the role and mission of the extension specialist. Perhaps it would help if, with the aid of the extension specialists of the department, a clear definition of what constitutes an effective extension program were developed and then efforts made to evaluate a specialist based upon the criteria defined. Wherever possible, accomplishments and excellence of programming should be quantified. Perhaps the specialist of the department could assist in the development of the yardstick to serve as a basis for evaluation of accomplishment. If such an effort is to be effective, such criteria should be shared and justified with those further from the scene who may have involvement in the evaluation process.

Resident instruction

It has frequently been considered difficult to accurately assess teaching quality and effectiveness. The two criteria that are most frequently used are student evaluation and peer evaluation. Student evaluation of teaching has become very important in many, if not most, universities. Interpreted cautiously student evaluations can be helpful in such areas as clarity of presentation, class preparation, accomplishment of course objectives, etc. Items that would reflect popularity must be viewed with caution. Where we often fall short is in the area of peer evaluation where such factors as course outlines, testing procedures, creativity, class notes, and degree of preparation for more advanced courses are treated too lightly. Faculty who have the reputation of excellence in the classroom can be of great help in assisting and evaluating less experienced faculty concerning teaching performance.

Research

Research accomplishments are often considered the easiest to evaluate: just count the number of publications in refereed journals. From this comes the over-used term: publish or perish. However if numbers of publications are to be used as the criterion, then faculty are encouraged to undertake research efforts that will quickly result in "papers" without serious concern as to the potential value of the findings. It would seem, particularly at the department level, that greater consideration should be given to the quality and the potential impact of the findings. It is important that research be carefully conceived, imaginative, and lead to the generation of information that will advance the research thrust of the department. Obviously, a research effort is not complete until the results are made known to those who need the information. But let's put greater emphasis on quality and the value of the findings rather than strictly on numbers.

Conclusion

In reviewing the total process, it becomes increasingly clear that we must strive to refine counseling and evaluation procedures and that we must be willing to make the critical decisions at the departmental level if we are to establish the confidence of higher administration and preserve the opportunity to reward those that are achieving departmental goals.

FACULTY EVALUATION: A PROFESSOR’S PERCEPTION¹

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To get the ideas of other faculty members concerning faculty evaluation, I contacted about 40 horticultural colleagues, at Kentucky and at other Land Grant Institutions. There were persons of all ranks, though most were "full" professors. I also had access to responses of our agriculture faculty to a Faculty Senate questionnaire on evaluation. Most thoughts or ideas presented here were suggested by respondents, although suggestions were not all included, particularly if the concern seemed to be related to a unique institutional situation. This topic seems important to faculty members, for response was good, and many responses showed evidence of much thought and effort. Thus, these comments are designed to reflect concerns of faculty — not from a single institution, but of horticultural faculty in general.

Faculty members almost universally desired department chairmen to have a greater role in faculty evaluation than they believe chairmen now have. As a corollary, they felt deans exert too much control, often without adequate knowledge, though they did not question the need to equalize departmental evaluations within the college or university.

Many faculty members feel that administrators fail to maintain objectivity and often favored or down-graded faculty for personal rather than performance reasons. These views seem quite serious because most horticulturists that responded are well regarded professionally and probably receive favorable evaluations. Prejudicial faculty evaluation is quite evident to faculty, hurts morale and decreases staff respect. Don't underestimate the perceptiveness of your faculty and subject them to other than factual information and/or explanation. Faculty members have a better idea of an administrator's fairness than you may suspect, just as administrators know more about faculty members than we suspect. There was not a plea for leniency on the part of faculty, just a plea for complete administrative integrity. It was apparent that most faculty dissatisfaction with evaluation was related to what was considered non-objective evaluation. We tend to lose sight of the truism "favoritism makes fewer friends than antagonists." Responses also make it quite apparent that no system currently in use insures objectivity, that has to be provided by the administrator.

Views on the desirability of evaluation varied. Some wanted stronger and more frequent evaluations. I sensed that others felt that a full professor was almost above evaluation. Apparently, the latter group felt all should get the same salary increase — a view I certainly do not share, for equal salary increases without regard to productivity are apt to equalize productivity downward instead of upward.

One respondent, a former administrator, expressed the need for periodic evaluation of administrators. The idea has appeal to faculty since administrators often make or break faculty careers. The hard questions are: How is it done and who does it, particularly when their reappointment is concerned?

Few faculty believed peer evaluation should be an important part of the evaluation process, especially in institutions where administrators are rotated. There is understandable reluctance to evaluate someone critically this year only to have him as chairman next year with full access to the files. Experience suggests that we tend to be kind to our friends and working associates, especially during evaluation. Thus, I do not believe in routinely giving a lot of weight to peer judgment in the evaluation process, though it does have merit if it is wisely used. The principal factor in respondents' desire for strong peer evaluation seemed to be concern about favoritism by administrators. Perhaps a way of improving the value and fostering acceptance of peer evaluation is to select peers carefully, some by the faculty member and some by the chairman. The peers should then evaluate on the basis of material provided by the faculty member being evaluated. The latter may or may not be known by the peer evaluator(s). Despite these questions and obvious difficulties, there is need for meaningful faculty involvement in the process of evaluation of all levels of faculty and administration if we are to avoid its becoming a function of top administration only.

Activity vs. productivity

There is need for better understanding in the question of activity vs. productivity. Administrators need to decide which they want, then clarify in their own minds what belongs in each category and let

¹The report in this paper (77-10-191) is published by permission of the author.
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it be known to the faculty. A researcher can have a very active breeding program, make hundreds of crosses and grow thousands of seedlings and still not produce new information or cultivars. On the other hand, we all have seen highly productive faculty members who, on casual observation, seemed relatively inactive. Whether administrators get activity or productivity may be determined by which is given favorable evaluation.

Several faculty members stressed the importance of administrative tact in discussing job performance with faculty to avoid overreaction and ad hominem morale attacks. There is also the problem of how much an administrator can exert influence over a faculty member. It should be made clear that many administrators perform the unpleasant part of evaluation without also satisfying the important need of staff professional development. Does the kind of study given the evaluation material and follow up justify faculty time preparing it? Faculty acceptance of evaluation is closely related to the emphasis, time and effort given to it by administrators. One system prompted a respondent to say, “Evaluation used more faculty work hours and gives less positive benefits to faculty and university than any other mandatory exercise.” This may be related to another respondents comment “Evaluators tend to see primarily those things that reinforce previously formed opinions.” Evaluation should be used as a constructive process, never for punitive purposes, because most people respond more to encouragement than to punishment. Failure to exploit the staff development process is reported, and the institution is rewarding. This may lead to internal friction and frustration.

Consider total contributions

Faculty members feel that evaluators should consider the total contribution of a faculty member especially in light of resources available to his program. It hardly seems fair to expect the same kind of output from a plant breeder with limited in-house or extramural funds, as from someone with extensive in-house support in a field that also has extramural funding readily available. This is especially important since the administrator often largely controls support. Likewise, respondents believe it inappropriate to encourage a faculty member to pursue a larger program than can be supported. He may then receive a poor evaluation because the jobs he realistically couldn’t be expected to complete with resources available were not finished. Another similar problem is the downgrading of a person because he’s not active on college or university committees when the administrator has a particular interest in those committees. Consideration also needs to be given to the difficulty of the assignment – teaching a large enrollment required course versus a small group in an elective course, or research on a difficult problem that requires imaginative approaches versus problems using routine methods.

The principal detrimental result of evaluation mentioned in responses concerned damage to the morale and initiative of those given a low rating or a rating lower than they felt they earned, especially when the reasons are not fully explained. One would expect the largest number of protests from those receiving the lowest ratings but one horticulturist active in his university evaluation appeals process indicated most appeals were from those faculty getting good ratings, but not good enough to be rewarded.

Therese care needs to be used to insure this does not demoralize productive faculty, for if they become convinced they can’t get a good rating (and everyone will sooner or later) they become less productive. This next comment may not be directly related to the evaluation process, but apparently is not always kept in proper perspective. The usual job descriptions of business management people assign them responsibility for determining availability of funds for salary purposes but not to determine how it is to be distributed to faculty or to participate in the faculty evaluation process. I’m a firm believer that promotion should be strictly on merit and not on the number of dollars available, for there is much less incentive if promotion is denied when it is earned. The feeling that all faculty members of similar rank and productivity should receive similar salary increases is shared by many of the respondents.

I want to thank all who responded to my plea for help and sum up by saying that above all else faculty want administrators to be completely fair and honest in their evaluations. We also feel we need more explanation for a given rating, more counseling on what might improve job performance, to see that faculty should receive similar salary increases is shared by many of the respondents.

We hope you will not belittle or downgrade us, no matter how self-satisfying, since it serves no useful purpose. We hope you will build us up within ourselves and to our public by helping us in our personal development, by creating awareness of our efforts and accomplishments and by patient, wise counsel and leadership.