

MEMORANDUM

TO: Agenda Committee of Policy Council
FROM: Ginette Delandshere, Ad Hoc Committee Chair
SUBJECT: Online Faculty Report for Merit Review
DATE: November 23, 2004

This committee was charged with examining the issues of concern to the faculty with regard to the online faculty annual report. The committee engaged in the following activities:

- investigated annual report systems in other Big Ten universities
(only Illinois seems to be using an online reporting system)
- consulted with the IUB legal counsel and Deans of Faculty
- conducted a survey of the faculty regarding their concerns

Based on the information gathered during this investigation the committee recommends the following:

- To continue using the online system but to establish a faculty oversight and monitoring system.
- To articulate a policy statement regarding the purposes, uses, control, and access of the database constituted from the faculty annual reports. Such a policy should probably be reviewed by the University Legal Counsel (see also the Access to Records Policy at: <http://www.indiana.edu/~deanfac/acadguid/a.html#pdd.>)
- To continue to address the logistical, technical and burden on faculty problems, and other concerns mentioned in the responses to the faculty survey (see attached list).

Committee Members

Jack Cummings
Suzanne Eckes
Larry Mikulecky
Michael Molenda
Theresa Ochoa

Pete Kloosterman (Ex-officio)
Larry Riss (Technology advisor)

Brief summary of concerns mentioned in faculty survey regarding online faculty annual report

Logistical, technical and burden on faculty problems

- privacy and security
- time it takes to complete the online form – more difficult and time consuming than the paper form – make reporting easier
- system completely inefficient – faculty spent an average of 3 days creating this report (cost in time, money exorbitant)
- availability of previous years' reports
- increase length of report due to online format
- categories need to be revised to be more inclusive – existing categories do not allow faculty to describe their work – not sure how to classify non-peer-reviewed publications – not all grants are listed
- link to social security number is problematic

Other concerns about online format

- leads to more simplistic and more superficial review
- the data will encourage uniform counting of “products” across diverse disciplines and field of inquiry – narrow forms of counting publications
- potential exists for misrepresenting what we do when activities are quantified with simplistic methods (quantity vs. quality)
- encourages conformity
- format does not match university merit review criteria
- format encourages comparisons of productivity across departments that lack commonalities among their research methods and agreements about expectations place on faculty
- format does not account for representations of non-standard types of activities- no categories for these activities
- critical to have a clear policy statement regarding who sees and uses the data and for what purpose – why and how often these data are used
- need faculty oversight—deans need to be accountable to FAC and PC
- need clear and direct communication from the Faculty Affairs Committee as to how this online form links to merit review criteria, how the data will be used and manipulated and that no sensitive information will be made available through this system
- items not in the public domain should be protected – invasion of privacy
- system benefits the administration not the faculty
- data standardized for administrative use, rather than collected for their usefulness in describing what we do
- can anyone change or manipulate the data?

- difficult to highlight truly important accomplishments when there are 30 page reports
- difficult to handle the detailed descriptions of our research, development, and service activities
- no control over how things are classified
- evaluation through pre-determined lenses instead of each individual's own merits
- not appropriate for clinical faculty – design alternative report for clinical faculty