

GP.96.02
September 30, 1996

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
General University Policy Committee
(Final;Action)

APPROVED BY UIUC SENATE

GP.96.02 Dean Review Guidelines—Proposed Policy Statement

BACKGROUND

The *Statutes* state that dean "performance evaluations" shall occur "at least once every five years in a manner to be determined by the college faculty". These evaluations serve several important purposes. By informing both the dean and the faculty themselves of the faculty's collective view of their dean's performance, they play a significant role in the development of relations between deans and their constituencies. They also figure prominently in the Provost's assessment of deans on these occasions.

Like all UIUC administrators, dean's contracts are for renewable one-year appointments rather than multi-year terms of office. Thus these periodic "performance evaluations" and associated assessments (which supplement the college executive committee reports required at the time of a dean's annual reappointment) are not actually term-renewal decisions. They are commonly so regarded, however, and to some extent function as such.

These evaluations are typically carried out by college dean evaluation committees (henceforth "DECs"). These committees must be constituted and charged and must function in such a way that they and their efforts have the confidence of all concerned. Furthermore, their reports must provide all concerned with whatever information may be appropriate, helpful and needed in connection with the purposes of this practice. It therefore is clearly desirable that the best possible practices be followed throughout the evaluation process. Guidelines reflecting these considerations are offered here.

It is our recommendation that the Senate endorse these guidelines. Senate endorsement may be helpful in achieving a desirable degree of consistency in these matters on this campus, and in enhancing the usefulness of this practice. In some cases college By-Laws may need to be modified if these guidelines are to be followed. We recommend that, in such cases, the colleges make such changes.

With reference to the evaluation schedule, the Senate has been asked to consider whether any changes might be warranted in our current practice of evaluating deans "at least once every five years". The GUP Committee, to which this matter has been referred, has made inquiry of other CIC institutions, and finds that very few other such institutions have significantly longer or shorter periods of review for deans. Since the *Statutes* require that a performance evaluation shall occur "at least once every five years", the first evaluation may occur prior to the fifth year of appointment. They thus already permit earlier initial evaluations.

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We recognize that in some cases five years may not be long enough to permit an appropriate assessment of a dean's performance. On the other hand, a college cannot afford to go even that long with a dean who is not providing the college with the leadership and stewardship it needs. A further important concern is that the timing and nature of the review process have no detrimental effect upon the recruitment and retention of deans of high quality. It also is clearly preferable to have a general policy with respect to initial evaluations in place for all new deans from the outset of their appointments, to avoid the onus that would otherwise attach to the conduct of early evaluations in a few cases.

We suggest that these concerns are all effectively addressed below, in a manner requiring no change in the *Statutes*. We recommend that the proposed evaluation schedule be implemented in a routine manner beginning with the next appointment of a new dean, and that this option be offered to any deans who have been appointed recently.

ESTABLISHMENT OF DEAN EVALUATION COMMITTEES

- The membership of Dean Evaluation Committees (DECs) should reflect the various elements of the college whose perspectives and assessments are relevant to the evaluation of the dean's performance. DECs should reflect the constitution of the faculty of the college, and may include staff and/or students in the college as well as faculty. They also may include some executive officers of college units; but other members should be in the distinct majority.
- If the membership of DECs in a college is not specified in the By-Laws of the college, DECs in that college should be constituted along the same general lines and in the manner followed in constituting dean search committees.
- If the By-Laws of a college do specify elements of the membership of DECs, the By-Laws should make provision for additional appointments to them in the event that the effect of the specifications happens to exclude significant elements of the college from the review process.
- The chair of a DEC normally should be a faculty member holding the rank of full professor and whose primary appointment is in a different college from the one whose dean is under review, and should be appointed by the Provost.
- Colleges may charge DECs in a general way in their By-Laws. DECs may also be charged in more specific ways by the Provost. They further may look into other matters that they may deem relevant to their "performance evaluation" task.

EVALUATION SCHEDULE

- Deans appointed subsequent to the adoption of this policy should be given an initial "performance evaluation" no later than the beginning of their fourth year. This initial evaluation should be genuine and conceivably can result in non-reappointment, but its primary and typical function is diagnostic. Subsequent evaluations should occur "at least once every five years" as the *Statutes* specify.

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EVALUATION PROCESS

- The dean evaluation process should involve an invitation to the dean being evaluated to prepare a short self-evaluation addressing goals, accomplishments, directions, problems, and any other matters that the dean may deem relevant. This self-evaluation should be shared with both the DEC and the Provost.
- DEC's should devise appropriate means of soliciting the views of faculty, staff and students in their colleges with respect to the performance of the deans being evaluated, with the assistance of the Office of Instructional Resources. Such solicitation should be a mandatory part of the process.
- DEC's should ensure that those who work with and report to the deans being evaluated have the opportunity to communicate their views with the assurance of confidentiality, and should consult with the Provost's office concerning the best ways of assuring that confidentiality under current law.
- Deans should be given the opportunity to meet with the DEC's both early in the evaluation process (for preliminary discussion) and toward its conclusion (to allow for discussion of any areas of concern that may have emerged).

REPORTING

- At the conclusion of the evaluation process the DEC should report in writing both to the Provost and to the faculty of the college, at whatever length and in whatever detail it may deem appropriate in each case, and should discuss its report with the Provost.
- The Provost should convey to the dean a written summary of the evaluation, prepared by the DEC for that purpose, and the Provost's conclusions. The Provost should also inform the college of the outcome of the evaluation.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICY
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Council of Deans

Dear Colleagues:

In consultation with the Senate, I request that units review their bylaws for completeness and currency and to make any revisions that may be needed to conform to relevant *Statutes* and university, campus, and college policy documents. There are six issues to which we recommend that units pay particular attention:

- 1) A clear definition of the membership of the unit's faculty. (See Article II, Section 3a of the *Statutes*.)
- 2) A clear definition of the voting rights of faculty members.
- 3) Clear procedures for calling faculty meetings.
- 4) Clear procedures for electing members of executive and advisory committees, as well as clear definitions of the terms of service for such committees. (See the *Statutes*, Article III, Section 2f for colleges; Article III, Section 4 for schools; Article IV, Section 2d for departments organized with a chair; or Article IV, Section 3f for departments organized with a head.)
- 5) Clear definitions of the responsibilities of the executive or advisory committee.
- 6) Clear procedures for amending and revising the bylaws.

There is one aspect of your bylaws that we would like you to review in the very near future. In the accompanying memo I ask that you examine and modify, if necessary, your procedures for the fifth-year evaluation of deans to assure consistency with guidelines recently adopted by the Urbana-Champaign Senate. It is most important that the Colleges whose deans will be reviewed in the next cycle examine their bylaws as soon as possible.

I realize that revisions of bylaws do not excite the academic imagination, but careful work can open some opportunities for improved practices and can definitely save grief later. I will much appreciate your work in this area.

In general, bylaws should cover only structural matters subject to very rare re-evaluation and revision. Unnecessary inflexibility should be avoided. For example, it is not in any unit's best interest to encode into its bylaws all details of its current committee structure. Such aspects are better addressed in policy documents, or simply by custom, rather than in bylaws.