



Faculty Performance Appraisal/Evaluation Process January 2013 Summary Findings from Focus Groups

Questions:

- 1. Is the written process clear and understandable? Are the expectations of the faculty member clear? (Any oral interpretation issues?)** One faculty responded yes, they met early in the semester with the dean, the process was explained clearly and it was not burdensome. Others responded yes, clear but overwhelming. Some said no, it was a little confusing. The outcomes and expectations of the process were not clear. There were inconsistencies between deans, and inconsistencies with individual deans among faculty members. Some items were listed as optional, but if the faculty did not include item(s) they were penalized for not including it.
- 2. Are the most appropriate materials being collected for the appraisal? Should any additional materials be included? Should any current materials not be included? (from both faculty and dean perspective)** Generally faculty reported that no, it was a lot of duplication and repetition – for example, the common course outline, ICE, SSI and PDP are available elsewhere so why use up resources to reprint and include here? It was much more a pulling together of previously collected information and not much reflection/writing. If faculty is going to invest the time to create the binder, the dean should invest quality time to review/respond to it and develop a rubric for a thoughtful, written response. The deans don't have time to do a good job with this process for the number of faculty evaluated each semester. There is frustration that faculty were penalized for not reporting on a level of detail that WIDS does not allow them to report.
- 3. Regarding the dean's classroom observation, when during the semester would be the best time for the dean to conduct the observation? (Dean & faculty member mutually agree on a time. Deans may also observe at unscheduled times.) (Did you have a peer classroom observation?)** Weeks 3-8 would be best time for the visit, as there would still be time for faculty to use the feedback to affect corrections/improvements in the classroom. Most faculty reported there was no problem scheduling the classroom visit. However, one said the visit was canceled several times, then when it finally did happen the dean arrived late which disrupted the class and made it so the observation was not very effective. Also, it was mentioned that deans don't have to wait for this process to conduct a classroom visit. One

faculty mentioned they did a peer observation, which was a test review session, and it was very effective and helpful.

- 4. What are the strengths of this appraisal/evaluation process?** There was agreement among faculty that there is value in an evaluation for all employees at the college, and praise can be a positive motivator, making for better employees, better instructors and better students. Tenure can be abused, leading to complacent faculty. But the majority of participants stated that this process is not effective and most could not identify any strengths. One faculty member did report that this was an overall positive experience for them, reaffirming they were doing a good job. It afforded an opportunity for uninterrupted dialog with the dean and a chance to document positive things they were doing as an instructor.
- 5. What opportunities for improvement to the appraisal/evaluation process do you see? (Do you have any input on how to streamline the appraisal/evaluation process?)** This should be streamlined to a 2-page process. Get faculty input on what it would look like. Evaluate more teaching skills, communication, technology, classroom skills, reinforcing knowledge and less on organizational and paperwork skills. An evaluation process is good and important, but there should be some self-improvement piece that is part of the process. Make the outcomes more clear. Provide better feedback. Instead of just collecting data, make it more of a dialog, more about performance and outcome driven. Let it serve as a learning process. This didn't feel like a pilot, if felt like a derogatory process. One faculty member was told to "play the game", but feels that if this was a game, the result should not be included in his permanent file. One suggestion was to use the "360 degree feedback" model. Another suggestion was to videotape lectures and self-evaluate as a tool for improvement.
- 6. Comments on the timeline – enough time to accomplish the process in the semester?** One faculty member did report they met with the dean early in the semester and that gave them enough time to plan things out and get everything done. Others stated it took way too much time to collect all the information, and way too much time for the deans to look at it all. Meeting dates with deans changed, hard to get actionable feedback. Deans took notes on the binder information but by the time they met with faculty they had forgotten what their notes meant.
- 7. Any other comments or concerns?** One faculty member reported that this evaluation process was an overall positive experience. However, this was not the experience for most respondents. Other comments included: This was not an evaluation, it was a data depository. It was not compensation driven, it was not performance driven. It was more of a process showing what faculty does. It shows that the administration has no clue what faculty do. It was a very punitive process, not a positive process. It put faculty in a defensive state of mind – "will SCC use this to get rid of me?" Faculty at the end of their career are

sliding out. This type of process is more appropriate for probationary faculty, and a different process could be used for tenured faculty. If a data-collection approach is kept, provide a binder with content tabs to faculty, and an example to follow. This process did not make faculty feel good as an employee of SCC, it did not increase an attitude that was beneficial to faculty or students. A lot of the art of teaching is attitude and this was bad for the teachers' attitude. Instead of concentrating on data, it should be a dialog about performance and outcomes. There is somewhat a feeling among faculty that administration lacks trust in them. With this evaluation process, there is no appeal process in the event the dean gave a biased review.