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# DEVELOPING TRANSPARENT AND DIALOGIC SYSTEMS FOR FACULTY PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION IN A COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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**Abstract**

*Interviews were conducted with the seven department heads in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to obtain descriptions of the current systems of faculty assessment and evaluation. These confirmed that seven distinct systems to collect, evaluate and report information were in use. Faculty in ACES were surveyed to identify how they believe their performance in teaching, research, outreach/extension and service should be measured. Faculty indicated that multiple measures in each category of activity provide useful information. The survey also asked faculty how their performance should be documented, how decisions should be made and how results should be reported. The faculty indicate clear preferences for each of these processes. The interviews and survey are initial steps towards making faculty performance assessment and evaluation systems in the College of ACES more dialogic and transparent.*

## Introduction

The increased demand for accountability in personnel assessment and evaluation in higher education has come from many sectors, including students and their parents, state and federal legislators and policy-makers, and the general public (Fossey, 1999). The interest of students and their parents in how well faculty perform has increased as the cost of a college education has risen. The interest of legislators and policy-makers has increased as requests for funding from public educational institutions have grown larger. And the interest of the public has increased. Negative publicity about institutions of higher education occurs more frequently, and it has become more obvious that a productive higher education system is fundamental to our nation's social and economic well being.

Effective faculty assessment and evaluation systems are in the best interest of colleges and universities and their faculty. A strong assessment and evaluation system will lead to opportunities for faculty development that, in turn, will allow faculty to earn the greatest rewards for their contributions. The current interest of colleges and universities in the evaluation of faculty performance is exemplified by a recent issue of *New Directions in Institutional Research* devoted entirely to this topic (Colbeck, 2002). Ultimately, an effective system will lead to the best decisions about which faculty to retain, promote and tenure and, hence, to a more productive higher education system.

Evidence indicates that many faculty and administrators in higher education are dissatisfied with current faculty evaluation and reward systems. The Sid W. Richardson Foundation (1997) surveyed a sample of 100 provosts, 157 deans, and 546 faculty members from 135 institutions of higher education with membership in the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges and the Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities. Twenty-three percent of the

provosts, 29% of the deans, and 51% of the faculty favored changes to the current faculty evaluation system.

Much of the literature on faculty assessment and evaluation focuses on classroom instruction, with relatively little information on other aspects of faculty work, including research, outreach, and service. However, a 1994 "National Survey on the Reexamination of Faculty Roles and Rewards" by the Carnegie Foundation provides evidence that many colleges and universities are seeking new ways to assess faculty performance in the areas of research and outreach, as well as teaching (Glassick, Huber & Maeroff, 1997). Few examples of faculty evaluation systems have been fully described in the literature. One recent example from Carl J. Huberty, Chair of the Department of Educational Psychology at The University of Georgia, details his personal faculty assessment and evaluation system (2000). Huberty lists the elements that he considers, including 12 elements for teaching, 8 for research, 8 for service, and 6 for administration (Table 2, p. 244). Unfortunately, many assessment and evaluation systems are not this transparent to faculty.

While transparency is a necessary characteristic of a successful faculty assessment program, this alone is not sufficient. Another essential characteristic is that the system be dialogic or, as Byrnes (2001) states, ". . . a joint and mutually supportive activity among faculty members, the department, and the institution" (p. 34). Many current faculty assessment and evaluation systems are not dialogic. For example, Huberty does not describe how he selected the particular variables he uses, other than to mention that some student evaluation of teaching items were ". . . selected by the department faculty as a whole" (p. 243). In contrast, Rosenfeld and Long (1992) describe an evaluation system used in the Department of Communications at the University of North Carolina that was devised by the chair and full professors and endorsed by the faculty before it was adopted. This approach agrees with Arreola's (2000) contention that the most effective faculty assessment systems will involve the faculty in the selection of the variables to be assessed, through a dialog between faculty and administration.

An important aspect of the performance assessment process is the selection of faculty roles and their definition through activities that faculty undertake (e.g., see Arreola, p. 3). The traditional faculty roles in teaching, research, outreach and service can each be defined through a range of activities. Faculty should have input into the selection of those activities that are to be used in the assessment and evaluation process in order to ". . . begin the political process of gaining faculty acceptance" (Arreola, p. 2).

Although no one right way or one perfect set of variables exists to consider in faculty assessment and evaluation, these processes do need to be made more transparent and dialogic. The original U.S. "Colleges of Agriculture" have, since their inception, had three major missions: research, teaching, and outreach or service. Faculty members in these colleges are expected to make significant contributions to at least one and often all three of these mission areas. How are the diverse contributions of these faculty members to be assessed and evaluated by their departments? How are these assessments and the evaluations derived from them to be justified to college administrators? This study addresses these questions in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign through interviews with the seven department heads about the faculty performance assessment and evaluation processes used in their departments, and through a survey of the college faculty on this process, including their perceptions of the transparency of the system and which activities should be used to define the faculty roles that they undertake.

## Purpose

The purposes of this study are to describe the faculty assessment and evaluation processes in use in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences (ACES) at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and to identify faculty preferences for

documenting, measuring, evaluating and reporting their performance. A desirable outcome of the study is to provide ideas and stimulus for change towards more dialogic and transparent faculty performance assessment systems. Descriptions of the current systems of faculty assessment and evaluation were obtained through interviews conducted with the seven department heads. These confirmed that seven distinct systems for faculty assessment and evaluation were in use in the college. These systems varied in many aspects, large and small, including what information was collected from faculty members, who assessed that information, and how that assessment was used for evaluation (e.g., raises, promotions) of the faculty members. In order to identify how faculty believe their performance *should* be assessed and evaluated, a survey of faculty in the College of ACES was then conducted. The survey is a first step toward making the system more dialogic and, hence, more transparent. The results of the interviews and survey have been shared with faculty and administrators in the college.

## Procedures

### *Department Head Interviews*

Interviews to examine departmental systems of faculty evaluation and reward, with an emphasis on teaching, were conducted by two of the researchers with each of the seven department heads in the College of ACES during April and May 2000. Each head was asked the same series of questions about collection, analysis and use of information for faculty assessment and evaluation. All interviews were taped (with permission) and later transcribed. Each department head had the opportunity to review the transcript and to provide corrections and additions to the information it contained. Several department heads also provided copies of written materials used in their departmental assessment and evaluation processes. After all interviews were completed, a summary of the departmental processes was shared with the department heads and other college administrators, as well as with the faculty.

### *Faculty Survey*

In the fall of 2000, all tenure-track faculty in the College of ACES were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding the annual performance assessment and evaluation process. Respondents indicated the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with each of 94 statements related to faculty performance assessment and evaluation in the college, using a seven-point Likert-type scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree with the statement
2 = Disagree with the statement
3 = Slightly Disagree with the statement
4 = Neither agree nor disagree with the statement
5 = Slightly Agree with the statement
6 = Agree with the statement
7 = Strongly Agree with the statement

The statements on the instrument were derived from the interviews with the department heads and from the literature. A panel consisting of faculty from the College of Engineering and from the Office of Instructional Resources reviewed the draft instrument for content validity. In addition, the instrument was reviewed by the associate deans for academic programs, research and extension. The instrument was field tested at another land-grant university by administering the survey to 30 faculty. Other than concerns regarding language specific to the University of Illinois, the instrument was found to be valid and reliable for the intended purposes.

Data were collected through a secure website. An electronic message was sent to all tenure-track faculty in the college, requesting their participation and indicating how to access the instrument. Of 240 faculty members in the population, 132 (55%) provided useable responses after the initial request and four follow-up reminders by e-mail. Responses were kept confidential; data were made available to the investigators in an Excel file with no identification of the respondent except by department and rank. Since faculty were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, no non-response follow-up was conducted. However, response rates across the seven

departments and across the three faculty ranks did not differ from the distributions in the population.

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Frequency responses for each of the 94 statements were calculated to provide a relative ranking of statements. Data were analyzed by department and by faculty rank and appointment; only data from the total respondent group are reported in this document to protect the anonymity of departments. Caution should be taken in reviewing the results, since the results cannot be inferred statistically to the population.

## Results

### *Department Head Interviews*

Each of the seven department heads reported that information was collected annually on faculty contributions in the areas of research, teaching, outreach/extension and service. Six department heads collected information for the calendar year; one department used a two-year period. The contributions in the four areas were weighted according to percentages agreed upon by the faculty member and head in four departments, according to official appointment percentages in two departments and equally in one department. Five of the departments had developed their own forms for use in faculty assessment and evaluation; one department used the university promotion and tenure format and one only required an updated curriculum vita.

Three measures of teaching were used in all seven departments: number of courses taught, student ratings and undergraduate advising. Peer evaluations, number of students taught and efforts to improve courses were considered in six departments, while advising of student organizations, teaching grants/awards and peer evaluation were considered in five. Other measures of teaching that were mentioned less frequently included: efforts to improve teaching (4 departments), informal classroom observations (4), publications on teaching (2), contributions to college or university teaching efforts (2), information from student focus groups (2) and information from a meeting of the head with the faculty member (2).

In two departments, the head was the sole evaluator of information collected from the faculty. Four department heads obtained input from other faculty members and one department head used a colleague outside the university as an evaluator. Six of the department heads then converted their evaluations into a numerical scale. Four of them ranked faculty across all professorial ranks, whereas the other three ranked faculty within each professorial rank.

All seven department heads informed faculty of the outcome of the annual assessment and evaluation process via a form letter. Two of the heads also arranged a meeting with each faculty member in the department to discuss the results of the annual assessment and evaluation process.

## Faculty Survey

### *Documentation*

For reporting and discussion purposes, the combination of Strongly Agree and Agree responses will be referred to as "Agree." The Strongly Disagree and Disagree responses will be referred to as "Disagree." The percents of respondents are combined for reporting purposes.

Faculty responded to eight statements related to how performance should be documented. On the seven-point scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7), respondents Agreed (69%) that a meeting with the department head should be held to discuss the performance report (Table 1). There was some preference given for including an updated vita in addition to the annual report (44%), but *not* using only the vita (21% Disagree) as the annual report. There also was some preference for using a two-year rolling average for documentation (36%) and for basing documentation on the previous calendar year (33%) as opposed to previous academic year (25%). Using a format created by the department (36%) or the university promotion and tenure guidelines (31%) were similar in agreement.

Table 1.
*Agreement/Disagreement with statements about faculty performance assessment*

| | Percent of Respondents | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***STATEMENT*** | **1 SD** | **2 D** | **3 SLD** | **4 N** | **5 SLA** | **6 A** | **7 SA** |
| Documentation should include a meeting with the department head to discuss the report. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 14 | 27 | 42 |
| In addition to the annual report, faculty should submit an updated curriculum vita to the department head annually. | 5 | 11 | 7 | 18 | 12 | 26 | 18 |
| The annual faculty performance assessment should be based on activities from the previous two years (a rolling average"). | 9 | 11 | 8 | 20 | 14 | 21 | 17 |
| Departments should create their own reporting format. | 12 | 11 | 8 | 17 | 13 | 19 | 17 |
| The annual faculty performance assessment should be based on activities from the previous calendar year. | 10 | 11 | 6 | 30 | 10 | 16 | 17 |
| The annual report should follow campus promotion and tenure format. | 11 | 7 | 7 | 29 | 15 | 17 | 14 |
| The annual faculty performance assessment should be based on activities from the previous academic year. | 14 | 12 | 7 | 33 | 9 | 15 | 10 |
| The annual report should be an updated curriculum vita. | 18 | 13 | 20 | 19 | 10 | 9 | 10 |
| **TEACHING PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED BY:** | | | | | | | |
| peer observation reports | 1 | 2 | 8 | 18 | 21 | 39 | 14 |
| peer assessment of course materials | 2 | 2 | 8 | 12 | 36 | 30 | 11 |
| self assessment of teaching | 2 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 29 | 30 | 11 |
| graduate student advising activities | 6 | 6 | 6 | 13 | 20 | 33 | 15 |
| contributions to developing new courses | 4 | 5 | 6 | 11 | 35 | 28 | 11 |
| student assessment of advising | 4 | 3 | 7 | 15 | 33 | 33 | 5 |
| contributions to college/campus teaching improvement | 6 | 5 | 4 | 14 | 30 | 29 | 11 |
| ICES (student ratings) scores | 10 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 29 | 30 | 14 |
| awards received for teaching | 8 | 5 | 6 | 14 | 22 | 27 | 17 |
| teaching portfolio | 6 | 5 | 3 | 21 | 30 | 25 | 9 |
| undergraduate student advising activities | 8 | 5 | 7 | 17 | 23 | 28 | 12 |
| conference with the department head | 7 | 5 | 9 | 29 | 23 | 17 | 8 |
| participation in conferences and/or seminars which focus on teaching | 10 | 8 | 7 | 20 | 33 | 17 | 6 |
| student focus group feedback | 6 | 9 | 13 | 27 | 21 | 20 | 5 |
| publications related to teaching and learning | 12 | 15 | 5 | 14 | 17 | 23 | 11 |
| number of courses taught | 11 | 12 | 9 | 16 | 23 | 21 | 8 |
| student club advising and activities | 12 | 13 | 8 | 11 | 28 | 21 | 5 |
| alumni feedback | 9 | 10 | 14 | 27 | 22 | 13 | 5 |
| department head observation of teaching | 10 | 9 | 15 | 31 | 17 | 11 | 5 |
| enrollment trends in courses taught | 13 | 13 | 12 | 17 | 27 | 11 | 6 |
| student performance in courses taught | 16 | 13 | 14 | 26 | 15 | 13 | 3 |
| number of Instructional Units[a] generated | 16 | 20 | 10 | 20 | 23 | 7 | 3 |

| *STATEMENT* | Percent of Respondents | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **1 SD** | **2 D** | **3 SLD** | **4 N** | **5 SLA** | **6 A** | **7 SA** |
| **TEACHING PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED BY:** | | | | | | | |
| recognition (awards) received by students | 18 | 13 | 16 | 23 | 15 | 11 | 2 |
| availability of course materials on-line | 17 | 17 | 15 | 22 | 18 | 5 | 5 |
| **RESEARCH PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED BY:** | | | | | | | |
| number of publications in premier journals in the field | 1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 40 | 38 |
| impact of the research program | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 28 | 36 | 27 |
| peer evaluation of research activities | 0 | 1 | 3 | 11 | 27 | 36 | 23 |
| number of invited papers, posters and presentations | 2 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 35 | 39 | 14 |
| citations in other published works | 1 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 34 | 34 | 17 |
| number of refereed books and chapters | 2 | 1 | 5 | 14 | 28 | 36 | 14 |
| self assessment of research program | 3 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 36 | 26 | 14 |
| awards received for research | 6 | 5 | 6 | 8 | 30 | 27 | 18 |
| quality of multidisciplinary activities | 5 | 7 | 7 | 11 | 28 | 32 | 10 |
| student performance in research | 5 | 3 | 10 | 19 | 28 | 25 | 8 |
| conference with the department head | 8 | 2 | 8 | 24 | 23 | 21 | 13 |
| number of bulletins, monographs and pamphlets | 2 | 4 | 11 | 17 | 39 | 20 | 5 |
| external funds generated | 9 | 5 | 5 | 11 | 35 | 26 | 8 |
| placement of graduate students after graduation | 8 | 5 | 10 | 17 | 34 | 20 | 7 |
| number of popular press publications | 8 | 11 | 14 | 14 | 36 | 10 | 5 |
| **OUTREACH AND EXTENSION PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED BY:** | | | | | | | |
| impact of the outreach/extension program | 0 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 15 | 36 | 33 |
| responsiveness to outreach/extension needs of clientele | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 16 | 42 | 27 |
| use of research in outreach/extension programs | 0 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 23 | 36 | 24 |
| leadership of outreach/extension teams/task forces | 0 | 2 | 3 | 12 | 22 | 36 | 20 |
| peer evaluation of outreach/extension programs | 2 | 1 | 3 | 8 | 30 | 36 | 14 |
| contributions to outreach/extension teams | 0 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 30 | 30 | 14 |
| participation in educational efforts of state agencies and stakeholder groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 13 | 27 | 34 | 13 |
| leadership in educational efforts to support state and federal policy formations | 1 | 2 | 4 | 16 | 32 | 29 | 11 |
| number of refereed publications | 2 | 1 | 7 | 13 | 33 | 27 | 11 |
| awards received for outreach/extension programs | 5 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 27 | 25 | 17 |
| number of presentations made | 3 | 2 | 6 | 12 | 37 | 27 | 8 |
| number of bulletins published | 2 | 3 | 5 | 14 | 41 | 23 | 8 |
| conference with the department head | 4 | 4 | 3 | 26 | 21 | 21 | 16 |
| collaboration with colleagues from other states | 2 | 2 | 5 | 20 | 29 | 30 | 5 |
| number of popular press articles published | 2 | 5 | 8 | 16 | 35 | 20 | 9 |
| department head observation of outreach/extension programs | 5 | 8 | 2 | 21 | 23 | 25 | 11 |
| self assessment of outreach/extension programs | 5 | 4 | 6 | 14 | 36 | 22 | 8 |
| amount of external funds generated | 7 | 8 | 8 | 20 | 33 | 14 | 4 |
| Use of distance learning technology | 7 | 10 | 8 | 23 | 23 | 18 | 5 |

| *STATEMENT* | Percent of Respondents 1 SD | 2 D | 3 SLD | 4 N | 5 SLA | 6 A | 7 SA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **SERVICE PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE MEASURED BY:** | | | | | | | |
| leadership role on professional society committees | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 27 | 41 | 19 |
| leadership role on departmental committees | 3 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 27 | 36 | 20 |
| leadership role on college committees | 4 | 2 | 3 | 11 | 29 | 36 | 16 |
| leadership role on university committees | 3 | 3 | 5 | 12 | 32 | 27 | 17 |
| peer evaluation of service activities | 3 | 5 | 7 | 11 | 35 | 27 | 8 |
| self assessment of service activities | 3 | 4 | 8 | 14 | 39 | 22 | 9 |
| conference with the department head | 6 | 3 | 6 | 23 | 25 | 20 | 14 |
| consulting to outside organizations, groups and universities | 8 | 3 | 5 | 22 | 33 | 21 | 6 |
| leadership role on community civic committees and activities | 12 | 9 | 11 | 24 | 26 | 11 | 5 |
| **OVERALL PERFORMANCE:** | | | | | | | |
| Teaching, research, outreach/extension and service performance should be measured against goals that were set. | 0 | 2 | 5 | 15 | 27 | 27 | 23 |
| Teaching, research outreach/extension and service performance should be measured against the percent of appointment. | 9 | 4 | 8 | 11 | 24 | 23 | 20 |
| Teaching, research, outreach/extension and service performance should be measured against the percent of time allocated to each, regardless of formal appointment. | 8 | 5 | 15 | 11 | 17 | 23 | 20 |
| Teaching, research, outreach/extension and service performance should be measured equally (25% each). | 67 | 18 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| **DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:** | | | | | | | |
| Performance should be evaluated by a group of faculty and the department head. | 6 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 27 | 39 |
| Faculty should be rated within their peer rank group (Assistant, Associate or Full Professor). | 7 | 5 | 11 | 11 | 20 | 21 | 25 |
| The process used in my department to assess faculty performance is equitable. | 8 | 7 | 8 | 20 | 18 | 24 | 11 |
| The process used in my department to assess faculty performance is clear. | 8 | 10 | 12 | 9 | 23 | 20 | 16 |
| Performance should be evaluated without a set formula and rating system. | 9 | 12 | 13 | 13 | 18 | 18 | 16 |
| Performance should be evaluated by a committee of faculty in the department. | 12 | 14 | 11 | 18 | 20 | 15 | 8 |
| Faculty in the department should be rated within the entire group. | 17 | 12 | 11 | 18 | 18 | 16 | 7 |
| Performance should be measured by the department head only. | 20 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 16 | 14 | 8 |

| STATEMENT | Percent of Respondents 1 SD | 2 D | 3 SLD | 4 N | 5 SLA | 6 A | 7 SA |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DECISION-MAKING PROCESS:** | | | | | | | |
| Performance should be measured by a set formula and rating system. | 26 | 23 | 12 | 13 | 9 | 17 | 5 |
| Performance should be measured by a knowledgeable person from outside the department. | 29 | 17 | 10 | 17 | 11 | 11 | 4 |
| **REPORTING RESULTS:** | | | | | | | |
| The department head should meet with each faculty member to discuss the results of the annual performance assessment. | 2 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 14 | 22 | 48 |
| Feedback regarding annual performance assessment should be provided prior to the reporting of the salary for the next year. | 1 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 20 | 30 | 31 |
| Faculty should receive a written summary of their performance. | 4 | 5 | 2 | 14 | 17 | 23 | 36 |
| The department head should meet with faculty who request it to discuss the results of the annual performance assessment. | 8 | 8 | 4 | 9 | 7 | 17 | 47 |
| Faculty should receive a written indication of their relative rank within the department or peer group. | 10 | 14 | 9 | 21 | 9 | 17 | 20 |

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree with the statement, 2=Disagree with the statement, 3=Slightly Disagree with the statement, 4=Neither agree nor disagree with the statement, 5=Slightly Agree with the statement, 6=Agree with the statement, 7=Strongly Agree with the statement.
[a]Instructional Units: number of students enrolled times number of hours a course meets a week.

*Measures of Teaching Performance*

Faculty responded to 24 statements related to how teaching performance should be measured. On the seven-point scale, respondents agreed most strongly with these four performance measures: peer observation reports (53%); graduate advising activities (48%); student ratings (44%); and awards received for teaching (44%).

The next six most highly agreed with statements included: peer assessment of course materials (41.%); self assessment of teaching (41%); contributions to teaching improvement (40%); undergraduate student advising activities (40%); contributions to developing new courses (39%); and student assessment of advising (38%).

The four performance measures rated the most disagreed with were: number of Instructional Units (students x hours) generated (36%); availability of course materials on-line (34%); recognition (awards) received by students (31%); and student performance in courses taught (29%). The remaining 9 items merit some consideration in measuring teaching performance, but faculty do not consider them critical measures.

*Measures of Research Performance*

Faculty responded to 15 statements regarding how research performance should be measured. On the seven-point scale, respondents agreed most with these performance measures: publications in

premier journals (78%); impact of the research program (63%); peer evaluation of research (59%); invited papers, posters and presentations (53%); and citations in other published works (51%) (Table 1).

The next nine statements were, in order: refereed books and chapters; awards received; multidisciplinary activities; self assessment; conference with head; student performance in research; external funds generated; bulletins, monographs and pamphlets; and placement of graduate students. The lowest-rated measure was popular press publications (15%). All 15 measures were in one of the agreement categories (50% or more), indicating that they deserve some consideration in faculty performance assessment.

### *Measures of Outreach and Extension Performance*

Faculty responded to 19 statements related to how outreach and extension performance should be measured. On the seven-point scale, respondents agreed most with these performance measures: impact of the program (69%); responsiveness to the needs of clientele (69%); use of research in programs (60%); leadership on teams and task forces (56%); and peer evaluation of programs (50%) (Table 1).

The remaining 11 items were in one of the agreement categories (50% or more), indicating that they should be used in performance assessment. The items rated *lowest* in agreement were external funds generated and use of distance learning technology. As in the research measures, all 19 outreach/extension measures deserve some consideration in faculty performance assessment.

### *Measures of Service Performance*

Faculty responded to nine statements related to how service performance should be measured. On the seven-point scale, respondents agreed most frequently with these performances measures: leadership in professional societies (60%); leadership on department committees (56%); leadership on college committees (52%); leadership on university committees (44%); and peer evaluation of service (35%). The measure with the highest percent of Disagree responses was leadership in community and civic groups (21%).

### *Overall Performance and Decision-making Process*

Faculty responded to four statements on overall performance assessment - how the four components (teaching, research, outreach/extension and service) should be measured in the aggregate. On the seven-point scale, respondents agreed with three of the four scenarios. Respondents preferred that teaching, research, outreach/extension and service performance be measured against goals that were set (50%). There was also some preference for performance measured against the percent of appointment for each component (43%) and for performance measured against the percent of time allocated to each component (43%). Respondents clearly do not want performance measured against an equal allotment of 25 percent for each component (85% Disagree).

Faculty also responded to 10 other statements regarding how performance assessment decisions should be made, again on the seven-point scale. Faculty indicated a preference for evaluation by a group of faculty *and* the department head (66% Agree) over one by a committee of faculty in the department (23%), the department head alone (22%) or a knowledgeable person from outside the department (15%). They also preferred to be rated within their academic rank (Assistant, Associate or Full Professor) (46%) rather than across the entire faculty group (23%). Performance evaluation without a set formula or rating system (34%) was preferred to the use of a set formula and rating system (22%). Further, faculty indicated some agreement that the current performance assessment process in their department is equitable (35%) and clear (36%).

### *Reporting Results*

Faculty responded to five statements related to how the results of the annual performance assessment should be reported to them. On the seven-point scale, four of the five items were in the Agree category: department head should meet with each faculty member to discuss results of annual

assessment (70%); feedback regarding performance should be provided prior to reporting of annual salary for the next year (61%); faculty should receive a written summary of their performance assessment (59%); and department head should meet with faculty who request it to discuss performance results (64%).

## Conclusions and Recommendations

There is no prescribed system for annual performance assessment of faculty at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Interviews of the seven department heads in the College of ACES revealed that seven different faculty assessment and evaluation systems were in use. In sharing this information with the department heads and faculty, the authors hoped that departments would be motivated to take a look at their system to see if it could be improved. This has, in fact, happened in at least two departments. In addition, as new administrators move into departmental leadership roles, the information gathered in this study helps them to develop effective faculty assessment and evaluation procedures. The goal is not to create a single "best" procedure that should be used in all departments, but rather to encourage all departments to examine and take steps to make their own systems more transparent, based on faculty dialogue.

Higher education will be a stronger enterprise if faculty accountability is increased, and faculty accountability is most successful when it is based on a system devised by the faculty. In our survey, the strongest message was that faculty believe a meeting with the department head should occur to discuss the annual report. At the time of the study, only two department heads followed that procedure. Also, the reporting formats could be reviewed, but there is no clear signal across the College for any particular format, except that a curriculum vita alone is not sufficient, which was the process used in one department.

It appears that faculty believe that teaching can be assessed in ways in addition to Instructor and Course Evaluation System (ICES) scores. In fact, three statements were rated as high or higher than using student rating scores. This provides an interesting contrast to the teaching evaluation methods reported by chief academic officers (CAOs) at Carnegie "Research" institutions (see www.carnegiefoundation.org), who reported that systematic student ratings are the most commonly used method for teaching performance evaluation (Williams and Rhodes, 2002). The CAOs reported only one other measure that rated at or above the frequency of "usual" use for evaluation of teaching performance: evaluation by a department chair/head. Departments in ACES should consider how the other highly rated measures of teaching performance can be incorporated into the annual performance review process. Departments also should consider that teaching performance goes beyond what happens in the classroom. Advising students, contributing to teaching improvement and feedback from sources other than students are all part of a comprehensive teaching performance assessment.

It is not a surprise that publications in premier journals was the highest rated measure of research. The CAOs at research institutions reported that five measures related to publications were "usually" used to evaluate research ("scholarship") performance, with "articles in quality journals" the most commonly used (Williams and Rhodes, 2002). Several other measures that were in the Agree category in this study were also reported as commonly used by the CAOs (e.g. invited presentations, awards received). Other measures, however, need further development. The *impact* of the research program and *peer evaluation* of research are typically not included in annual performance review. Likewise, citations, a self-assessment of the program and quality of multidisciplinary activities should be considered in annual assessment. While the amount of external funds generated was rated above the mid-point of the scale, 10 other indicators were agreed to at the same or greater rates. Interestingly, "grants or funding received" was the third most common item used for evaluation reported by the CAOs at research institutions.

Performance assessment in outreach and extension is probably based more on impact and responsiveness to identified needs and collaboration with other groups and agencies. These measures can be more difficult to quantify than many teaching and research performance measures. The quality of programs should be based on the use of their research, and publications and presentations are appropriate indicators of outreach and extension performance.

The CAOs at research institutions reported that service on departmental and college committees and as a departmental administrator were usually used to evaluate "college service performance" (Williams and Rhodes, 2002). The most commonly used item for evaluation of "community service performance" was "providing technical or management advice to outside organizations or businesses", which could include the roles in professional societies that ranked highest in our survey. Thus, service performance should be and often is measured by leadership to the professional and academic communities. In contrast to the faculty rankings in this study, the CAOs at research institutions reported that college service was more commonly used to evaluate overall faculty performance than was activity in professional societies. Other measures, such as peer and self-assessments of service activities, also should be considered.

This study found that faculty prefer a performance assessment system that is based on set goals. Although there was also some preference for assessment against appointment or allocated time, setting goals could take into consideration the faculty member's assignment, percent of appointment and amount of time to be allocated to teaching, research, outreach/extension and service.

Faculty also indicated a clear preference for performance decisions to be made by a group of faculty in the department and the department head. Decisions by a faculty committee, the head alone or an external person were much less preferable. At the time of this study, only four of seven departments followed the preferred system.

Department heads should meet annually with each faculty member to discuss the faculty performance assessment results, a practice that was followed in only two of seven departments at the time of this study. Faculty should receive written feedback of their performance assessment prior to receiving a notice of salary for the next year, and faculty have some preference for knowing their relative performance ranking within the department or peer group.

Finally, while the ratings for equity and clarity of faculty assessment and evaluation processes were in the Agree category, thought needs to be given to these important aspects of the faculty performance assessment system. There is likely some association between having assessment and evaluation procedures that are clear to the faculty and the faculty believing that the process is equitable. There is definitely room for improvement and departments should address both of these aspects of their faculty performance assessment process.

This study has already had impact in ACES as departments have evaluated their faculty performance and assessment evaluation systems and as new department heads have been appointed. The ACES Academy of Teaching Excellence has developed a document for the college entitled *Faculty Performance Assessment Guidelines*, using the results of this study to propose ways in which departments and the college should address faculty performance.

The next steps the authors plan are to select key measures for teaching, research, outreach/extension and service performance, to define each of these measures and to provide examples of how each can be documented and evaluated. By sharing these with the faculty and administrators in ACES we hope to encourage the development of more transparent and dialogic systems for faculty performance assessment and evaluation in our college.

Assessment is an important part of any attempt to improve faculty performance and therefore the teaching, research and outreach/extension programs of a college. Faculty in agricultural education should be able to take the lead in their respective colleges to assess faculty performance and to provide guidelines for a clear and equitable system of evaluation.

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