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Faculty Evaluation of Academic Administrators: 2003-2004

This issue of the *Forum* contains the results of the evaluation survey conducted during the month of May. The Evaluation of Academic Administrators is an annual survey conducted by your Faculty Senate. This was the first year that the survey was administered electronically. Although the response rate showed a disappointing decrease from the near historical average of 31.5% for last year's survey (02-03) to 23.5% this year, the number of comments increased substantially.

You should note that a 6-point scale was used this year, eliminating the mid-point score of 3 denoting "average performance" in previous surveys using a 5-point scale. The new scale adopted for this year's survey is compared to the corresponding scores from the old scheme below.

NEW SCORING SCHEME		COMPARABLE SCORE FROM PREVIOUS SCHEME
6	Excellent	5.00
5	Very Good	4.17
4	Good	3.33
3	Fair	2.50
2	Poor	1.67
1	Very Poor	0.83

The result of the change in scale was an increase in scores for most, but not all, administrators. As has been our practice in the past, survey statistics are not reported for units with fewer than 3 responses. Your survey comments have been shared with your relevant administrators. These survey results, along with those for prior years, are also posted on the Senates website at facsen@du.edu.

The Senate expresses its appreciation to those faculty members that participated in this year's survey.

Leon G. Giles, Past President
Faculty Senate

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A Word from the Incoming Senate President

As the incoming President of the Faculty Senate I have watched the Administrator Evaluation process with great interest. As Leon notes, this year there were changes in administration of the survey and in the scoring rubric. The return rate is down, and the meaning of the numbers must be considered carefully. For example, a 4 isn't nearly as good as it used to be! Of course, when a fraction of faculty members respond, the message is murky.

I also had the opportunity to sit with the Chancellor as he focused on almost every response and wondered about the meaning, and the Provost as he considered the implications of patterns. I understood very clearly how lightly we squander the opportunity to communicate through this process.

Next year, the Senate will focus on ways that the administrator evaluation process may be improved. We will consider re-design of the question set(s), timing and methods for submitting responses, reporting formats and creating opportunities for discussion of results. If you have thoughts on this matter, please feel free to communicate them fully to cpotter@du.edu.

During the next academic year the Senate will be addressing a number of issues and responding to those that appear during the year. Our working list contains the following items, thought it will certainly not be limited to them.

1. We will continue work on the Faculty Salary Study completed by the Financial Planning Committee of the Senate. Both the Faculty and Educational Affairs Committee and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees have expressed interest in receiving, and discussing this study. We will pursue those discussions with the goal of promoting action.
2. Related to the salary issue is an interest in pursuing potential methods of providing housing financing support for new faculty members. Some Board members are familiar with models in use at other schools, and there is interest in examining those models.
3. In a similar vein, many faculty members remain interested in exploration of tuition support / consortium policies that may be feasible for DU.
4. The Senate will work closely with the Vice Provost's office to consider ways to improve the PROF review process, and expand the funding available. This initiative is an important mechanism for support of faculty scholarship. The Senate is committed to strengthening and supporting peer review processes as the basis for decision-making.
5. Given the recent interest in post-tenure review in some divisions, the Senate may wish to consider the most common models for such review, and articulate the pros, cons and creative solutions to these approaches. We would hope to work with the Provost and the Deans to create a space for reflection and joint consideration that can form the foundation for any future policy initiatives in the divisions.
6. The Senate will make nominations to the Board of Trustees for members with academic expertise. You may remember that this opportunity was one result of last year's G-6 Board-Faculty working group.

I look forward to working with the faculty of the University of Denver as we enthusiastically join in every opportunity for shared governance. Please find me if you have interests and ideas in support of faculty governance here at DU. One of the great pleasures of Senate service is the opportunity to work with faculty members from across the University.

Cathryn C. Potter
President, Faculty Senate
