



April 11, 2014

To Executive Committee,

I want to follow up on a question that arose in yesterday's meeting of the Executive Committee. Although I think we fully addressed the question in yesterday's meeting, I want to give you a written document you can share with colleagues. Also, because the question may prompt a reexamination of policy, having something in writing may help next year's Executive Committee craft a charge to one of the standing committees.

To begin, the policy for evaluating deans calls for data to be gathered in the second year of a dean's appointment. The following passage from PPM 1-17 is relevant.

"By the end of the dean's second full year of service, the instrument will be administered that year and every two years thereafter. Each full-time faculty and staff member will be notified by the provost's office to complete the dean's evaluation survey. Faculty and staff shall have a maximum of 10 working days to complete the evaluation survey."

Further, PPM 1-17 states,

"The biennial survey data will be interpreted the year in which the dean is evaluated. An advisory committee for each dean consisting of that college's rank and tenure committee, at least one department chair from the same college, and another dean to be chosen by the provost will be formed to interpret the survey data and assist the provost in the interim assessment and formal reappointment evaluation. A copy of the compiled survey results from each year will be held in the provost's office until they are needed by the committees. Deans may have access to annual evaluations as desired. A dean may request the opportunity of discussing the evaluation data with the committee prior to its final report."

Because deans are formally evaluated in the fourth year of their appointment, the biennial data that is gathered in the second year of the appointment isn't scrutinized by members of the college until the dean's fourth year.

I speculate that the rationale of those who drafted this policy was to give the fourth-year advisory committee at least two data points to examine. I can understand this rationale.

At the same time, this process has proven problematic for several reasons. First, faculty are asked to complete a survey, yet the results of the survey are not interpreted by anyone in the college for two years. This means the faculty do not receive substantive feedback regarding the outcome of the second-year survey for two years. In addition, unless the faculty in the college are part of the fourth-year advisory committee, the activities that take place in the second year appear identical to the activities that take place in the fourth year. This causes ongoing confusing with regard to whether the process taking place in the second year is a formal evaluation or mere data

gathering. Finally, the language in PPM 1-17 could draw a sharper distinction between what occurs in the second year and the fourth year.

If you think it would be useful to say a few things about this in your next Faculty Senate meeting, I would be happy to do so. Otherwise, I will leave it up to you to decide whether you think the policy should be revisited.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Vaughan".

Michael Vaughan