Conducting Effective Faculty Reviews

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February 7, 2024
Conducting Effective Faculty Annual Reviews:

- Purpose of annual reviews
- Rationale
- DEO role
- Faculty engagement vs underperformance
- Strategies for managing performance issues
- Share concerns/best practices
What are the Purposes of the Faculty Annual Review?

- Assessment – both retrospective and prospective
- Engagement
- Mentoring
- Documentation
Faculty are our most important resource
Faculty deserve feedback
There must be a balance between faculty independence and self direction, and the mission of the unit and University
Transparency and clarity are essential to an effective process.

Rationale
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→ Faculty should participate in the process of evaluation and development.
→ Faculty career development is ongoing even though writing the review is an annual process.
→ Expectations may/should change over the faculty career. The annual review is part of a larger picture of growth and development.
Rationale

→ “Merit” pay decisions require an effective performance appraisal.
→ Equity is the issue in compensation, internal and external, not just amount.
Factors to Consider

- Faculty Member (Portfolio, Personality, Relationship)
- Track & Related Policies
- Departmental Standards & Culture
- Social Identities
- Rank & Career Stage
As a DEO:

→ Establish clear departmental standards and expectations
  • What are the expectations for scholarship, teaching and service?
  • How do you assure equitable distribution of workload?
  • This may be related to rank/track

→ Articulate the process that will be followed for conducting the reviews
  • What do you expect the faculty to provide?
    • CV, personal statement, self assessment?
    • How do the materials get to you?

→ Encourage faculty members to perform a self-assessment of past year performance
  • Review goals set previously
  • Determine progress towards promotion where applicable
  • Outline any concerns/impediments faced during previous year
As a DEO:

- Conduct **performance feedback sessions**, as required by departmental/collegiate process.
  - Should be face to face
  - Address previous goals; set new goals
  - Discuss success/impediments from previous year
    - Provide specific examples
  - Assess/address progress towards promotion if appropriate
  - Document and address issues of professionalism
  - What else do they need? Do not overpromise
As a DEO:

- Develop **written documentation of the performance review process and outcomes, per collegiate requirements; share documentation with the faculty member and place in ePersonnel file.**

- The faculty member has rebuttal rights – but cannot change the document. If writes a rebuttal it travels with the review.

- If you delegate this responsibility you need to ensure the evaluator knows the parameters of what you would be willing to support and any other observations you may have.
Professionalism

In our environment the issue of professionalism has loomed large as a concern.

Addressing issues is an important part of the annual review.

It is not a stand alone to deny promotion and/or tenure.

However, addressing concerns early may prevent issues down the road.

- [https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/professional-ethics-and-academic-responsibility](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/professional-ethics-and-academic-responsibility)
Questions to Help Achieve Discussion During the Faculty Review Meeting

Use open-ended questions to get the conversation going. Avoid "YES-NO" responses to promote conversation.

→ What have been your successes in teaching, research, service, and outreach over the last year?
→ In what areas could you improve?
→ What ideas do you have for further developing your career?
→ What have been the most difficult problems that you have faced?
→ Where do you see your future in the unit, the profession?
→ How do you see this position developing?
→ How can I help you?
Actionable Feedback

→ The reviewee should leave the meeting knowing:
  • What the expectations are
  • How well they are meeting the expectations
  • What they are doing well
  • Where they could improve performance
  • What resources may be available to them
  • Whether shorter term follow up is needed

→ Some listen better than others
  • Hence the importance of follow up documentation
Managing performance
Poor performance results from a lack of:

- Direction
- Clarity
- Motivation
- Confidence
- Ability
Why bother?

- Managing underperformance is a huge energy drain
- Managing underperformance distracts from other things

- And...
- Demonstrating concern can change performance
- Demonstrating the will sends messages to others in the group
- Mitigating the cost of NOT managing the performance is key
How to prepare

Let’s be honest – these are hard

→ Prepare yourself; have a loose agenda with talking points
→ Consider role play with a trusted colleague
→ Mind shift – it is NOT the person – it is the situation
→ Do you need to be right – or do you want to be effective?
→ Can you change their personality? No, but perhaps you can change the behavior
In the meeting

- Keep your mind open to possibilities and alternatives
- Listen carefully and actively
- Show empathy and compassion
- Be prepared to hear something you were not expecting
- Problem solve
- Provide resources
CONFRONTING NEW/CONTINUED PERFORMANCE ISSUES

➔ Open the meeting - state what you've observed
  • I have a concern…I want to discuss (“I” statements)

➔ Wait for a response – are you getting agreement?
  • If no, change is going to be difficult but persevere!
  • If yes then it is important to
    • Cite examples; review past discussions; clarify consequences both natural and imposed

➔ Remind them of the goal
  • This can lead to a review of expectations; unit goals
CONFRONTING NEW/CONTINUED PERFORMANCE ISSUES

→ Ask for specific solutions - discuss alternatives - get commitment to act
  • Ensure the individual is part of the solution
  • Prepare to be flexible – this is in part a negotiation

→ Agree together - close the meeting
  • Summarize what you have heard to ensure clarity

→ Prepare a written summary of the meeting
  • Include any agreements and resources
Group Discussion

What are the most challenging aspects of conducting useful and effective faculty annual performance reviews in your unit?

What strategies have you used to implement effective and meaningful annual reviews?
Conclusions

- Regular faculty review is critical for development and engagement
- Expectations should be clear
- Examples should be given
- Feedback should be actionable
- Successes and concerns should be addressed and documented
Relevant Policies

- Tenure track probationary
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.5
- Post tenure review
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty/review-tenured-faculty-members
- Clinical Track
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.9
- Instructional Track
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.11
- Research Track
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty#10.10
- Faculty Dispute
  - https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/faculty-dispute-procedures