With guidance from the chair or unit administrator, it may be possible to manage these activities so that they support the faculty member's research and teaching agenda.

A second issue sometimes arises with respect to the research/scholarship of faculty members from underrepresented groups. At times the minority or female faculty member's research interests or outlets may be targeted to issues around gender or ethnicity. They may be perceived by the unit or chair as too specialized or not mainstream. Managing these difficulties can be aided by open discussions among the entire faculty about research and publication outlets, discussions that are enriched where necessary with information about high quality but "nontraditional" research outlets and directions. The use of the faculty career development plan, with its a priori discussion of intended research direction, can also serve as a vehicle to minimize such problems.

#### POST-TENURE REVIEW

Since the mid-1990s, many universities have considered, if not adopted, post-tenure review processes. These processes vary greatly, encompassing regular periodic reviews for all tenured

faculty to reviews only for "underperforming" faculty. They sometimes include peer review, and at other times review by administrators (chair and/or dean). The reasons for adoption are varied—for example, threatened legislative action, perceptions that nonperforming faculty are protected by tenure (so-called deadwood), and a development tool to help all faculty.

Whatever form post-tenure review takes at an institution, the process works best when viewed as a part of a larger process of performance development. Just as performance appraisal cannot be successful if looked at as an isolated event, absent the setting and communicating of standards and goals, effective post-tenure review requires similar discussion/agreement on workloads and standards. The post-tenure review should be the evaluative component of this broader process of helping faculty succeed and achieve.

#### THE ROLE OF THE DEAN

Much of what has been written assumes that the chair and unit handle faculty performance reviews in a procedurally correct and effective manner. Deans play two critical roles in the process. First, deans must set high expectations and provide support for chairs with regard to this critical aspect of faculty development. Chairs are at the front line of faculty development, but they need resources, guidance, and monitoring assistance from the dean's office. For example, in the absence of formal post-tenure review processes, such monitoring assistance should include identification of faculty with a recent pattern of substandard performance reviews. Additionally, deans must communicate clearly the college expectations for faculty, as well as the performance environment (e.g. workload, grant activity, etc.).



The second and more important role for deans is to support chairs when they make tough performance-based decisions. In the process of building a high-achieving unit, chairs need backing from the dean when they make the difficult decisions to give a faculty member a poor performance review or poor merit increase.

## CONCLUSION

The faculty is a college or university's most important resource, the human capital that comprises the essence of the institution. Helping faculty to be successful is one of the most important roles of the chair or unit administrator. The faculty performance review, as a part of a broad process of faculty performance development, is a critical tool that dedicated administrators should use to help faculty perform excellently, as they are inclined to do. This is an essential building block for excellent units and institutions.

## REFERENCES

Curry, T. H. (2000). Moving from performance appraisal to performance management. In E. Kossek & R. Block, *Managing human resources in the 21st century: From core concepts to strategic choice* (pp. 15.1–15.22). Cincinnati: Thompson Learning.

Curry puts performance appraisal in the broader context of performance management for organizations of all types. The chapter explores the legal issues involved in performance management and appraisal, roles in the process, common biases and how they can be overcome, and implementation strategies. The chapter also discusses new developments in performance management including linking the process to the organization's strategies and multi-rater approaches.

Davidson, J. E. (1995). Temptation of performance appraisal abuse in employment litigation, *Virginia Law Review*, 81, 1605–1629.

Legal issues with respect to performance appraisal arise when organizations use them as tools to make or defend important human resources decisions—merit pay, promotion, retention, and dismissal, for example.

Courts have frequently been asked to judge those decisions, most frequently when the plaintiff alleges that the decision was based upon prohibitive characteristics, e.g. race, gender, national origin, age, etc. The defendant employer then relies on the performance appraisal, when done properly, to demonstrate that the decision was in fact based upon merit and not the alleged factor.

Mathis, R., & Jackson, J. (2003). *Human resource management* (10th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western.

Mathis and Jackson have prepared one of the most popular human resources management textbooks used in colleges and universities at the graduate and undergraduate level.

Seldin, P. (1993). *Successful use of teaching portfolios*. Bolton, MA: Anker.

Seldin is perhaps the leading scholar on the use of teaching portfolios as a tool for faculty members to share information about their teaching, including documents and materials which collectively describe the quality of a faculty member's teaching performance.

## Statement of Purpose

*Effective Practices for Academic Leaders* is a monthly publication that assists leaders to better manage their work agendas and make key decisions by offering critical advice and information in a concise format for ready application in administrative life.

Each monthly 16-page briefing sets out the context and fundamental issues on a key topic; summarizes key scholarly research findings to ground administrative practice; offers insights and tips on effective practices drawn from real world experiences, and presents an annotated bibliography. Each issue is written by an acknowledged authority.

These briefings cover a wide array of leadership, management, and governance practices associated with the roles and responsibilities of academic administration, with special emphasis on topics germane to academic departments. They also address the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed for exemplary administrative performance.

An online subscription provides unlimited access to all users of an institutional network.

## 2006 ISSUES

## VOLUME 1

Walter H. Gmelch: *Stress Management*

Theodore H. Curry: *Faculty Performance Reviews*

Irene W. D. Hecht: *Becoming a Department Chair*

Trudy W. Banta & Lauryl A. Lefebvre: *Leading Change through Assessment*

Jerry R. Thomas: *Fostering Scholarly Research*

Donald E. Hanna & Michael J. Johnson: *The Challenges and Opportunities of Technology in Higher Education*

Carole J. Bland & Kelly Risby: *Faculty Development*

Dan Wheeler: *Change Management*

Betsy E. Brown: *Supporting Early Faculty Careers*

Michael J. Dooris & Louise Sandmeyer: *Academic Planning*

Mary Deane Sorcinelli: *Teaching and Learning*

Ann Springer: *Legal Issues*