Study of Practices for the Evaluation of Administration (SPEA)

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Introduction

This committee was created under the principle that regular, systematic, and professionally gathered feedback from a variety of constituents creates the best opportunity for useful input that can be formative in one's work performance and under the knowledge that administrators at the University of North Dakota have a commitment to excellence in their performance. This committee was charged to perform a study of current practices at the University of North Dakota for evaluating administrators, including the President, Vice Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, and Deans and will provide a descriptive report to be presented to the University Senate for discussion, as part of an ongoing commitment to collaborative governance.

Committee Functions and Responsibilities
• Meet regularly as necessary to conduct a thorough study of practices of evaluating administrators over the last ten years,
• Investigate SBHE policies and procedures as well as University level, and College level policies and procedures for administrative evaluation,
• Investigate best practices in administrative evaluation nation-wide to provide a comparison point for our own practices,
• Investigate any requirements for administrative evaluation mandated as part of accreditation bodies.

Committee Membership

Cheryl Hunter—co-chair, Assistant Professor Educational Foundations and Research
Tom Petros—co-chair, Professor Psychology
Lori Reesor, Administrative representative, Vice President Student Affairs
Tyler Clauson, Staff representative
Renee Nilsen, Student representative, Department of Educational Leadership
Tami Carmichael, Faculty representative, Professor, Humanities and Integrated Studies
Eric Basile, Faculty representative, Assistant Professor Aerospace
Pam Henderson, Staff Senate President
Amber Flynn, Staff Senate Vice-President
Margaret Williams, Dean Business and Public Administration

Best Practices


We found the following points to be most relevant to our charge:
• Institutions should develop procedures for periodic review of the performance of presidents and other academic administrators. It should not be on an ad hoc basis
• The purpose of such periodic reviews should be the improvement of the performance of the administrator during his or her term of office.

• Senior administrators need to articulate clearly the job responsibilities, authority, goals, and expectations that go with the role, in order to assess subsequently the individual’s effectiveness” (Heck, 2000, p.667)

• Evaluation should be periodic, regular, and collaborative, and based on principles shared by all parties involved in the procedure.

• Fellow administrators, faculty, students, and others should participate in the review according to their legitimate interest in the result, with faculty of the unit accorded the primary voice in the case of academic administrators.

• The degree of faculty participation should be appropriate to the nature of the administrative office whose holder is under review. It should be focused on faculty interaction with administrators directly charged with the oversight of the educational program, of students, and of such personnel matters as salaries, promotion, and tenure.

• The review should provide both for the orderly transmission of faculty concerns and for the fair and equitable treatment of the administrator equivalent to what we expect in the case of faculty members.

• The review should, as far as possible, be constructive and provide the supervising administrator or body with adequate grounds for reaching an informed decision when continuance of the person being reviewed is at stake.

• The consequences flowing from such a report should be understood by all parties and should allow for further exchange and feedback as the review may require for ensuring administrative effectiveness and responsiveness to the faculty voice.

• Reviews should give supervisory administrators (that is, those at a level above the administrator who is the subject of a review) a rational basis for the decision whether or not to reappoint an individual, and at the same time, they should provide the person under review with guidance on improving his or her performance.

• There is merit to measuring the variability of response rates in the multiple facets being assessed. The variability shown -- or the lack thereof -- might provide helpful insight and, in an instance where there is little variability overall or in one particular constituency could indicate true problems or a particular area of problems.

• The governing board or appointing administrator should publish a summary of the review, including a statement of actions taken as a result of the review.

Recommendations from the literature include:
• The practice has developed of keeping the search committee in place for a year or so after the appointment has been made to serve as an informal advisory body to the administrative newcomer. This mechanism provides a reality check to both parties: the administrator can report to the faculty whether he or she was adequately prepared for on-campus realities, and the faculty can examine the relationship between the presumptions that lay behind the original offer of appointment and the actual results of the administrator’s performance to date.

• Develop a measure for evaluation that includes the following categories: vision and goal setting, management of the unit, interpersonal relationships, communication skills, research/professional/campus endeavors, quality of education in the unit, support for institutional diversity.

• Consider when developing a evaluation system: 1. the objectives of the evaluation system to be put in place, 2. the purposes of the evaluation, 3. the standards for judging, the instrumentation, 4. the data collection procedures, 5. utilization of the information collected.

**Nation-wide comparisons**

We consulted several faculty in the College of Education and Human Development regarding recommendations of other institutions known for established policies/practices for evaluation of administrators. Four institutions were suggested and their policies/procedures reviewed and summarized below.

**University of Minnesota**

The University of Minnesota provides an overarching policy titled “Administrative policy for the performance management of academic professional and administrative employees.” U of M then breaks down this policy in three categories: Conducting Annual Performance Reviews of Academic Professional and Administrative Employees; Reviewing and Evaluation Deans; and Assessing the Performance of Senior Leaders. U of M clearly outlines the steps at each level of evaluation, including timelines for Dean’s evaluations.

Core performance criteria are identified, confidentiality of the assessment is described, three-year evaluation process is explained in terms of purpose, methodology, initiation of review, multiple source assessment process with clearly outlined steps and a timeline, participants in the assessment, the review committee, evaluation document, evaluation file, communication process at conclusion.

**University of North Carolina**
The University of North Carolina provides an overall process and also adjustments for vice chancellors (the equivalent at UND would be VPs) who have staff positions as opposed to faculty positions, yet still allows for faculty input. UNC provides a step-wise process for administrative reviews including: who initiates the review, the timeline for the review, the makeup of the committee, committee interactions with superiors and reviewees, timeline for review (to be completed within a 6-week period), reporting of committee results, and confidentiality of the review.

University of Tennessee

Two things were viewed as important in this policy. First, overseeing administrators agree to both participate in and honor the outcomes of the review (that the outcomes have consequences) as defined by the faculty. Second, there is both a self study by the evaluated administrator and that the results of the review are transparent - published and distributed to everyone. There seems to be a firm understanding of goals and a sense of cooperation inherent in this policy that I think is necessary for a review process like this to have "teeth."

University of Alabama

One element that stands out as a best practice is the requirement that administrators who are evaluated must provide "written or verbal feedback" to constituents within 120 days of the evaluation. I think the timeframe is appropriate - 120 days is approximately one academic semester. That should be enough time for an administrator to thoughtfully consider the evaluation and formulate a response. Stakeholders need to be able to see that individuals treat their evaluations seriously and are able to articulate what, if anything, they are doing differently in response to the evaluation. Requiring a response - and further, that the response be publicly disseminated - brings the process into the sunlight and avoids a situation where evaluations get buried and no substantive changes occur.

University of Alabama recognize the Faculty Senate as sharing responsibility with the President and Provost for periodic evaluations of academic administrators (chairs, deans, and library directors) and university administrators (the Provost and the President) by their constituents. The Senate evaluations are utilized by the immediate supervisor as a component of comprehensive reviews to assess performance of responsibilities. Full- and part-time regular faculty members of the University have the right to participate in these administrator evaluations.

One element we did not see discussed or outlined in this process was a job analysis. The rating scale will need to delineate categories for rating that are central to what the administrator actually does. These categories need to be well defined either in the beginning
of the survey or by training all the respondents before completing the survey. This type of training for evaluators is called frame of reference training in IO psychology. One of the prerequisites in my opinion to a successful evaluation is that the evaluator prepares for the evaluation and knows the dimensions of the job. All evaluators need to be trained. All dimensions of the evaluation form need to be fully explained and fully understood by those completing the scales or an interview.

**University level Administrative Positions**

Using the broadband job list provided by HR (in the 0000 Executive/Administrative category there are 79 total) there are 24 administrators that would fall under the wording of this charge- 26 if you include Assistant Vice Presidents. This was determined by searching just for the specific job titles specified by the charge. With the diversity of responsibilities across these positions we found that recommending a two-pronged committee that could be adapted to diverse positions was appropriate. The only administrative evaluation policies we could find were policies at the College level. In October of 2004 the following evaluation policy was revised and accepted by the Dean’s Council.

**Committee Recommendations**

A permanent standing University Senate Committee (subsequently referred to as the Senate Committee) charged with evaluating all Deans, V.Ps., Associate V.Ps, and President at the end of the first year (after hire) and then every 3 years.

The Senate Committee would have two subsets. One subset would oversee academic administrators and the other would oversee non-academic administrators.

The Senate Committee would be comprised of both tenured faculty and staff.

The Senate Committee members would undergo training in criteria based evaluation.

A more in depth review of the literature on executive evaluation needs to be completed to insure that the salient categories for executive evaluation recommended from the literature are represented in our evaluation tools.

The Senate Committee is responsible for first establishing categories of evaluation for each level of administrator based on a clear understanding of the requirements of the position. A series of interviews need to be completed with faculty, administration and external constituents on the most salient dimensions of administrator’s job. The intent of this
analysis is to insure that the salient categories for executive evaluation are represented in our evaluation tools. Once these criteria are established they should be reviewed regularly to ensure job criteria reflects evaluation criteria.

The Committee is responsible for doing multiple-source evaluations for all administrators. Multiple-source evaluations are based on the administrator’s job description and the evident stakeholders. This includes the collection of both quantitative data and qualitative data from all stakeholders relevant to job criteria.

The ad hoc SPEA committee decided that we would focus on presenting a mechanism for evaluation of Deans that could be empirically developed and validated and consistent with what other schools have implemented. Our assumption was that once the job dimensions were established for Deans, we could easily extrapolate to other executive positions within the university. Further, UND has a policy in place for evaluation of Deans so we chose to build upon that work already established and recommend the following changes:

Evaluation of College and School Deans-revised 4/15/16

I. Schedule
   1. All deans reporting to the Provost & VPAA shall receive an evaluation every three years.

II. Procedure
   1. The Senate Committee initiates the evaluation with an announcement of the procedure and time schedule for the administrator under review. The evaluation will be announced at the beginning of the evaluation semester and will be complete by the end of the semester. These evaluations will occur in the Fall or the spring to maximize campus wide participation. The evaluation will consist of four parts - the dean's self-study, a faculty/staff survey, peer input, and external constituent input.
   2. The Senate Committee makes available the categories of evaluation based upon the job requirements of the position. Ideally these criteria are available to the administrator well in advance of the evaluation.
   3. Data collected consists of four parts - the self-study, a faculty/staff survey, peer input, and external constituent input.

   **Self-Study** - the dean will prepare a statement of his/her vision for the future of the school or college, together with a self-analysis of his/her performance as dean over the evaluation period. These documents will be posted with a current vitae on an intranet web site with full access for all participants in the evaluation.
The Committee will provide, to the respective supervisor, summaries in the four areas of data collected, areas of excellence, and areas identified for improvement. In the case of the President, this would be the Chancellor. A formal dissemination of a final report is posted for public consumption. The supervisor is expected to provide a response that describes how the report was used in the administrators final evaluation process.
RESOURCES


State Board of Higher Education Policy

We found in reviewing State Board of Higher Education (SBHE) Policy there are two entities identified for evaluation: Institution Presidents and benefitted employees.

**Presidents:** SBHE Policy for President Evaluation (Section: 604.1 Performance Evaluations: Presidents (September 5, 2012)

Summarized below:

- The Chancellor shall evaluate the individual performance of the presidents on an annual basis. These evaluations are intended to provide (1) a means by which incumbents may review their own performances; (2) a procedure to establish new, short- and long-term goals for the ensuing months and years; and (3) an opportunity to receive comments and ideas as to possible ways in which the management and planning functions of the University System and its constituent institutions might be improved.

- Each president shall prepare for Chancellor review and approval an annual goals statement identifying a focused set of goals the president hopes to attain during the coming year, including implementation strategies and timelines, in support of the Board strategic direction. Each president shall have five goals, including three identified by the president and two identified by the Chancellor. One goal identified by each president shall address resource development, including fundraising, sponsored research, private-public partnerships and other entrepreneurial activities.

- The evaluation of present performance will form the basis for discussion between the Chancellor and the president of the revised goals statement and the relationship between present performance and the future direction of the institution. The outcome of this process
will be a set of goals for the institution for the coming year which have been approved by
the Chancellor. The Chancellor shall seek board input regarding presidential performance.

- After the results of the annual review have been separately shared with each
  president, the Chancellor shall review with the Board the results of the presidents’ annual
  reviews.

- The Chancellor shall periodically complete a broad-based, comprehensive evaluation
  of each president, seeking input from key constituents. The Chancellor may utilize external
  consulting assistance for this purpose.

**Benefitted Employees:** SBHE Section: 604.3 Performance Evaluations: Benefited
Employees (June 21, 2001)

Full Policy below:

- All benefited university system employees shall have an annual written and verbal
  performance development review that includes evaluation of performance based upon
  mutually agreed upon development plans or goals. Procedures governing faculty shall be
  consistent with requirements stated in Policy 605.1. Requirements for employees included
  within the broadbanding system are stated in Section 17 of the NDUS Human Resource
  Policy Manual; those requirements shall also apply to all other employees except faculty.

- All merit pay increases must be supported by current written performance reviews
  and consistent with a salary administration plan adopted under policy 702.4.

**UND Policy**

We found in reviewing university documents (Faculty Handbook)

- The faculty handbook outlines administrator responsibilities (Faculty Handbook 1.2)
  but does not mention evaluation procedures for administrators. Faculty evaluation
  procedures are outlined in section: UND PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE
  EVALUATION OF TENURED AND NON-TENURED FACULTY (Faculty Handbook 4.2).
  Performance evaluations are outlined in the section: PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS:
  BENEFITED EMPLOYEES (Faculty Handbook 4.1; State Board of Higher Education Policy
  Manual, 06-21-01 , Section 604.3).

- Presidents and Vice Presidents are identified in the Organizational and
  Administration Chart but NOT Associate Vice Presidents (http://und.edu/university-
  senate/faculty-handbook/organization-and-administration.cfm).

**College level Evaluation Policy and Practices**
The only administrative evaluation policies we could find were policies at the College level. In October of 2004 the following evaluation policy was revised and accepted by the Dean's Council.

**Schedule**

1. All deans reporting to the Provost & VPAA shall receive an initial evaluation in the semester following the second anniversary of their appointment.

2. All deans reporting to the Provost & VPAA shall thereafter be evaluated on a five year cycle during the same semester as the initial evaluation.

**Procedure**

1. The Provost & VPAA shall initiate the evaluation with an announcement of the procedure and time schedule. The evaluation will be announced at the beginning of the evaluation semester and will be complete by the end of the semester. The evaluation will consist of four parts - the dean's self-study, a faculty/staff survey, peer input, and external constituent input.

   i) **Dean's Self-Study** - the dean will prepare a statement of his/her vision for the future of the school or college, together with a self-analysis of his/her performance as dean over the evaluation period. These documents will be posted with a current vitae on an intranet web site.

   ii) **Faculty/Staff Survey** - a survey form will be sent, where appropriate, to all regular faculty and staff, and all forms will be returned to the Office of the Provost & VPAA for review. The Office of the Provost & VPAA will generate a summary of the survey.

   iii) **Peer Input** - the Provost & VPAA will request UND deans review the intranet web site material and provide their individual input for the evaluation. The Office of the Provost & VPAA will generate a summary of the input received.

   iv) **External Constituent Input** - the Provost & VPAA will provide selected external constituents with a copy of the dean's self-study and current vitae, and request input. The Office of the Provost & VPAA will generate a summary of the survey.

2. The Provost & VPAA will meet with the faculty and staff of the school or college, and discuss the evaluation data and the activities identified for improvement.

3. The Provost & VPAA will meet with the dean under evaluation, and discuss the data generated by the four-part process and determine appropriate actions for performance enhancement.