

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMISSION
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT & EVALUATION SUBCOMMITTEE
Final Report 5/18/07

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STRATEGIC DIRECTION: "Develop and implement transparent and fair faculty evaluation processes and robust faculty development programs to enable faculty success." (SPC Forum 1/5/07, p.12)

VISION STATEMENT: Providing an excellent educational experience for students depends on an engaged and productive faculty. To achieve this goal, Appalachian must design strategies and initiatives to attract and retain a diverse faculty whose talents and achievements are recognized. Through an integrated approach, Appalachian must promote quality teaching, research, and service through faculty development and evaluate faculty performance through transparent and uniform processes.

OBJECTIVE 1: Define and develop processes for evaluating teaching, scholarship, and service to be used in tenure, promotion, and merit decisions.

Activity 1: At the university level, provide a vision of the broad expectations of faculty performance and create guidelines for colleges and schools to develop standards and criteria for faculty performance in teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service.

Rationale: Equitable standards and criteria across colleges and schools can be used to clarify expectations at all levels of evaluation.

Unit(s) Responsible: Provost and Academic Affairs.

Assessment Strategies: Review the Academic Affairs vision statement and assess equitability across colleges and schools.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish by January 2008.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 2: At the college level, provide department-specific guidelines for faculty performance.

Rationale: Equitable standards and criteria among departments within colleges and schools will clarify expectations.

Unit(s) Responsible: Deans.

Assessment Strategies: Review the Deans' guidelines and assess equitability across departments within the colleges and schools.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish by May 2008.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 3: Develop departmental policies with clearly stated expectations for faculty performance in teaching, scholarship/creative activity, and service. The standards, and the criteria for meeting those standards, should be publicly available.

Rationale: Transparent and equitable standards and criteria within departments will clarify expectations for faculty.

Unit(s) Responsible: Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Review department guidelines and assess equitability.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish by May 2009.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

OBJECTIVE 2: Define and develop processes for promoting, encouraging, and rewarding quality teaching.

Activity 1: Provide faculty with training and resources for the appropriate use of technology in the classroom, both on and off campus.

Rationale: Teaching will be enhanced and will best keep pace with changing methods in the delivery of education if continually updated technology and training are available.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Instructional Computing Services, and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: Survey the faculty and compare training opportunities and technology use with a 2008 baseline and with our peer institutions.

Five-Year Timeline: Begin incremental implementation each year, beginning in 2009-10.

Estimation of Resources: Regular increases to the Education and Technology fee must cover new technologies. Additional funds must be made available for increased personnel as needed.

Activity 2: Create a database that identifies faculty's interdisciplinary interests, proficiency in languages other than English, and international areas in which faculty work, serve, teach, or wish to teach.

Rationale: Faculty effectiveness in interdisciplinary teaching will be facilitated by the networking the database will provide. The database will also help faculty develop international dimensions for existing or new courses and new faculty-led courses abroad.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Office of International Education and Development, Instructional Computing Services, and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: The number of hits on the database will document its use. A faculty survey will assess the extent to which the database contributed to the increase in number of faculty involved in interdisciplinary teaching, courses for which international components have been developed, and new faculty-led study abroad courses developed.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish database in 2007-08 and update annually with new faculty interests. Begin faculty surveys in 2010.

Estimation of Resources: 2007-08: Halftime graduate assistantship for two semesters for Computer Science/Math/Information Technology Student (\$3,500 in 2007-08), after which responsibilities will be assigned to a graduate student line in the Hubbard Center.

Activity 3: Provide teaching mentors for new faculty.

Rationale: Newer and inexperienced faculty benefit from a relationship with veteran faculty, and veteran faculty benefit from the fresh ideas brought by newer faculty.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Chairs, and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify participation and survey involved faculty on the effectiveness of mentorships.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish program under the Hubbard Center for 2008-09 and nurture the program in the following years; such a program already exists but could benefit from a newer approach.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 4: Introduce teaching forums in which faculty will be invited from other campuses to share their research, primarily in the area of teaching.

Rationale: Faculty members will remain energized and committed to their teaching if given the opportunity to meet and engage with faculty from other disciplines.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify forums and total attendance annually.

Five-Year Timeline: Using the model of the Humanities Thematic Series, forums could begin in 2008-09 with the appointment of a director/coordinator.

Estimation of Resources: Reassigned time for director/coordinator, honoraria, and hosting visiting scholars.

Activity 5: Promote a teaching/reading circle in which faculty from various departments meet and discuss books on teaching. The administration will provide financial support for books and other incentives for participating.

Rationale: Faculty members will remain energized and committed to their teaching if given social and professional opportunities to engage with faculty from other disciplines.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify participation and survey involved faculty.

Five-Year Timeline: Establish program under the Hubbard Center for 2008-09 and nurture the program in the following years.

Estimation of Resources: Costs of books will vary and a small stipend for the facilitator will be required: \$400/group.

Activity 6: Introduce a faculty exchange program within the UNC system.

Rationale: Faculty exchange will promote new ideas, enhance diversity, and improve relations with our “sister”/peer institutions.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs and the Hubbard Center.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify faculty exchanges annually.

Five-Year Timeline: Collaborate on logistics in 2008-10 and initiate first exchange in 2010-11.

Estimation of Resources: Temporary housing for exchange faculty, as needed.

OBJECTIVE 3: Define and develop processes for promoting, encouraging, and rewarding scholarship and creative activities.

Activity 1: Establish an equitable and predictable distribution of reassigned time for scholarship and creative activity (including sabbaticals) and increased reassigned time for pre-tenure and especially productive faculty members.

Rationale: New faculty require time to establish programs of scholarly and creative activity. Both new and veteran faculty are more likely to remain active and productive if given adequate time for student mentorship, creative activity, publishing, and grant writing and will benefit from more regular interactions with colleagues outside the university.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Provost, Deans, and Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Use discipline-specific standards to monitor publication rates, grant submissions, and other activities in relation to reassigned time.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement policy in 2008-09.

Estimation of Resources: Create new faculty lines to allow for decreased teaching loads for new and for productive faculty. In the sciences, for example, allocate three additional hours of reassigned time each year for first three years of employment and continue as justified by research productivity.

Activity 2: Support collaborative and mentoring relationships for scholarship and creative activity, for example by raising graduate assistant stipends, involving undergraduates in scholarly/creative activity, and increasing opportunities for collaboration among faculty members and between faculty and students.

Rationale: Increased involvement in scholarly and creative activity will better prepare students for employment and/or graduate work. The quality and impact of faculty scholarly and creative activity will improve with more focused and dedicated involvement of students. Collaboration among faculty and between faculty and students will increase the quality of scholarly and creative activities.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Graduate School, Office of Student Research, Deans, and Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Monitor increases in stipends, undergraduate research involvement, student-authored publications or creative products, and collaborative work.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement in 2008 and monitor from 2008 - 2012.

Estimation of Resources: Increased funds are required for graduate stipends and to support undergraduate research.

Activity 3: Establish equitable, university-wide systems for recognizing comparable activities in scholarship and creative activity.

Rationale: Faculty commitment to quality scholarly and creative activity is enhanced by consistent recognition of their efforts.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, the Hubbard Center, Deans, and Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Compare recognition of faculty efforts across disciplines.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement in 2008-09 and assess annually.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 4: Increase support for inter-institutional and international collaborations, including those sponsored by professional and international organizations.

Rationale: Interaction at professional meetings and other opportunities for inter-institutional and international collaboration promotes networking, broader faculty recognition, and recognition for programs, while benefiting students and encouraging faculty to maintain active scholarly and creative programs.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Office of International Education and Development, the Hubbard Center, Office of Student Research, Deans, and Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify faculty involvement and products from collaborative projects, in relation to support provided.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement in 2007-08 and evaluate annually.

Estimation of Resources: Substantial funding will be required for additional travel and meeting attendance, especially for international collaboration.

OBJECTIVE 4: Define and develop processes for promoting, encouraging, and rewarding service.

Activity 1: Develop systems to recognize and reward service as it relates to the university mission.

Rationale: A clearly articulated university-wide system for recognizing and rewarding service as an integral part of faculty evaluation will encourage more faculty to participate in faculty governance and other forms of service to the university.

Unit(s) Responsible: Faculty Senate, Deans, and Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Document development of system to promote service activity and quantify increase in service activities. Survey faculty on their perceptions of recognition of service contributions.

Five-Year Timeline: Develop policy in 2007-08 and assess in 2009-10.

Resources: Minimal.

Activity 2: Recognize and support faculty engagement in out-of-class learning and development of students.

Rationale: Faculty clearly affect the development of students both inside and outside the classroom. Significant student learning opportunities exist outside the classroom. Faculty participation in the co-curriculum (organizational advising, mentoring, etc.) is limited by demands on faculty time and the lack of recognition of faculty involvement.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Deans, Chairs, and Office of Student Development.

Assessment Strategies: Measure faculty participation in out-of-class learning experiences. Assess whether faculty believe that they are recognized for this work.

Five-Year Timeline: Compare participation and survey results between 2008 and 2012.

Resources: Minimal.

Activity 3: Improve quality of communication at all levels and involve faculty by soliciting substantive input and participation at the outset and at subsequent stages of institutional policy making,

Rationale: Including faculty in early stages of planning and implementation of institutional initiatives will encourage involvement in service activities at all levels.

Unit(s) Responsible: All major divisions at Appalachian.

Assessment Strategies: Assess extent to which faculty believe they are included in developing and implementing initiatives.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement in 2007-08 and assess in 2012.

OBJECTIVE 5: Improve recruitment and retention of diverse and talented faculty.

Activity 1: Create transparent and fair merit pay distribution that adequately rewards productivity.

Rationale: Recognizing contributions through merit pay provides incentive for continued quality performance.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Deans, Chairs.

Assessment Strategies: Survey faculty in 2012 regarding transparency and fairness of merit pay distribution and compare results with those of the 2007 Faculty Evaluation and Development Task Force survey.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement policies by 2008 and complete survey by 2012.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 2: Implement diversity initiatives.

Rationale: Recruiting a diverse faculty will help recruit a diverse student body, and both will optimize the intellectual climate and overall educational experience at the university.

Unit(s) Responsible: Academic Affairs, Hubbard Center, and the Equity Office.

Assessment Strategies: Compare minority faculty ratio calculated in 2007 with that of 2012.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement goals to be recommended by the newly-appointed Diversity Task Force (Equity Office and Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Diversity).

Estimation of Resources: \$25,000 per annum for recruitment costs, campus visits, and marketing.

Activity 3: Increase pay raises for promotion and tenure so that they are comparable to those of peer institutions.

Rationale: Significant raises will help retain faculty, promote productivity, and encourage faculty applications to higher ranks.

Unit(s) Responsible: General Administration and Academic Affairs.

Assessment Strategies: Compare promotion and tenure raises to those of peer institutions in 2007 and 2012.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement by July 1, 2007.

Estimation of Resources: Sufficient to meet peer institutions.

Activity 4: Provide cost-efficient housing for first three years of employment for new faculty and for visiting faculty.

Rationale: The high cost of living, particularly for housing, is a major concern for new faculty and can be a barrier to faculty hiring.

Unit(s) Responsible: Provost, Academic Affairs, Business Affairs and University Advancement.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify available housing units for faculty in 2012 and compare to 2007 baseline.

Five-Year Timeline: Secure funding for construction by 2009; begin construction by 2010.

Estimation of Resources: Cost assessment to be performed by task force in 2008-09.

Activity 5: Increase availability of on-campus childcare.

Rationale: Access to adequate childcare can improve the quality of faculty work. There is currently a waiting list for childcare and a lack of community based childcare.

Unit(s) Responsible: Provost and Business Affairs.

Assessment Strategies: Compare the number of childcare slots available to faculty in 2007 to those of 2012.

Five-Year Timeline: Survey faculty in 2012 and compare results with those of the 2007 Faculty Evaluation and Development Task Force survey.

Estimation of Resources: Determined by Provost and Business Affairs.

Activity 6: Establish unmarried domestic partnership benefits.

Rationale: Many faculty members (and other state employees) are struggling with the rising costs of health coverage. Faculty members in unmarried partner relationships are not permitted to extend those benefits to their loved ones; therefore, advocacy is needed for faculty and family members not recognized under the current North Carolina healthcare policy. University systems nationwide are successfully addressing this issue.

Unit(s) Responsible: General Administration, Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, and Human Resources.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify unmarried domestic partners who receive benefits in 2012 and compare this with 2007 baseline of 0%.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement recommendations of Faculty Development and Evaluation Task Force. Completion date: 2012.

Estimation of Resources: Costs will be comparable to coverage for married partners and their families.

Activity 7: Create, seek, and actively promote employment opportunities for trailing spouses and partners.

Rationale: Suitable employment opportunities for spouses/partners will help recruit and retain faculty. Networking and proactive communication with the Employment Security Commission, the Town of Boone, the Chamber of Commerce and any other potential employers may be useful in addition to more serious consideration of spouse/partner hires within the university.

Unit(s) Responsible: Chief of Staff, Academic Affairs, and Human Resources.

Assessment Strategies: Survey faculty in 2012 and compare results with those of the 2007 Faculty Evaluation and Development Task Force survey.

Five-Year Timeline: Completion date: 2012.

Estimation of Resources: Minimal.

Activity 8: Attract experienced faculty members by hiring at the associate professor level with competitive salaries.

Rationale: Experienced faculty bring established research programs to the university. Colleagues benefit through mentorship and collaboration, and students benefit from an enhanced learning environment.

Unit(s) Responsible: General Administration and Academic Affairs.

Assessment Strategies: Quantify senior-level hires in 2007 and compare to those in 2012.

Five-Year Timeline: Implement by 2008.

Estimation of Resources: Based on needs of departments.