

Ad Hoc Committee on Chair Assessment
Proposed Changes to the College of Liberal Arts Policies and
Procedure Manual

Nicholas DiFonzo (Chair)
Kijana Crawford
Richard Santana
Jeannette Mitchell

- I. Our Charge:
To recommend back to the faculty on how to evaluate chairs.

- II. Our Recommendations:
 - A. That the following subsection be added to Section III.C.3. of the Liberal Arts Policy and Procedures Manual.
 1. Overview: Each department and program chair will be reviewed annually. This review is the responsibility of the Dean of the College and will include a consideration of ratings and comments from the faculty of the Chair's department. These ratings and comments will be collected the Chairs Evaluation Committee (CEC), a standing committee of the College of Liberal Arts. The entire procedure will preserve faculty anonymity.
 2. Procedure. The annual review will consist of the following steps:
 - a. By the third week of the fall quarter, the CEC will administer a survey to department faculty regarding the performance of each department and program chair. A starting date will be determined by the CEC but should be no later than the end of the third week of fall quarter. The termination date will be the first day of classes winter quarter.
 - b. The CEC will tabulate responses and compile a summary report, hereinafter termed a Feedback for Department Chair Report, for each department and program chair. The CEC will send the Feedback for Department Chair Report to the dean no later than January 15th. The dean will ensure that the chair receives a copy of the Feedback for Department Chair Report by January 20th.
 - c. Department and program chairs will include a copy of the Feedback for Department Chair Report in their self-evaluation and Plan of Work. The Plan of Work will explicitly address areas in need of improvement, if any, as

- identified by the Feedback for Department Chair Report.
- d. The dean will meet with each chair to discuss the self-evaluation, the Plan of Work, and the Feedback for Department Chair Report. The dean and the chair will discuss areas in need of improvement identified by the Feedback for Department Chair Report and steps for improvement.
 - e. The steps for improvement formulated above will be communicated by the chair to members of the department or program.
- B. We recommend that section III.G (Faculty Evaluation of Administrators) of the College of Liberal Arts Policies and Procedures Manual be divided into two sections. The first section to consist of the current section designated III.G.1 and a second section, III.G.2 stipulating the annual chair evaluation as herein contained.
- C. We recommend that Section III.B.4. include a Chairs Evaluation Committee with the stipulations as to election, duties and term given below.
- a. Committee Election. The committee will be elected at the start of the academic year and will be comprised of three tenured faculty members from different departments.
 - b. Committee Duties: By the third week of fall quarter the committee will ensure the completion of a survey form for each academic department and program in the CLA. This form should be designed and approved by the faculty of the college no later than the last faculty meeting the previous academic year. Each form will list the department or program name and the chair's name. The forms will specify a starting date during the third week of fall quarter and a completion date the first day of classes winter quarter. The committee will then tabulate the responses and compile a Feedback for Department Chair Report and submit said report to the dean.
 - c. Committee terms: The initial committee will elect one of its members to serve a term of three years. The other two committee members will serve a term of two years.
- D. We recommend the formation of an ad hoc committee to develop the initial instrument. This committee would have the duty to develop an instrument and to submit said instrument to a meeting of the CLA faculty for approval no later than December 2004.

APPENDIX 1 Rationale, What we did, How chairs are currently evaluated in CLA, the Dean's Perspective, Chairs' Perspectives, Faculty Perspectives, Literature

I. Rationale

A. What is upward feedback?

In our setting, upward feedback refers to ratings and comments made by department faculty regarding chair performance; it is upward in the sense that it travels up the organizational hierarchy.

B. Why should the chair evaluation incorporate upward feedback?

Precedent and consistency. Faculty evaluations incorporate upward (student) feedback; the Deans evaluations incorporate upward (faculty) feedback. Chairs are currently the only group not receiving upward feedback.

Upward feedback will improve chair performance. This is particularly important for areas stipulated in need of improvement. When used for the person performing the evaluation, in our case the dean, upward feedback typically leads to improved performance.

Upward feedback leads to more accurate appraisals. This is simply because co-workers observe a greater sample of behavior than the person doing the appraisal; in our case, faculty feedback will contribute to chair assessment accuracy simply because the faculty observes the chair much more often than does the dean.

Faculty wants to have input in chair appraisals. Feedback to our committee indicates that faculty generally desire to have input into chair appraisal.

The dean and most chairs welcome a chair evaluation procedure that incorporates upward feedback. Chairs want more detailed guidance on how they are to be evaluated, clearer expectations on the role of the chair, and a more systematic evaluation procedure. The dean would find such information helpful in his yearly evaluation.

C. Why should a formal chair evaluation procedure be enacted?

A formal procedure ensures some uniformity to the chair evaluation process. Leaving the procedure informal and unwritten allows the chair evaluation process to differ across year and personnel. A uniform process is inherently fairer.

Having a formal procedure will help chairs—and thus departments—by documenting values, duties and activities associated with effective chair performance. Because chair performance is central to departmental functioning, enacting a formal procedure to help chairs improve will lead to improved departmental functioning.

D. Will faculty responses be anonymous?

Yes. Faculty anonymity should be maintained throughout this process. Identifying information, if used by the committee, should be removed when responses are sent to the committee.

E. Is performing an annual chair evaluation feasible?

Yes. Using this system will not add to the responsibilities of faculty, deans or chairs. For chairs there are additional tasks involved with the process, but as these tasks are required by all faculty and are part of the established performance appraisal process, the committee regards these tasks as reasonable.

II. What we did.

Investigated current CLA policy on the evaluation of chairs.

Interviewed the dean.

Interviewed department chairs.

Reviewed chair assessment procedures and forms from other universities and the IDEA center.

Reviewed research literature on effectiveness of upward feedback

Requested and received faculty feedback.

Consulted Christine Licata, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, regarding the IDEA Systems in use at NTID.

Requested and received feedback from some experienced faculty regarding this proposal.

Met with chairs and the dean at a chairs meeting to garner input.

III. How chairs are currently evaluated.

There is currently no formal policy for chair evaluation.

In some departments a verbal discussion occurs between the dean and the chair, the dean then makes a merit determination.

In some departments the chair submits a self-evaluation to the dean who then discusses it with the chair and makes a merit evaluation.

In two departments, in addition to the activities above, the chairs share their self-evaluation with all members of their department, and then the faculty member gathers feedback from each member of the department and composes a 1-2 page summary of departmental feedback. The faculty member then meets with the dean to discuss this summary.

IV. The Dean's Perspective.

A summary of faculty feedback would be helpful.

The process should be done in such a way as to preserve confidentiality. This may not be possible in very small departments.

V. Chairs' Perspectives.

Most chairs are in favor of a formal feedback procedure.

Some chairs wished for greater transparency in their performance; that is, they want more detailed guidance on how they are to be evaluated.

Some chairs want whatever procedure that is enacted to have a quantitative component; others want a qualitative.

Some chairs indicated they desired fairness and consistency in evaluation across departments.

VI. Faculty Perspectives

A number of faculty (n=25) responded to our request for feedback. This faculty was largely strongly positive about the need to adopt a formal feedback procedure. Some department chairs are (or have been) perceived by some faculty as needful of better assessment and incentives to improve.

Faculty suggestions included the need to assess chair practices related to “fairness in all operations; concern for shared governance; and a capacity to build consensus.”

Some faculty stated that the adoption of a formal upward feedback procedure is sorely needed. This faculty felt strongly that a crucial missing element in chair evaluation was faculty feedback.

Faculty wanted the process to be anonymous out of fear of punishment for poor ratings and negative comments.

VI. Literature

Atwater, L., Roush, P., & Fischthal, A. (1995). The influence of upward feedback on self- and follower ratings of leadership. *Personnel Psychology, 48*(1), 35-59.

Lucas, A. F. (1994). *Strengthening departmental leadership: A team-building guide for chairs in colleges and universities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lucas, A. F. (2000). *Leading academic change: Essential roles for department chairs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Reilly, R. R., Smither, J. W., & Vasilopoulos, N. L. (1996). A longitudinal study of upward feedback. *Personnel Psychology, 49*(3), 599-612.

Smither, J. W., London, M., Vasilopoulos, N. L., Reilly, R. R., Millsap, R. E., & Salvemini, N. (1995). An examination of the effects of an upward feedback program over time. *Personnel Psychology, 48*(1), 1-34.

Walker, A. G., & Smither, J. W. (1999). A five-year study of upward feedback: What managers do with their results matters. *Personnel Psychology, 52*(2), 393-423.

APPENDIX II: Policies and Procedures to be amended.

Liberal Arts Academic Departments Membership, Functions and Position of Department Chair III.C

I. Membership

1. The membership of an Academic Department shall be comprised of all full-time Liberal Arts faculty who teach courses in the academic discipline for the department.
2. A full-time Liberal Arts faculty member who teaches in a discipline during an academic year shall be a member of the department for that academic year. (For the purpose of Departmental activities. The academic year shall consist of the three academic quarters.)
3. Any discipline for which NTID Liberal Arts Support faculty regularly teach classes shall allow such faculty to sit as non-voting members of the department.
4. Faculty members may have multi-departmental membership but only one department may be designated as the home department, ordinarily the department in which the majority of courses are taught.
5. Departmental membership confers full voting rights at departmental meetings with these exceptions: a faculty member may vote in nominating elections in the home department only; tenure track and temporary faculty do not participate in the annual review of tenure-track faculty; and temporary faculty do not participate in designing descriptions of tenure-track faculty positions for which they might be candidates.
6. Joint appointments to two or more departments may be made by the Dean and Provost on the recommendation of the academic departments. In such cases the faculty member will have full voting rights in each department.

II. Functions of the Department

1. An Academic Department shall determine the objectives of the discipline over which it has jurisdiction.
2. In consultation with the Dean and the Affirmative Action Officer of the College, the academic department shall interview candidates for faculty positions in the department, review their credentials, poll department members, and communicate the Departments recommendation to the Dean.
3. An Academic Department shall advise the Dean on annual tenure reviews, and on questions of renewal and non-renewal of faculty contracts for all untenured faculty members within that department.

III. Department Chairs

1. All Academic Departments shall have a Chair. No faculty member may be the Chair of more than one department at the same time.
2. Selection
 - A. Election of Chairs will require a majority vote of the Department faculty and the approval of the Dean. If these two approvals are not forthcoming, the Dean will appoint an Acting Chairperson for one year after consultation with the faculty of the Department as a group.
 - B. Elections should be conducted in the Spring Quarter of the year in which the current Chairs term expires. The Chair shall be nominated for the Deans consideration by a majority Vote of the members of the Department. In the case of a tie vote, a second,

and, if necessary, a third vote shall be taken.

3. Term of Office

A. The term of office of the Chairperson shall be three consecutive academic years, commencing July 1.

B. If a Chair resigns or is unable to serve for an indefinite period of time due to illness, leave of absence, or any other reason, the duties shall end and a new Chair shall be selected to serve for the duration of the former Chair's term.

C. A Chair must meet all the criteria for departmental membership.

Approved January 1990

Revised May 18, 2001

III.G. An Assessment of the College and Its Administration

1. An Assessment Committee of four faculty, elected at-large by the faculty, will conduct an annual assessment of the state of the College and how it might be improved. Committee members will serve staggered two-year terms, with the initial terms determined by lot. The senior ranking representative (years in highest rank) will be chair and assume responsibility for coordinating the assessment.

2. The assessment will minimally include a survey of all full-time faculty regarding their perception of the College's strengths and weaknesses and how they think the College could be strengthened. The survey must be reviewed and approved by the faculty and is subject to yearly review and modification.

3. All assessment data will be anonymous.

4. The Committee will detail the perceived strengths and weaknesses and provide a check list for how the College could be strengthened. The annual check lists will serve as one basis of the assessment and will be available for all faculty and staff.

5. Upon completion of the assessment, the Committee will meet with the Dean and other appropriate administrators to discuss the assessment; these meetings should take place no later than April 30th.

After this meeting with the Committee, the Dean will make a summary report to the Liberal Arts Faculty before the end of the academic year; this report can be in oral or written form.

III.B Committees

1. Ad hoc committees may be created by the faculty through a vote or by the Dean through appointment. Faculty approval is required to extend ad hoc committees beyond one year or the completion of their duties.

2. All committees must seek faculty approval to amend or establish policy.

3. The membership of Standing Committees shall be determined by election of its members from tenure and tenure-track faculty in the College of Liberal Arts

except that the Tenure Committee shall have one member from another College and except that some committees shall have the Dean or the Dean's representative as an *ex officio* non-voting member.

4. The Standing Committees of the College are as follows: HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1e.html>" [Academic Conduct](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1e.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3e.html>" [Agenda](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3e.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3g.html>" [Assessment](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3g.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1b.html>" [Curriculum](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1b.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3f.html>" [Election](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3f.html), Faculty Development, HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/%7E692awww/Honors.html>" \t "_blank" [Honors](http://www.rit.edu/%7E692awww/Honors.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3d.html>" [Policies and Procedures](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy3d.html), HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy2b.html>" [Promotions](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy2b.html), Tenure, and HYPERLINK "<http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1c2.html>" [Writing](http://www.rit.edu/~690www/policies/policy1c2.html). Their charges, composition, and modes of election are as follows: