

Rutgers University Senate

Faculty Affairs and Personnel Committee

Response to Charge S-0407: Faculty Reporting Processes

March 29, 2005

A. Charge

Faculty Reporting Processes: Investigate, consider, and make recommendations for streamlining and making easier the processes involved in faculty reporting of teaching, scholarship, and service. Consider compatibilities between the Annual Faculty Survey and Form 1A, cross-document copy-and-paste capability, and availability of data for reformatting for insertion into other electronic documents.

Report to Senate Executive Committee by March 2005.

B. Summary and Background

This charge stemmed from difficulties with the lack of standardization in faculty reporting of teaching, scholarship, and service. The design of the Annual Faculty Survey has, to date, not been consistent with promotion forms (i.e., Forms 1a,b,c,d,e) or standard *curriculum vitae*. Data in the annual survey must be entered manually, and there is no flexibility to move information from the annual survey into promotion forms or *vice versa*. For these reasons, completing the annual survey has been a hardship for most faculty (or the staff who type them), and the reporting process has, therefore, been frustrating and incomplete.

The Personnel Policy Committee of the New Brunswick Faculty Council (NBFC) attempted to deal with this issue in 1993/1994. The council denounced the format of the annual survey as unusual, and as not complying with typical *curriculum vitae* of any discipline. The council also suggested that a format compatible with standard promotion forms would be helpful in preparation of tenure/promotion materials and would also make faculty more familiar with the survey. The Lawrence central administration responded that they were happy with the percentage of faculty responding and were not willing to do anything different. The council passed a resolution urging faculty to boycott the annual survey until such time when the format was compatible with tenure and promotion forms. A letter drafted by the NBFC Personnel Policy Committee to new faculty in 1999 (<http://nbfc.rutgers.edu/Form1.htm>) simply steers new faculty towards record keeping that is compatible with the tenure and promotion forms.

In this charge, the University Senate is asked to go on record to promote a simpler and more efficient form of faculty reporting that can be used for other required reporting such as tenure and promotion and FASIP. Faculty should have the option to update information throughout the year at their convenience, and should be able to cut-and-paste from, or otherwise copy or reference, other forms. Ideally, the annual faculty survey and tenure/promotion forms should be completely compatible; information should be capable of being edited and reassembled for a variety of purposes, such as for *curriculum vitae*, faculty home pages, departmental Web sites, undergraduate and graduate recruitment efforts, etc.

C. Actions

Since the charge was issued, it became clear that the EVPAA had already arranged for Robert Heffernan, Director of Institutional Research and Planning (IRAP), to devise an on-line faculty survey with multi-use flexibility. We visited with Mr. Heffernan and/or Richard Tedesco, Application Developer, on two occasions (11 November, 2004 and 19 March, 2005) to evaluate their product.

IRAP is developing a faculty survey with the capacity to maintain faculty profiles (background information as well as teaching, service, and scholarly activities) on-line. The database has been structured to mirror the criteria in Form 1a. Once information is entered into the database, it is maintained indefinitely. From a faculty perspective, these data can be downloaded to generate both promotion reports (Forms 1a,b,c,d,e) as well as *curriculum vitae* in Microsoft Word format, and the survey has the flexibility for use in other reporting formats. The survey can also be used by administrators to generate department-specific reports. The Faculty Survey home page includes the following language:

“This site is not only a survey, but a community for faculty, deans, and departments to share information. The data collected are used to generate various reports to assist deans and chairs, while providing faculty members easy access to maintain their profile, general customized CV, or search for colleagues.”

The Web site provides menus to:

- Maintain and publish faculty profiles:
 - biographical information, degrees and certificates, scholarly activity, and service are entered here
 - data are maintained indefinitely and can be added, deleted, or rearranged at any time
- Customize and publish *curriculum vitae* or other reports:
 - the user chooses which data is downloaded into report form
 - data for *curriculum vitae* or other reports can be downloaded three ways: as a “printer friendly” version (based on the browser); as a “quick-Word” version that is not formatted and can be customized by the user; or into an Excel database
 - a *curriculum vitae* or resume can also be downloaded into a pre-selected template that can be further customized in Word
- PHS 398 Biosketch:
 - The NIH biographical sketch (which includes educational background, honors, experience, and peer-reviewed publications) can be automatically generated
- Generate promotion and tenure reports:
 - promotion forms are automatically generated; users select the appropriate form (e.g., 1a,b,c,d,e) from a pull-down menu
 - such forms are downloaded into Word and can be customized to suit the user
- Generate department-specific reports:
 - a generic reporting mechanism is available for deans who request certain criteria for faculty in their respective units (this is not for faculty use)
- Search for faculty by various criteria

Teaching:

At this time, course data (course numbers, sections, and enrollment) can only be entered manually into the database. In addition, there is no ability to automatically download student evaluations from the Center for the Advancement of Teaching database into this one.

Advantages:

- Information need be entered only once and can changed (updated or deleted) at any time
- “Cut-and-paste” capability from applications in Microsoft Word is available
- Users can select which information is downloaded into reports
- Once data is downloaded into resumes or promotion forms in Word, the reports can be customized or used for other purposes
- An extensive on-line help menu is available, and users may also download a help manual in .pdf format

Disadvantages:

At the time of this response, the survey has limited functionality with browsers other than Internet Explorer. Its compatibility with the Linux operating system or browsers such as Safari and Firefox is unknown at this time, and this may be a constraint to the system.

Other considerations:

IRAP plans to integrate the Faculty Survey with the Speakers Bureau. Faculty who wish to maintain a profile on the speakers bureau may do so through this link. In addition, IRAP is working to implement “faculty profiles” similar to those already available for Cook faculty.

Time-line:

IRAP plans to beta-test this product by mid-April, and will probably begin with units such as GSAPP as well as Camden and Newark faculty. They consider this process to be rather fluid; if necessary, training sessions on use of the data-base will be held.

D. Recommendation

We realize that this survey is still a work in progress by IRAP, but we are highly pleased with the Web site and are confident that, once vetted, the survey will adequately address the issues in the Senate charge. We are sufficiently assured that perceived difficulties with the survey will also be addressed to our satisfaction. The amount of flexibility afforded with the new survey will improve the record-keeping and report-generation processes for faculty members, and should keep the requirement for information by deans to a minimum.

It is the recommendation of this committee that the Faculty Survey in development by IRAP is suitable for faculty needs and addresses requirements for one-time entering of data that has sufficient flexibility to be downloaded for various purposes.