



Faculty Evaluation of Administrators

The report that follows, prepared by a subcommittee of the Association's Committee on College and University Governance, was approved by the full committee for publication.

In 1981, the Association's Fifty-seventh Annual Meeting endorsed a revision and expansion of the 1974 statement *Faculty Participation in the Selection and Retention of Administrators* under a revised title, *Faculty Participation in the Selection, Evaluation, and Retention of Administrators*. Over the next two decades, inquiries from faculty members who sought further guidance in such procedures, as well as increased activity by the AAUP's Committee on College and University Governance (formerly Committee T on College and University Government), revealed that the paragraph on evaluation in the 1981 statement, though broadly affirmative of Association policy, offered little practical guidance. Something more was needed for those faculty members who were either already charged with, or wished to be more effectively involved in, such evaluations, whether midcourse during an administrator's term or as part of a more comprehensive review at the end of a term, in which termination of the appointment might be one of an array of options.

The applicable paragraph in the 1981 statement reads as follows:

Institutions should develop procedures for periodic review of the performance of presidents and other academic administrators. The purpose of such periodic reviews should be the improvement of the performance of the administrator during his or her term of office. This review should be conducted on behalf of the governing board for the president, or on behalf of the appointing administrator for other academic administrators. Fellow administrators, faculty, students, and others should participate in the review according to their legitimate interest in the result, with faculty of the unit accorded the primary voice in the case of academic administrators. The governing board or appointing administrator should publish a summary of the review, including a statement of actions taken as a result of the review.

It will be noted that this statement does not distinguish between the two broad types of review just cited, nor does it offer any specific advice on the conduct of the review. It leaves open the question of just what "primary voice" means, and its concluding sentence sidesteps a host of issues including possible legal restraints on the release of information, or the level of detail to be offered in relationship to different kinds of outcomes. In 2001, the governance committee's report to the annual meeting called for the development of a statement of principles and recommended procedural standards to supplement the brief paragraph quoted above, and the procuring of sample evaluation instruments that could lend any recommendations some detail. The substance of the committee's thinking on the matter at that time is not reiterated in this introduction, because it informs the report that follows and is, in some measure, reproduced verbatim in "Broad Principles" below.

In the interim between that report and now, the Association's staff collected a variety of sample instruments and policy statements on which the present subcommittee, appointed at the end of 2005, has drawn.¹ The subcommittee had before it documents from seven public flagship campuses, eight other state colleges or universities either part of a larger system or with a stand-alone identity (such as those with historic teacher-training missions), one statewide faculty senate, a large public urban college, a medical center, two liberal arts colleges, a midsize private university, and a Canadian university. Some cautions should be drawn from this sample, chief among them the familiar, "one size does not fit all." The prevalence of large public institutions may be in part circumstantial, the result of the fact that at many smaller colleges the evaluation of administrators may proceed much more informally and communally, without extensive written procedures; other institutions, both small and large, private or public (for example, the community-college sector), may have little or no tradition of faculty involvement at all. We have not ascertained to what extent collective-bargaining contracts may incorporate relevant procedures. A second caution is that written descriptions do not always give an accurate sense of actual practice. Despite these limitations, the subcommittee believes that it is possible to draw certain generally useful and applicable conclusions about the principles that ought to be brought to bear in any evaluation of an academic administrator.

Broad Principles

The Association's 1966 [Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities](#) makes it clear that the faculty has a collective expertise that gives it "primary responsibility" in such areas of academic governance as "curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research,

faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process.” It is accordingly appropriate that the faculty role in the evaluation of administrators be especially focused on faculty interaction with administrators directly charged with the oversight of the educational program, of students, and of such personnel matters as salaries, promotion, and tenure. If the faculty exercises its role responsibly, such administrators will more likely see the faculty as a resource to be drawn upon, not an enemy to be combated. Faculty members need to point out to administrators the specific expertise they can bring to evaluation and emphasize the value of their years of experience. After all, faculty often have served their institutions much longer than administrators, many of whom change positions and institutions frequently.

At the end of this report we will take brief note of some developments that seem to be calling this relationship, and hence the ability of the faculty to evaluate administrators, into question. But rooted in Association policy is the principle that faculty members are officers of their institutions, not employees, and as officers (a term that first appeared in the 1940 [Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure](#)) their expertise is both an indelible part of a full and fair evaluation and a positive service to relevant administrators and to the institution’s governing board. Faculty members are probably among the most frequently evaluated members of the college or university community, whether through peer review, student surveys, or administrative supervision. There seems to be no reason why a system of evaluation should not also be in place for administrators, again, as is the case with faculty, drawing on all informed sectors of the community.

The most effective systems of administrator evaluation are those that occur *periodically* as part of a *collaborative* endeavor involving the faculty, the administration, other campus constituencies with a stake in the outcome, and the individual under review. The system should be not only *periodic* (as affecting the individual) but also *regular*, that is, part of the institutional structure, rather than being triggered on an ad hoc basis that requires the reinvention of the wheel for each separate review. In some extreme cases in which the right of the faculty to undertake such a review is not enshrined in either institutional policy or precedent, it may be necessary for a representative body of the faculty to take on the evaluation of an administrator’s performance without waiting to be asked. Clearly, the most desirable, as well as the most effective, system is one that rests on sound institutional policy, healthy relationships among the parties, and scrupulously fair practice. Indeed, such a system at its best will involve not only evaluation, but also constructive mentoring, as is the case with the best systems of faculty evaluation.

At the time of the initial appointment of an administrator, the faculty should be advised of the length of the administrator’s term (if one is designated) and the timing of the review cycle, unless these are already stipulated in institutional statutes or bylaws and can be safely assumed to pertain in this case.² Most important of all, especially with regard to comprehensive reviews (see next paragraph), the process should be so designed that members of the faculty have reason to believe that their participation in the review has been meaningfully weighed in the outcome. Thus, for example, when the faculty is not provided with a report following a review, there is likely to be pervasive suspicion that its role in the process has not been important. This does not mean that all faculty members necessarily have the right to a “raw” report in its entirety, only that a trusted representative body of the faculty most directly engaged in its preparation should have the opportunity to know the results. We return to this matter in the section “Resulting Report and the Question of Confidentiality.”

In general, a distinction should be made between *annual reappointment reviews*, which might be quite swift and of a lesser degree of formality, intended mainly for purposes of constructive suggestions about the administrator’s performance, and a *comprehensive end-of-term review*, in which nonreappointment to the administrative post is a possible outcome. Some institutions may have a single midpoint review at which all options are on the table. At one Midwestern state university the provost meets annually with the elected faculty executive committee of each college to review the performance of the dean, but the fifth-year review is a comprehensive one requiring broader faculty consultation. In the case of administrators with primarily academic responsibilities (see the next section below), the faculty should be viewed as an informed source of judgment no matter what kind of review is taking place, but it may be appropriate, as in the example given here, to delegate interim reviews to an elected faculty body that deals with the administrator on a regular basis. This, of course, is not to ignore the possibility that even a routine annual review may raise issues sufficiently serious and substantive to call into question the continuance of the administrator in his or her position.

All reviews should give supervisory administrators (that is, those at a level above the administrator who is the subject of a review) a rational basis for the decision whether or not to reappoint an individual, and at the same time, they should provide the person under review with guidance on improving his or her performance. The more constructive and developmental the evaluation, the greater the desirability of confidentiality sufficient to encourage the individual to undertake a midcourse correction. The question of confidentiality has other bearings to which we shall return later in this report (again, see “Resulting Report and the Question of Confidentiality” below).

The credibility of the evaluation depends in large measure on the commitment of all parties to a generally understood and agreed-upon procedure for jointly carrying out the review. On occasion, the instigation for a review may come from a body of the faculty that has reason, or believes it has reason, to be sharply critical of, or to dissent from, some aspect of an administrator’s performance, for example, when a

faculty senate passes a vote of no confidence in the president or a chief administrative officer. Usually such a move results from a serious breakdown in some part of the institutional structure, although it needs to be noted that a vote of this kind can drive the governing board to close ranks behind a beleaguered president. Moreover, such a vote may also breed, or exacerbate, divisions in the ranks of the faculty. It is important, therefore, to observe that before such a faculty move is initiated, the burden is all the greater on the faculty, despite the heat of the moment, to observe the most scrupulous fairness in proceeding and, particularly, to offer the administrator the opportunity to respond fully.

Finally, although our focus is on the *evaluation* rather than the *selection* of academic administrators, in any case in which the appointment of an administrator has taken place over faculty objections and without an adequate response to faculty concerns, or where the faculty has reason to believe that it was insufficiently consulted in the appointment (for example, when the recommendation of a search committee was ignored without good reason), the appointee faces a burden of proving his or her worth that may impair her or his ability to function. It is therefore a matter of simple administrative prudence, as well as sound academic principle, that the appointing administrator take the faculty voice into account prior to making such an appointment, provide compelling reasons stated in detail to justify any overriding of the faculty judgment, and make every effort to ensure that the appointee is advised of faculty concerns and given the opportunity to respond to them.

We also observed that at a few institutions where the faculty has exercised an appropriate role in the selection of administrators, particularly where the administrator has come from outside the institution, the practice has developed of keeping the search committee in place for a year or so after the appointment has been made to serve as an informal advisory body to the administrative newcomer. This mechanism provides a reality check to both parties: the administrator can report to the faculty whether he or she was adequately prepared for on-campus realities, and the faculty can examine the relationship between the presumptions that lay behind the original offer of appointment and the actual results of the administrator's performance to date.

The Level of Faculty Participation in Review

In the spirit of the *Statement on Government* (see "Conclusions" below), any administrative review process needs to distinguish the appropriate level of faculty involvement in that particular review. The provost or other chief academic officer and the dean or director of a college or school occupy positions directly involved in faculty personnel decisions—including appointment, reappointment, promotion, and tenure—as well as other matters governing faculty status and academic programs that fall within the primary responsibility of the faculty. Faculty participation in the evaluation of a president or other chief executive officer, such as a chancellor, is likewise conditioned on that person's role as an institutional leader and spokesperson but should recognize that other constituencies—students, staff, alumni, and, in terms of ultimate authority as well as delegation of responsibilities, the board of trustees—have equally important roles to play. In general, the faculty voice is likely to be weightiest at the department and decanal levels and more diluted by the necessary presence of other institutional constituencies in the review of administrators above the level of dean. Broadly speaking, we would argue that many of the same considerations that govern the formation of a search committee (such as the identification of the constituency with a primary relationship to the office for which a person is being sought) should be applied in the composition of a review committee.

The evaluation of department chairs or heads is a partially separate (or separable) matter.³ The tendency of AAUP policy has been to view such persons as faculty rather than as administrators. Local practices, however, as well as some unit determinations in collective-bargaining elections that class departmental executive officers as supervisors, may well point in another direction. In the most democratic model, in which a department chair is periodically elected by a majority vote of departmental colleagues, the election is a summary evaluation or, at the very least, an acknowledgment that no one else in the ranks is better fitted or willing to serve. In cases where a departmental executive officer is appointed by a dean, albeit with faculty input, the kinds of evaluation addressed in this statement are more germane, particularly so when there is no automatic presumption that continuance is guaranteed or that a replacement will necessarily come from the ranks of the present faculty.

Somewhat different considerations figure in the case of those administrators, particularly chief financial officers, who are in a position to make critical budgetary recommendations affecting teaching, research, and faculty status as well as the composition of the faculty (whether, for example, the institution can afford to appoint new faculty). In making such administrative appointments, presidents and governing boards are obliged to take into account a number of competencies that may not reflect an academic background and do not normally lend themselves to academic evaluation of the sort that faculty members are accustomed to practice; moreover, the confidence of the president and the board are essential to ensure the continuance of a vice president for finance (or whatever title may be used) in office. In such cases, faculty do retain a legitimate, though not determinative, role in evaluation, but it may be as important in such a context to interpret "evaluation" as the providing of *information* that will assist the administrator in understanding the academic consequences of fiscal or budgetary decisions. Both faculty members and administrators, from their respective sides of the divide, may sometimes tend to underestimate the willingness of the other party to learn about their own perspective and therefore may move too quickly to an antagonistic or critical position, when, in fact, all parties should have the same interest in a stable and healthy educational

environment.

In still other cases, the level of faculty involvement may depend on institutional type. In a small college where faculty members may be more directly involved in day-to-day matters of student life, their evaluation of a dean of students may be more salient than in a complex and highly bureaucratized environment in which a specialized corps of student-personnel administrators attend to such issues as housing, financial aid, or student judicial actions that do not engage most faculty. A healthy institution, however, through the agency of a broad-based faculty body such as a senate, will always be alert to ways in which special kinds of faculty interests (for example, in athletics, buildings and grounds, and the like) may be represented in the evaluation of a particular administrator.

We need to take note of one objection that might be made at this point, and that is that our remarks so far imply that over the years, the relationship of faculty to administration has remained essentially unchanged. In reality, the growth of large administrative staffs that carry out much of the work of academic planning, or other duties that have some degree of academic impact, has sometimes tended to decrease direct interaction between faculty and administration, or to deflect faculty members toward dealing with appointees who, whatever their professional skills, are not necessarily alert to the faculty dimensions of an issue or even particularly responsive to them. No magic bullet in the Association's governance standards can be developed for this particular problem. We can here only observe that one aspect of an administrator's performance that ought to be subject to faculty evaluation is how he or she appoints staff and delegates duties to them, to the extent that this activity falls within the range of faculty observation.

Evaluative Procedures

What follows is a set of considerations for a comprehensive review in which the expectations for procedural formality are fairly high, though some of these procedures may be invoked if a single substantive midterm review is being conducted of the sort envisioned in "Broad Principles" above. As previously indicated there also, such reviews should be conducted as part of normal institutional business, along procedural lines generally understood to apply to all such evaluations. In instances in which the faculty has a primary role to play, it is important that, by whatever other means they may be involved in the evaluation, a body composed entirely of faculty members has the opportunity to reach distinct faculty recommendations. In other cases we have envisioned, a mixed body representing different constituencies may be appropriate.

Whether such a faculty committee should be a standing or an ad hoc body is probably best determined by circumstances internal to the institution. A standing body (for example, the executive committee of the senate in the case of a campus-level administrator), or a standing body of a constituent college or department, signals what we have described as a desirable regularity in process. On the other hand, an ad hoc faculty body, elected by the faculty or constituted as a partly elected and partly appointed body, has the potential advantage of tapping fresh insights through broader faculty involvement. The danger of the first procedure is that in some places there may be a perception of the process as being controlled by a faculty oligarchy. The danger of the second in its purely elected form is the worry that the result will be the election of opportunistic faculty members with axes to grind. In a case of mixed election and appointment—for example, with some faculty elected by the faculty or appointed by the senate and other faculty named by the administration—what is required is a degree of trust and a perception of fairness on both sides. What is essential in any case is that such a body, however constituted, be perceived as credible and fair (neither rubber-stamping a preconceived outcome nor acting vindictively in its pursuit of an unpopular administrator) and able to protect confidentiality as much as is required during the process while being as honest and open as possible—two requirements that, to say the least, are often difficult to realize in tandem.

At a flagship research university in the West, a review committee is impaneled in somewhat the same manner as a grievance committee is constituted at that institution: for the review of a dean, for example, the provost must pick at least four names put forward by the faculty but may appoint three others plus representatives from other university constituencies, as long as the result is less than 50 percent of the committee. At least one member must be a department head. In the review of a department head, the faculty elects three committee members, the dean may appoint up to two others, plus representatives of other constituencies, again under the operation of the less-than-50-percent rule. Another institution requires that at least three faculty members reviewing the executive officer come from outside the department. Two public universities in our sample have an all-university faculty committee for evaluating administrators, which in one of the two institutions oversees reviews in years three and five of a five-year administrative appointment. The standing committee is composed of nine members of the faculty assembly, six of whom are chosen—one each—by the six divisions, one by library faculty, and one by each of two regional campuses. At still another state university, a standing committee of seven, five of whom must be distinguished senior faculty appointed by the chancellor, oversees the process and appoints review committees for each administrator, with the president of the faculty senate appointing the chair of the standing committee itself.

Some of the issues involved in the details of establishing the reviewing body become less contentious if it is remembered that the designation of a committee is only a first step. What really matters is that the committee, however designated, proceeds in such a way as to maximize the sense that faculty of diverse shades of opinion can participate in the process and see it as fair and legitimate. Normally,

such a committee will first meet with the administrative officer (or perhaps, in the case of a president, the governing board) to whom (or to which) it is reporting the results of the review, and then with the person being reviewed. In the first of these meetings, the parties need to reach a clear understanding of the timelines for the review, and though we cannot specify standards for the timelines themselves, they should be sufficient to allow for a considered faculty evaluation, an equally considered response to the results by the person under review, and due deliberation by those charged with making a final decision. At the second of these meetings, the person under review should be invited to submit any information about past performance or prospective plans that he or she believes will assist the committee in its deliberations, as well as a list of persons to whom the committee should speak, and there should be no bar to the receipt of further oral or written communication after this initial meeting.

The next task is for the review committee to agree on its method of operation and, as soon as possible after it meets, to submit this plan to the faculty as a public document, specifying its procedure and the nature of any rules governing the confidentiality of proceedings. In any solicitation of opinion, the committee should identify persons or groups with whom it wishes to meet, and it should state its openness to meeting, within reasonable time limits, with any individual or group that seeks access to its deliberations. When there is reason to fear that this may result in an overly protracted process, the committee may wish to subdivide for purposes of maximizing the receipt of relevant information, but this requires a very careful agreement on the nature and format of such information, including, if necessary, a template that will ensure some reasonable degree of standardization or at least provide a basis for thoughtful comparison.

An effective way of ensuring as wide a spectrum of faculty participation as desired by the faculty is the development of a questionnaire. All the plans scrutinized by the subcommittee had some form of a questionnaire that could be widely distributed. If a standard questionnaire (geared either to a specific administrative office or to all administrative appointments) does not already exist, the committee may wish to devise one, if necessary with expert assistance from faculty with survey-method competencies or (if agreed upon by all parties) an outside professional consultant, that is sufficiently specific to address all areas believed to be of importance and that may allow also for brief written commentary. In keeping with our earlier comments about structuring the review so that the faculty voice is perceived as meaningful, we would add that the use of a survey fosters the expectation that the results will be released in some form at an appropriate time.

Evaluative Criteria

Evaluative criteria vary widely, but the same core areas and considerations, in one form or another, tend to recur from institution to institution. The areas may be stated as subject categories—in the case of a dean, for example, attention to leadership (a category that, of course, knows no boundaries by administrative position), faculty and program development, fairness and ethics, and communication skills (these from a large public research university)—or in the form of questions: does the administrator actively promote an environment for scholarly and teaching excellence, consult faculty adequately before making important decisions, make sound administrative appointments, and inspire confidence? At another large research university, the areas are stated somewhat differently: leadership, commitment to diversity, strategic management, functional competence, and interpersonal skills. At a third, those areas cited also include communications, response to work demands, budgeting and use of resources, and the internal functioning of the dean's office. In the case of a department executive officer subject to a formal evaluation, the most salient issues are likely to turn on his or her effectiveness in identifying and responding to departmental needs and in representing the department effectively to the college and campus (both fiscally and in terms of personnel and concern for students); alertness to developments in the profession, including research directions, which may affect future hiring; fair treatment of and good counseling to nontenured faculty; a strong commitment to teaching and curricular development; and commitment to democratic procedures in departmental affairs.

When the person being evaluated is either the chief academic officer or, especially, the president, the net may be cast wider, but there may also be somewhat less depth in areas that are especially relevant to a department chair or a dean. The criteria for evaluating a chancellor at a public (nonflagship) campus include interaction with faculty, interaction with students, interaction with the community, management of administrative units, and, again, leadership—a list that, because of the nature of the position, requires some attention to extramural concerns. The criteria for the same office at a flagship research institution include involving faculty in campus issues; securing funds for faculty compensation and new faculty recruitment; promoting the value of research to the external public; effectively supporting teaching and service to that same public; and demonstrating commitment to diversity, clarity of strategic goals, and effectiveness in appointing efficient and responsible campus administrators. One of the more thorough lists, devised for the review of a campus chancellor at a large flagship university on the East Coast, includes the following:

- Success in creating a sense of unity, civility, and purpose, as well as campus momentum and growth;
- Choosing and working with administrators and encouraging good morale;
- Promoting affirmative action;
- Establishing good relations with faculty, staff, and students;
- Supporting the academic mission;

- Maintaining and enhancing relations with alumni, foundations, and state and federal agencies;
- Projecting “an attractive image of [the] institution” to the citizens of the state;
- Assisting the campus in development, planning, and policy;
- Supervising the overall allocation of campus resources such as budget, personnel, and physical plant; and
- Working successfully with the president of the multicampus system and the governing board.

It will be seen from these examples that the identification of areas for evaluation may either be very broadly stated, or, alternatively, read more like a laundry list. Each reviewing body must adopt the approach that best suits the circumstances and the felt needs of the institution. In general, however, we tend to favor compactness and brevity of the sort that invites in-depth responses, since too long a list may have the effect of discouraging participation in the evaluation process or watering down the results.

Resulting Report and Confidentiality

Prior to the issuance of the report, we recommend that the reviewing body offer the administrator under review the opportunity to meet for an informal discussion of the findings and for the opportunity, if the administrator so wishes, to respond to criticisms that have surfaced in the course of the review before the final document is released to the administrator receiving the report.

The report that emerges from the evaluative procedure should describe the main premises governing the report, state clearly the method by which information was sought and the guarantees of confidentiality offered to all participants, give fair treatment to both the strengths and deficiencies of the administrator’s performance, and offer clear counsel to the recipient of the report. For example, the report could state whether reappointment is recommended unconditionally, is recommended on a conditional basis (in which case continuing areas of concern and a method of remediation for them should be laid out), or is not recommended. With respect to methodology, a more detailed outline comes from a Midwestern public institution with a strong teaching mission that stipulates that the resulting report should include (a) the number of surveys sent out, the response rate, and the number of people indicating insufficient information to participate; (b) the mean and distribution of responses if numerical data are reported; (c) “a brief, balanced overview of the overall response to each question or set of questions, not quotations of the respondents’ actual words”; and (d) “when the committee feels it appropriate, separate analyses of responses from persons who indicated that they have a more extensive knowledge of the administration’s responsibilities and performance.”

Either state law or institutional practice may pose limits on what can be released to a broader audience or, on the contrary, may require full disclosure, consistent with open-meetings laws (perhaps with some limitations in the case of details of personnel performance). In private institutions it is often doubtful that administrators will agree to having evaluations, at least in their unredacted form, published institution-wide. In any case, if some degree of discretion is permitted either as a matter of law or as a matter of custom, a balance needs to be struck, on the one hand, between keeping faculty informed through a degree of disclosure sufficient to indicate the basis for a recommendation, and, on the other, protecting the administrator against either libelous or gratuitously damaging revelations that may jeopardize his or her career. At the very least, the release of principles, procedures, and criteria used, and of all survey information, including results, should, if at all possible, be incorporated in the publicly available report.

After the Review

The reviewing body, whether standing or ad hoc, should receive a response from the appropriate administrator on the disposition of the report and, if ad hoc, should remain in existence long enough to receive any further information on how the administrator may have responded to constructive criticism, particularly in areas of faculty concern. As one former chair of the AAUP’s governance committee, Paul Strohm, has written, faculty evaluation of administrators

is no substitute for day-to-day faculty involvement in actual decision making. . . . Even if a faculty is asked to make no concessions in return for a stake in evaluation, it will still want to know that it is engaging in a consequential process, which will not require an investment of energies out of proportion to its potential results. . . . If administrators want any final decisions to be made by the board or the appointing administrator, the faculty should at least insist that the evaluating committee not disband or drop out of the picture before the final decision is made.⁴

Conclusions

Unlike Association policy in the area of academic freedom and tenure, in which it is imperative to insist on a certain common denominator governing the details of due process no matter what kind of institution or governance structure is involved, policy in the area of college and university government is subject to a number of contingencies, ranging from explicit legal constraints that may exist at certain institutions, to matters of tradition not necessarily governed by written policies, but enforced by common consent, to individual institutional styles and methods of conflict resolution. A highly consensual academic community may, for example, have no difficulty with the principle of

administrative representation on committees charged with reviewing academic administrators; at others, with a history of fractiousness, even if moderated by new, more enlightened administrative methods, a more sophisticated faculty, and a gradual warming of the interpersonal climate, the faculty will almost certainly feel it necessary that measures be taken to ensure that its voice is given primacy on academic matters.

If this report appears to veer more in the latter direction, it is for two reasons. First, and more narrowly, the subcommittee believes that institutions needing some explicitly drawn guarantees far outnumber those that operate by generally agreed consensus. Second, the wider conditions that affect faculty participation in governance in higher education are almost certainly less secure than they were forty years ago, when the AAUP, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges jointly formulated the principles set forth in the 1966 *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities* and commended them to their respective constituencies.

Evidence abounds that the atmosphere on many of our campuses is increasingly adversarial and that faculty participation in institutional governance is being questioned at its roots. In some instances, efforts have been made to eliminate the role of faculty in these institutional activities altogether and to attempt to isolate faculty from any direct interaction with governing boards. Models drawn from business have sometimes been employed to justify this trend, even though the “business model” appears not to have served even all businesses very well.

Contrary to the assumptions behind many such moves, the involvement of faculty in governance is not a grab for power, special pleading, or partisanship, but action in the best interests of the academic institutions themselves. Faculty expertise can be a positive force in providing information about various aspects of campus life and institutional governance that governing boards and administrations ignore at their own expense or even peril. In this document we have spoken to one particular aspect of shared governance as a potential force for fairness and equity for parties that are too often assumed to be at odds. Whatever the details of a particular plan that is implemented to provide for faculty evaluation of administrators, we believe that the following basic principles should be affirmed:

- Evaluation should be periodic, regular, and collaborative, and based on principles shared by all parties involved in the procedure.
- The degree of faculty participation should be appropriate to the nature of the administrative office whose holder is under review.
- The review should provide both for the orderly transmission of faculty concerns and for the fair and equitable treatment of the administrator equivalent to what we expect in the case of faculty members.
- The review should, as far as possible, be constructive and provide the supervising administrator or body with adequate grounds for reaching an informed decision when continuance of the person being reviewed is at stake.
- The consequences flowing from such a report should be understood by all parties and should allow for further exchange and feedback as the review may require for ensuring administrative effectiveness and responsiveness to the faculty voice.

We hope that the detail provided in this report will be of practical use in specific situations, but the foregoing principles, we believe, are common to all of them.

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Notes

1. Published material included Elizabeth A. R. Brown, “Faculty Evaluation of Administrators: The Experience of Brooklyn College,” *AAUP Bulletin* 64 (December 1978): 298–304; Paul Strohm, “Toward an AAUP Policy on Evaluation of Administrators,” *Academe* 66 (December 1980): 406–13; and two articles by Ronald H. Heck, Linda K. Johnsrud, and Vicki J. Rosser, “Administrative Effectiveness in Higher Education: Improving Assessment Procedures,” *Research in Higher Education* 41 (2000): 663–84, and “Academic Deans and Directors: Assessing Their Effectiveness from Individual and Institutional Perspectives,” *Journal of Higher Education* 74 (2003): 1–25. [Back to text](#)

2. In general, we believe that fairness both to the faculty and to the administrator in question makes a stated term preferable to an “at-will” appointment. But in any case, the timing of the review cycle itself usually implies an appointment of specific duration. [Back to text](#)

3. We use the term “executive officer” to cover both chairs and heads, each of which implies a distinct view of the office. [Back to text](#)

4. Strohm, “Toward an AAUP Policy,” 408–9. [Back to text](#)

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