



Open Pathway Quality Initiative Proposal

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Proposal represents the work that the institution will undertake to fulfill the quality improvement requirements of the Open Pathway.

5-28-20

Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor

Date

Joseph Harroz, Jr., President

Printed/Typed Name and Title

University of Oklahoma

Name of Institution

Norman, Oklahoma

City and State

The institution completes the Quality Initiative Proposal by responding to the questions in each category of the template. Proposals should be no more than 4,500 words. The institution may choose to submit a brief implementation plan or supplemental charts or graphs as appendices to the template. The Quality Initiative Proposal will be accepted beginning September 1 of Year 5. It is due no later than June 1 of Year 7.

Submit the proposal as a PDF file to hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Pathways/Quality Initiative" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. Submission file names should utilize the following format: QIProposal[InstitutionName][State].pdf (e.g., QIProposalNoNameUniversityMN.pdf). The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a title and brief description of the Quality Initiative. Explain whether the initiative will begin and be completed during the Quality Initiative period or if it is part of work already in progress or will achieve a key milestone in the work of a longer initiative.

Review of Norman Campus Annual Faculty Evaluation:
Aspirational Peer Comparison of Policies and Procedures

[A quick clarification regarding scope: although OU is comprised of three campuses – Norman, Health Sciences Center (HSC), and Tulsa – this QIP is focused on Norman only. Many HSC faculty are also practicing medical professionals, so their evaluation processes will necessarily be different from faculty in non-medical programs. The Tulsa campus has resident faculty from both Norman and HSC programs – those from Norman programs will be included under this project. For the rest of this document, the name “OU” will refer to Norman Campus only.]

Productive, engaged, and well-supported faculty are key to the success of an institution. They are central to fostering the kind of well-rounded, inclusive, and cutting-edge education the University of Oklahoma (OU) strives to provide to every student. Recent organizational changes and campus community discussions have revealed widely held concerns that OU’s current annual faculty evaluation processes and procedures do not adequately and equitably support our faculty, and, by extension, our mission.

We recognize that changes to annual faculty evaluation policy and procedures should be done only after careful deliberation, research, and consultation with various campus constituencies. To that end, OU has split this initiative into multiple phases. See Appendix A for a list of project phases. This proposal addresses the first phase of this project: gathering information on peers’ faculty evaluation policies and practices.

OU will identify three sets of aspirational peers, one each for areas of special focus – research, teaching, and diversity, equity, and inclusion – then gather information on those institutions’ annual faculty evaluation policies and guidelines. The data will be summarized into a report that will be used as a resource as we begin future phases.

Sufficiency of the Initiative’s Scope and Significance

2. Explain why the proposed initiative is relevant and significant for the institution.

The University of Oklahoma has experienced significant changes over the past few years. Since 2016, we have had three presidents, undertaken significant reorganizations, and shifted spending policies to improve our long-term financial stability. Within the past year, OU has hired a Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as well as created the position of Associate Provost for Inclusive Faculty Excellence to specifically address faculty development and support. The University brought a new Vice President for Research and Partnerships on board, who is working closely with the Provost’s Office and the Graduate College on revitalizing research productivity and incorporating benchmarking in strategic planning processes. OU also has (or will shortly have) new deans in approximately half of Norman campus colleges. New leadership at all levels, along with improved efficiency and transparency of operations, has created ideal conditions for this project. A small working group, composed of the Accreditation Liaison Officer, representatives from the Provost’s Office, and Faculty Senate leadership, met to evaluate potential topics for the QIP. After much discussion, clear consensus emerged that faculty evaluation is an area of concern for a variety of constituencies.

The mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for our students through excellence in teaching, research and creative activity, and service to the state and society (<http://www.ou.edu/provost/mission>). This QIP aligns well with OU’s mission, as it would more clearly elucidate standards for faculty in the areas of teaching, research and creative activity, and service. OU is also developing a strategic plan. The plan was drafted by a faculty committee with

extensive stakeholder input; the first draft was submitted to the Board of Regents in March 2020. The plan articulates five pillars, all of which could be positively impacted by the proposed project:

- **Become a top-tier public research university:** clear and rigorous evaluation criteria would support VPRP efforts to stimulate and support research productivity.
- **Make OU a place of belonging for all students, faculty, and staff:** transparent evaluation rubrics would help reduce bias in faculty evaluations as well as serve as a road map for faculty efforts toward creating an inclusive and welcoming environment for students, other faculty, and staff.
- **Offer a life-changing experience for students:** improving the teaching portion of faculty evaluations would help place higher value on experiential learning and incentivize adoption of best practices in pedagogical methods and outcomes.
- **Impact Oklahoma and the world:** a well-designed annual evaluation system encourages faculty to value projects that will have measurable impacts on the state and beyond.
- **Be the home of unlimited opportunity:** transparent, clearly articulated evaluation standards highlight ways in which faculty can improve their work, better support their colleagues, and help their students make the most of the OU educational experience.

Additional impacts of this project on the University's operations include:

- ◆ Provide more meaningful information about a department's faculty productivity during Academic Program Review
- ◆ Provide support for departmental requests for new faculty lines
- ◆ Inform internal research funding allocations
- ◆ Contribute to Faculty Senate Working Group on Teaching Evaluation
- ◆ Alignment with grant application - OU's NSF ADVANCE Partnerships for Adaptation, Implementation, and Dissemination Award: Promoting Institutional Change at the University of Oklahoma and within the Big XII Conference
- ◆ Collaboration with Associate Provost for Inclusive Faculty Excellence implementation of eight training modules on inclusive excellence developed for instructional faculty and staff, with modules designed to orient faculty to best practices in teaching; cultural competency in recruitment, hiring and retention; and culturally-aware mentoring

The University of Oklahoma's faculty evaluation section of the Faculty Handbook (see Appendix B) was last revised in 2004, although a close reading of prior versions indicates the last substantial update to the section was done in 1987. The Provost's Office issues an annual memo (see Appendix C) providing academic units with a timeline and general instructions, but OU does not have a centralized policy providing academic units with standard evaluation criteria and procedures. Concerns about the current evaluation system identified so far include:

- **Evaluation scale is vague.** The university-wide *Summary Report of Annual Evaluation* form (see Appendix C) for regular faculty currently has the following 5 categories on a 5-point scale: Outstanding, Very Good, Good (Meets Expectations), Marginal, Unacceptable. Because "expectations" are not centrally defined, interpretations of this term vary widely. Units need clearer and more consistent criteria about what scope, type, and quality of performance meet, exceed, or fail to meet standards in the areas of research, teaching, and service.
- ◆ **Evaluation scale is unevenly weighted.** In the current scale, three of five categories are "Good" or higher. The two lowest scores are reserved for extreme cases, leading to score inflation. Lack of transparency, as well as inevitable inconsistencies in applying the current

evaluation scale, makes it harder to provide meaningful feedback, as well as to identify faculty who could benefit from additional support.

- ♦ **Unclear who is responsible for evaluation policies and procedures.** Responsibility for developing and updating faculty evaluation policies is not clearly defined. Scoring rubrics and procedures are largely left to individual academic units, leading to lack of transparency, rigor, and relevance of annual faculty evaluations across campus.
- ♦ **Overreliance on student teaching evaluations when assigning faculty teaching scores.** Despite research demonstrating students' evaluations of teaching show evidence of bias, it continues to be the easiest, and therefore most often used, measure of teaching quality. The Faculty Senate is working with the Provost's Office to create a holistic evaluation of teaching, which would be a welcome resource for the annual evaluation process.
- **Does not adequately recognize professional development and community service.** OU is committed to faculty professional development, as evidenced by the creation in 2019 of the Center for Faculty Excellence. Revision to the faculty evaluation process could include incentives for faculty participation in development activities, a side benefit of which would be supporting OU's commitment to making the University a place of belonging. Faculty participation in (and credit for) community-building is vital to sustainable change, but the current evaluation system does not effectively credit faculty for time spent on inclusivity training and community mentoring,

Another, more pragmatic reason for the current interest in faculty evaluation reform is the recent reintroduction of faculty salary increases. Merit increases had been frozen for many years. During that period, many faculty expressed the view that annual evaluation scores were largely symbolic, as they had no impact on compensation. Once OU's administration prioritized faculty salary increases in FY18 to address salary compression and inversion issues, as well as retention and merit, there has been renewed interest in revising evaluation procedures. Discussions about possible future raises have involved support for a strong merit component, yet lack of evaluation rigor prevents meaningful progress.

3. Explain the intended impact of the initiative on the institution and its academic quality.

Faculty are integral to the University's mission, so any significant change to policies and procedures impacting them will necessarily affect the institution and its academic quality. To most efficiently illustrate this, we map below the intended impact on the institution in general, and on the three main components of OU's mission - research and creative activity, teaching and student success, and service.

Intended impact on faculty productivity and awareness of field standards:

- More clearly signal work that aligns with the institution's strategic plan
- More consistency in evaluation scoring across units
- Better informed processes, based on best practices gathered from peer institutions

Intended impact on research and creative activity:

- Increase number of prestigious external grants and awards across disciplines
- Incentivize and inspire interdisciplinary and collaborative research
- Involve graduate students and undergraduates in faculty research
- Encourage pursuit of high-impact products and publications (e.g., STEM federal grants)
- Increase number of high-impact, high-visibility research, publications, and creative products
- Use externally validated research benchmarks in strategic planning
- Improve career outcomes for program graduates and postdocs by increased prestige of faculty research
- Increase prestigious invitations, plenary talks, disciplinary service, honors, and awards

- Inclusively recognize innovation and entrepreneurship (OU recently joined the Promotion and Tenure Innovation and Entrepreneurship Coalition (PTIE))
- Recognize and reward scholarship on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Recognize and reward community engaged scholarship

Intended impact on teaching and student success:

- Development of a more holistic teaching evaluation system would provide better quality feedback on instruction, reduce perverse incentives for grade inflation, inspire adoption of instructional best practices (rather than popularity with students), as well as improve faculty morale
- Improved teaching evaluation could result in more awards for historically underrepresented and women faculty (current award criteria emphasizes teaching evaluations)
- Recognize value of graduate education and postdoctoral mentorship
- Recognize value of undergraduate student mentorship, a positive contributor to student success, especially the amount of effort required
- Incentivize diversification of curricula and integrating inclusive best practices in the development of curricula
- Recognize value of faculty who foster a sense of belonging and inclusion for students, a key factor for student retention and completion
- Encourage faculty to train in culturally responsive and inclusive pedagogies
- Encourage faculty to participate in community-creating value-added activities, as well as increase use of high-impact and collaborative learning experiences for historically marginalized and underrepresented students
- Improve constructive feedback to faculty by including peer evaluation of classroom teaching, portfolios, and syllabi, as well as use of inclusive language
- Increase participation in assessment activities
- Recognize value of service learning activities and development of service learning designated courses

Intended impact on service:

- Increase engagement in community-enrichment activities
- Increase service in high-profile roles to raise national awareness of OU faculty
- Increase faculty representation in national and international professional organizations
- Provide credit for workshops on diversity and inclusion, such as becoming a LGBTQ+ Ally, etc.

Clarity of the Initiative's Purpose

4. Describe the purposes and goals for the initiative.

Evaluation, and ultimate revision, of the annual faculty evaluation process must be done with care and rigor. Before we revise OU's policies and procedures, it is sensible to gather information on best practices at other institutions, for context and resource in future discussions. OU will conduct a review of faculty evaluation processes at peer institutions. Once gathered, the data will be analyzed and summarized in a report distributed to stakeholders. Future phases of this project will use the peer report as a resource in drafting and discussing new policies and procedures.

Rather than use an all-purpose peer group, we will identify three sets of aspirational peers, one for each area of focus: research, teaching, and inclusive excellence. When possible, peer institutions will be

restricted to institutions of similar size and mission (e.g., public, 4-year, mid-level AAU, etc.). Each peer group will be selected with input from relevant stakeholders, including (but not limited to):

- Research: Vice President for Research and Partnerships; Dean of Graduate College; Senior Vice Provost
- Teaching and student success: Vice Provost for Instruction and Student Success; Associate Provost for Academic Advising
- Inclusion and community: Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Associate Provost for Inclusive Faculty Excellence

Once the peer institutions are identified, OU will attempt to identify:

- what is the primary source of information on faculty evaluation standards that is consulted by deans and unit leadership
- what are the evaluation scale point range, category labels, and definitions used
- who defines the standards for each category
- what are the roles and responsibilities for evaluation processes
- are there universal expectations (if so, what are they), or do they vary by unit
- which academic units, spread across disciplinary areas, are good examples of university best practices
- whether the institution is willing to share copies of evaluation documents (policy, guidelines, criteria, etc.)

OU hopes to identify, in the data analysis, practices or policies that might serve as templates or inspiration in future project discussions.

5. Select up to three main topics that will be addressed by the initiative.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advising | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Retention |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Learning Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Civic Engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Online Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistence and Completion | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Success |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching/Pedagogy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engagement | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Underserved Populations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> Workforce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-Year Programs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Quality Improvement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Education | | |

6. Describe how the institution will evaluate progress, make adjustments and determine what has been accomplished.

We have prepared a timeline (see Section 10, below), indicating target periods by which each step of the research should be completed. The Accreditation Liaison Officer, Susannah Livingood, will be responsible for tracking progress relative to the timeline, as well as convening regular meetings with project team members to review accomplishments.

Evidence of Commitment to and Capacity for Accomplishing the Initiative

7. Describe the level of support for the initiative by internal or external stakeholders.

A small working group, comprised of the Accreditation Liaison Officer, representatives from the Norman Campus Provost's Office, the Health Sciences Center Provost's Office, and Faculty Senate leadership, met in November 2019 to evaluate potential topics for the QIP. After much discussion, there was clear consensus that faculty evaluation is an area of concern for a variety of constituencies. For example, there are several mentions of the topic in the Faculty Senate minutes in 2018 and 2019 (see Appendix D).

OU also periodically receives requests for information from the state legislature, the press, and the general public, who are interested in concrete information on how OU positively impacts the state economy, as well as wanting assurances that faculty are effective teachers. Having more substantive information available to answer those questions would be a welcome resource, as would having comparable information for peer institutions.

8. Identify the groups and individuals that will lead or be directly involved in implementing the initiative.

This initiative will be overseen by the Accreditation Liaison Officer, who is also the Associate Provost and Director of Institutional Research & Reporting. The Senior Vice President and Provost, as well as the Senior Vice Provost, are committed to providing support and resources as needed. The ALO will supervise research conducted by a staff Policy Analyst and Graduate Research Assistant(s), as well as assemble a working group of OU stakeholders for institutional input. Areas represented would include:

- ◆ Office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships
- ◆ Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- ◆ Associate Provost for Inclusive Faculty Excellence
- ◆ Graduate College
- ◆ Center for Faculty Excellence
- ◆ Faculty Senate

More details about assignment of responsibilities and timeline can be found in the action plan below.

9. List the human, financial, technological and other resources that the institution has committed to this initiative.

The plan requires research labor, most of which will be covered by existing OU resources:

- Accreditation Liaison Officer / Associate Provost for Institutional Research & Reporting (IRR)
- Policy Analyst (IRR)
- Graduate Research Assistant (nine-month appointment, 0.50 FTE)
- Senior Vice Provost (as needed)

Computers, office space, telephone access, and all other supplies needed will be funded by the Provost's Office, administered through the ALO as project leader.

Appropriateness of the Timeline for the Initiative

(The institution may include a brief implementation or action plan.)

10. Describe the primary activities of the initiative and timeline for implementing them.

The timeline below is consistent with intended purposes and goals in Section 4, above. We are confident this timeline is reasonable and feasible given the work to be accomplished.

Dates	Action items
June - July 2020	<p>What:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Compile three lists of aspirational peers: research peers, teaching peers, and inclusion and community peers ◆ IRR hires GRA for next step <p>Who: ALO and OU stakeholders</p>
August - October 2020	<p>What: Gather data outlined in Section 4, plus any other relevant data as determined by ALO in collaboration with the Provost's Office</p> <p>Who: GRA, overseen by ALO</p>
November - December 2020	<p>What: Organize peer data into a single, coherent document. ALO and/or designate reads over document for accuracy and clarity</p> <p>Who: GRA, Policy Analyst, overseen by ALO</p>
January - February 2021	<p>What: Analyze data and write up a report of commonalities and best practices. Present to key upper administration stakeholders: VPR, Provost, Center for Faculty Excellence leadership, VP for DEI</p> <p>Who: Senior Vice Provost (SVP) / ALO</p>
March 2021	<p>What: Share draft report with peer group stakeholders</p> <p>Who: SVP / ALO</p>
April 2021	<p>What: Present updated draft for input from Faculty Senate</p> <p>Who: SVP / ALO</p>
May - July 2021	<p>What: Provost reviews document draft, determines format for soliciting feedback</p> <p>Who: Provost / SVP / ALO</p>
August - September 2021	<p>What: Feedback conversations with Provost, deans, unit heads, and faculty, as determined by Provost</p> <p>Who: Provost / SVP</p>

October - November 2021	<p>What: In coordination with the SVP, and taking into consideration peer data and feedback from constituent discussions, write up summary of any preliminary recommendations, suggestions for further research, additional stakeholders, etc. for next phase of project</p> <p>Who: SVP / ALO</p>
December 2021 - February 2022	<p>What: Write HLC QI report on action taken from June 2020-November 2021</p> <p>Who: ALO/ [TBD]</p>
March 2022	<p>What: Submit QI Report for approval of OU provost and president.</p> <p>Who: ALO</p>
April 2022	<p>What: Submit QI Report to HLC. Share draft with Human Resources as reference for future conversations.</p> <p>Who: ALO</p>

Institutional Contact for Quality Initiative Proposal

Include the name(s) of the primary contact(s) for the Quality Initiative.

Name and Title: Susannah Livingood, Associate Provost and Director, Institutional Research and Reporting

Phone: 405-325-5065

Email: slivingood@ou.edu

APPENDIX A

Annual Faculty Evaluation – Comprehensive Review and Update Plan

Timeframes shown here are approximate and account for the possibility of doing some steps concurrently, as well as the iterative nature of developing new policy.

Phase	Action Step(s)	Approximate Timeframe
Peer Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify aspirational peer institutions – along three main dimensions of research; student success; and diversity, equity and inclusion • From each peer, gather policy language, procedure examples; interview key administrators • Summarize in report, highlighting best practices in action where found 	2020-2022
OU Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document current OU policies, procedures, etc. used in annual faculty review – at all organizational levels (e.g., Provost, college, academic unit) • Summarize any existing information about faculty and administrators' opinions of current system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Faculty HERI survey results ○ Comments from Academic Program Review discussions ○ Faculty Senate discussions 	2021-2022
Draft Policy / Gather Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking both current OU and peer information into account, draft a new set of policies and procedures, including new language for Faculty Handbook • Present proposed new policies and procedures to campus stakeholders, requesting feedback 	2022-2023
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize language of new policies and procedures • Update Faculty Handbook • Determine appropriate timeline for implementation – will it be implemented in phases, or done in next academic year, etc. 	2023-2024

APPENDIX B

Faculty Evaluation Excerpt from Faculty Handbook

<https://apps.hr.ou.edu/FacultyHandbook/Default.aspx#3.13>

3.13 FACULTY EVALUATION

3.13.1 FACULTY EVALUATION, ADJUSTMENT IN SALARY, AND ADVANCEMENT IN RANK

Faculty evaluation is a continuous process, both prior to and following the granting of tenure. An annual review of each faculty member's performance is the responsibility of the academic deans and the specific academic units. A systematic procedure for accomplishing such evaluations shall be developed in each academic unit with the participation and approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost. The criteria for evaluation shall be carefully and clearly stated. Specific faculty assignments within an academic unit and the specific mission of a particular academic unit may have different percentages of effort distributed across the areas of professional activity (teaching; research, and creative/scholarly activity; and professional and University service and public outreach) if, in consultation with the dean and Senior Vice President and Provost, this is determined to assist the entire University in best meeting its mission.

(A) Norman Campus

All salary adjustments and promotions in rank shall be based on systematic evaluations of faculty performance.

(Note 1)

Note 1: There are two basic purposes of faculty performance evaluations. The first and foremost is to provide information to the faculty member regarding his or her work so that the faculty member can build upon strengths and improve where improvements are desirable. As such, it becomes an essential element of career development for the individual and assists both the faculty member and the faculty member's department or school.

The second basic purpose is to provide a documented basis for providing appropriate recognition of the quality of the faculty member's work; of how well the faculty member meets the department's or school's approval criteria for advancement in salary, promotion, and tenure.

(Senior Vice President and Provost, 7-14-81)

It is the policy of the University (Norman Campus) that all "A" budget salaried faculty, temporary and permanent, tenure-track and non-tenure-track, and renewable term be subject to the same performance evaluation process currently in place starting academic year 1986-87. (Faculty Senate, 4-14-86, President, 4-21-86, Senior Vice President and Provost, 10-8-04)

Every faculty member will be evaluated annually by Committee A in the appropriate academic unit or department according to the criteria and procedures approved by that unit. These evaluations then will be represented in the form known as the Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation and submitted first to the faculty member, who may respond to the Summary Report in the space provided, and then to the appropriate dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost.

(Faculty Senate, 1-12-87, President, 1-16-87)

3.13.2 (A) Salary Adjustments

(1) The most frequent reflection of a continuing faculty evaluation system is in the annual recommendations for merit salary increases. Deserving faculty should be rewarded, within the limits of the financial resources of the University, for meritorious performance.

(2) Each academic unit, with the participation and approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost, shall establish and publish specific criteria for evaluating faculty performance in that unit, consistent with overall University evaluation procedures, so that any ensuing disagreements on salary recommendations will arise only through differences of opinion concerning evaluation and application of the criteria rather than over the criteria themselves. These criteria may be changed by the faculty of the unit from time to time with the approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost. The Senior Vice President and Provost's approval of the revised criteria shall indicate a date on which they become effective. The revised criteria for salary evaluation shall apply to all faculty beginning with the academic year following the effective date.

- (3) Under no circumstances will merit increases in salary be based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, political beliefs or status as a veteran.
- (4) At times when a faculty member is recognized with a special award designating a specific merit increase in salary to accompany the award, such special monetary award will be treated as additional to any increase recommended through normal procedures.
- (5) In certain circumstances, merit salary increases may cause the salary of a faculty member to equal or exceed the salary of faculty in higher ranks. Such a situation is perfectly acceptable provided the salary levels are fair reflections of the respective merits in effort and achievement of the faculty.

3.13.2 (B) PROCEDURES FOR RECOMMENDATIONS ON SALARY ADJUSTMENTS

Procedural guidelines for salary recommendations are as follows:

- (1) The academic unit will annually collect:
- (a) achievement data from all the academic unit's faculty and
 - (b) evaluations of each faculty member's performance from those who are in supervisory positions and from other sources agreed upon as suitable in departmental policy.
- (2) For each faculty member, the chair (along with Committee A, where appropriate) will prepare a recommendation based upon a comparison of faculty performance with University and departmental criteria and forward a documented recommendation to the dean.
- (3) The dean will review each recommendation and notify the chair of any changes or adjustments made.
- (4) The salary recommendations from the college will be forwarded from the dean to the Senior Vice President and Provost for additional discussion, further recommendations, and administrative action.
- (5) Each faculty member may request the reasons for the salary recommendation that was made. It is the duty of the chair to discuss such matters individually with the unit's faculty. These discussions should take place as soon as feasible following delivery of the official salary notifications.

3.13.2 (C) ADJUSTMENTS OF SALARY INEQUITIES

Upon occasion, adjustments in salary may be needed to correct inequities caused by annual variations in available funds, changing conditions in the academic profession or in the economy, or other elements beyond the University's control. The responsibility for making adjustments, where needed, lies primarily with the dean, who, after consultation with the appropriate academic unit, recommends to the Senior Vice President and Provost specific salary adjustments to correct evident inequities. Such adjustments should be made as funds are available, without causing disruption to the merit reward system.

3.13.3 ADVANCEMENT IN RANK

Advancement in rank is a major way in which the University recognizes a faculty member's achievements. A promotion is not a routine reward for satisfactory service but reflects a positive appraisal of high professional competence and accomplishment.

(A) CRITERIA FOR PROMOTION

Decisions to promote a faculty member must be made in light of a thorough evaluation of his or her performance in all the areas of faculty activity.

The candidate's performance is judged by all recommending parties against the academic unit's written statement of criteria for promotion to the rank in question, the approved written assignment for the candidate, and any special conditions pertaining to the candidate's appointment.

Each academic unit, in concert with the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost, shall establish and publish specific criteria for promotion in that unit. These criteria may be changed for promotion in that unit from time to time with the approval of the dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost. The Senior Vice President

and Provost's approval of the revised criteria shall indicate a date on which they become effective. The revised criteria for promotion shall apply to all faculty in the unit beginning with the academic year following the effective date. These statements of criteria determine the emphasis placed on the various areas of faculty activity, subject to the following conditions:

(1) Qualifications for promotion in all units should include attainment of high standards in teaching, research, or creative/scholarly activity; and professional and University service and public outreach; and the evaluation should be substantially the same process as followed in tenure considerations.

(2) Service in a given rank for any number of years is not in itself a sufficient reason for promotion.

(3) Promotion should indicate that the faculty member is of comparable stature with others in his or her field at the same rank outside the University.

(B) PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTION DECISIONS

(1) Recommendations regarding advancement in rank shall originate in the academic units by procedures to be determined by the Senior Vice President and Provost.

(2) The college dean or the Senior Vice President and Provost may at his or her discretion, require an academic unit to initiate consideration of promotion for an individual faculty member. In such a case, the academic unit must forward a recommendation, whether or not it is favorable.

(3) While primary responsibility for gathering complete information on professional activity rests with the individual faculty member, the chair should assume a share of this responsibility to be certain that all promotion recommendations are initiated on the basis of full documentation. All such documentation must be considered by any person or group making a recommendation.

(4) All recommendations must be in writing and, with the exception of a recommendation based on any polling of the unit's faculty members, all must include a statement of reasons for the recommendation made. Notification of all such recommendations made above the level of the academic unit, up to and including the recommendation of the Senior Vice President and Provost, must be provided to the unit's chair. The numerical result of the formal secret ballot polling of the unit's faculty members shall be provided to the candidate if the candidate makes a request.

(5) In all recommendations that are to be forwarded, the chair and Committee A members shall provide their recommendations. Each member shall record an independent opinion, by name, without obligation to represent majority departmental opinion. Reasons must be given for all recommendations.

(6) Whenever possible, a promotion should be accompanied by an appropriate increase in salary. If budgetary limitations make this impossible in any particular year, an adjustment should occur at the next budget period when funds are available. Promotions should not be delayed because of budgetary constraints. Conversely, promotions should be earned on their own right and not be used as substitutes for salary increases.

(Regents, 2-12-76, 1-15-87, 7-23-87, 5-9-91, 6-13-91, 7-27-93, 1-27-04)

APPENDIX C

“Annual Faculty Performance Evaluations” memo for academic year 2019-2020


SEE ATTACHED



OFFICE OF THE
Senior Vice President & Provost

MEMORANDUM

To: Deans, Associate Deans, Directors and Chairs – Norman Campus

From: Kyle Harper 
Senior Vice President and Provost

Date: January 6, 2020

Subject: Annual Faculty Performance Evaluations

Faculty performance evaluations are integral to everything we do at this institution, and they have never been more important. As we begin the new cycle of annual evaluation, I am writing to encourage that all departments approach the evaluation process with a renewed spirit of rigor, thoughtfulness, and fairness. By policy, faculty performance evaluations are to be the basis of merit-based compensation programs. Future raise programs will take account of annual evaluation scores in the determination of compensation adjustments. Therefore, it is crucial that every Chair/Director and Committee A leads a thorough and meaningful process of evaluation. For this cycle, we encourage you to aim for a balanced distribution curve for your faculty.

Faculty performance evaluations are an opportunity to measure achievement relative to institutional goals and College and Unit standards. As you go through the process this year, please be mindful of ways that we can improve our system of faculty evaluation to make it more impactful going forward. This might include updating unit guidelines and standards to reflect our ambitious institutional goals and to benchmark against peers and aspirational peers. But even as we look for ways to improve, it is crucial to uphold the highest possible standards and to communicate to departmental faculty the meaning of those standards and the criteria used to measure performance. Please be in communication with your Deans about this process, and you can reach out to me directly or to Jill Irvine with questions or ideas. This is a high priority.

In accordance with the OU Regents' policy since 1977, annual faculty evaluations are conducted for each calendar year. The policy requires individual units to establish their own criteria, subject to dean and provost approval, and to the general standards and limits enacted by the Regents. The process of this annual evaluation usually begins in December and ends in April. It is the policy of the University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus) that all salaried faculty, temporary and permanent, tenure-track and non-tenure-track, and renewable term be subject to the same performance evaluation process.

The basic process of faculty evaluation is described in Section 3.13 of the Faculty Handbook; Sections 3.6.1, 3.6.2 and 3.6.3 provide definitions of teaching, research and service. For

split faculty appointments, see Section 3.5.2 of the Faculty Handbook. The basic process of director or chair evaluation is described in Section 2.8.2 (e) of the Faculty Handbook. In 1986, the President approved a Faculty Senate recommendation that the evaluation process produce results that can be reflected on a uniform summary report. To serve this purpose, the Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation form (attached) and a mini-vitae must be completed through the Faculty Activity System (FAS) for each faculty member's 2019 evaluation.

The Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation records the ratings of each faculty member's contributions in the areas of teaching, research scholarship/creative activity and service using a numerical scale ranging from 0.01, unacceptable, to 5.00, outstanding. The rationale section of this form should include a brief qualitative justification for the rating in each area. The mini-vitae, which enumerates each faculty member's calendar year contributions, provides the basis for the qualitative assessment reported on the Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation form. Units may ask faculty members for additional details about their contributions and request the inclusion of mini-vitae(s) for the previous year or two.

Regular faculty in all colleges are asked to use the Faculty Activity System (FAS) to document their 2019 activities. FAS workflow will be used by faculty to submit their Annual Faculty Mini-Vitae and optional departmental documents to their review committee. Faculty members may enter activity information into the system by going to <http://www.ou.edu/provost/faculty-activity-system> and login with 4+4 username and password.

The evaluation should follow the criteria and procedures approved by each faculty member's academic unit. For faculty with appointments split across budget units, deans, directors/chairs should evaluate that portion of the faculty's effort within their own budget. However, Chairs, Directors and Committee A members are encouraged to meet jointly to discuss the person in a holistic manner. A listing of faculty on permanent split appointments **across** colleges is attached to assist you. Each dean is responsible for maintaining a list of faculty split appointments across budgetary units within their own college.

According to University policy, the Summary Report of Annual Faculty Evaluation is to be submitted to the faculty member who should have at least one week in which to either meet with the chair/director and Committee A to discuss the evaluation or to respond in writing to the evaluation before it leaves the academic unit. All members of the unit should be provided with some means of interpreting the relative meaning of their evaluation (e.g., means and standard deviations for all evaluations in the unit, a report of ranking in terms of deciles, a listing of the rank order of the evaluations without names).

All annual faculty evaluations (summary report forms and one-page mini-vitae), evaluation criteria used and the procedure followed for the evaluations are due in the Provost's Office by April 3rd, 2020. Using the Faculty Activity System (FAS) workflow, chairs/directors should submit the summary reports and the unit mini-vitae first to their college deans, who in turn, will submit them to the Provost's Office by the April 3rd deadline. It is the responsibility of the deans to ensure that each unit turn in a complete set of evaluations and other required documents. The deans will establish college deadlines for completion of the summary report forms by the departments. I will schedule a meeting with each dean in June/July to review the college's faculty

and unit evaluations.

Thank you for your assistance in making this evaluation process a useful one for faculty, academic units, colleges and the university.

Attachments

cc: Joseph Harroz, Jr., Interim President
Joshua Nelson, Faculty Senate Chair
Tomás Díaz de la Rubia, Vice President for Research and Partnerships
Jill Irvine, Senior Vice Provost

FACULTY RESPONSE

[] I have read and do not wish to respond to the evaluation summary of my performance.

[] I have read and wish to respond to the evaluation summary of my performance.

Response:

FACULTY MEMBER'S SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX D

Relevant Excerpts from Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

December 2018 Meeting Minutes, page 6

http://facultysenate.ou.edu/minutes/2018_12jrn.pdf

“Prof. Woodfin said that standardizing and comparing the faculty performance evaluation process between units and colleges is important. He also asked how the annual evaluations and progress towards tenure letters are viewed by the Campus Tenure Committee (CTC). Prof. Ashby, who has served on the CTC, said that the committee looks at evaluations within a unit, but does not compare those between units. Prof. Elwood Madden said that standardizing and providing guidance on the faculty evaluation process is something that the FSEC has raised with both Provost Harper and Vice Provost Irvine.

Prof. Warren said that her department is in the process of revising their evaluation procedures; they would like to discuss best practices with someone from the Provost’s office. Prof. Demir said that there has been debate within his unit about the lack of standard guidelines for faculty evaluation. This is problematic as faculty members find the metrics to be unclear. He also advocated for merit-based raises in the future. Provost Harper indicated that future salary programs would include a merit or performance component. Prof. Hoagland said that since there has not been funding for raises in the past, it has become imbedded in the culture that annual assessments are not significant. He added that this attitude would need to be addressed if annual evaluation results are going to be incorporated into future salary programs.”

March 2019 Meeting Minutes, page 8

http://facultysenate.ou.edu/minutes/2019_03jrn.pdf

“[VP for HR] Dr. Wolf provided an update of ongoing work that coincides with several recommendations in the resolution. She confirmed that the administration intends to convert the Vice Provost for Community position into a Chief Diversity Officer position with a direct report to the President, and strong connections to both provosts. She also discussed plans to invest in more effective training strategies. The FSEC stressed the need for high quality, in-person workshops, and other training opportunities that are explicitly valued in the faculty evaluation system. We also discussed the pros and cons of requiring diverse search committees, including elevated service requirements for faculty from under-represented groups.”

March 2019 Meeting Minutes, page 17

http://facultysenate.ou.edu/minutes/2019_03jrn.pdf

[Excerpt from] Faculty Senate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Resolution (Approved by the Senate at the March 11, 2019 meeting)

B.1.b-e states:

- b. Explicitly value work that strengthens campus diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging when assessing faculty, staff, and administrators for annual evaluations, promotion criteria, awards, internal grants, merit indexes, etc.
- c. Reward faculty and staff involvement in diversity-focused trainings and workshops via the annual evaluation.
- d. Formalize mentorship programs and reward mentors in annual evaluation and merit indexes.
- e. Include numerical registering of community outreach in annual evaluation and merit indexes.