Department Chair’s Self Review

Department Chair:  Andrew Vorder Bruegge       Date:  8 May 2007

Rating scale: Please write the appropriate number in the space next to each category based on the following scale:

4 - Performance exceeds expectations, as I understand them
3 - Performance meets expectations, as I understand them
2 - Performance marginally meets expectations, as I understand them
1 - Fails to meet expectations, as I understand them
0 - Don't know or not applicable as I understand them

Note: The major characteristics you are asked to assess below are described by several different descriptors, which provide broad guidelines for each major area. Please provide additional comments as appropriate in each area.

3  1. Leadership
   · Inspires/motivates faculty/staff to work toward the goals of the department.
   · Uses an effective administrative style.

COMMENTS:
I feel confident in saying that I inspire colleagues by my example to work towards our common goals. I believe that they trust my intentions. In my mind, “motivation” in academia can very easily take the form of coercion. If anything, my administrative style abjures coercion. For this department in its current state, non-coercive leadership is just what is needed. Over these past two years the faculty has reviewed many policies. I have led the discussions with a style that allows everyone to have her/his opinion heard. It makes more sense to let individuals speak their mind, and then their views will stand or fall on their merit, credibility and integrity. And that is what is happening. Progress on all fronts has been slow, but steady.

4  2. Organization
   · Effectively uses personnel, time, money, materials, equipment, and space.
   · Plans and develops appropriate policies.
   · Evaluates financial needs and makes appropriate recommendations for financing.
   · Delegates authority, provides support or supervision of subordinates as needed and displays reasonable creativity in the use of resources.

COMMENTS:
This is probably my greatest strength as an administrator. I am nothing, if not organized. I hope to be delegating many, many responsibilities in the next year—responsibilities that should fall to the two new faculty members who will join our department in August.

3  3. Quality of Work
   · Exhibits an understanding of the duties of the position and the knowledge necessary to do the job as expected.
   · Is persistent and dependable, generally managing to get things done.
   · Recruits and assigns the best available personnel in terms of competencies.

COMMENTS
There’s no doubt in my mind that I’m persistent, dependable and get things done—without bulldozing. This past year I can say that I made fewer mistakes, and I could anticipate problems well enough to handle them or head them off completely. I assigned the right faculty members to serve on our two search committees, and the results in both cases were what we wanted. I
expect that I will only get better in the next year in terms of regularizing even more of the department’s life. As I have come to know the abilities of my colleagues, I am better able to assign duties. For next year, I already have some very clear ideas about who ought to handle what tasks.

4. Personal Integrity
· Maintains high standards of ethics, honesty, and integrity in all personal and professional matters.

COMMENTS:
I believe I have acted with integrity in all aspects of my role as chair. I’ve been here long enough to see how my high standards of integrity have brought positive results. The results show up in the trust that colleagues and students grant me. When my career ends, I hope to look back and judge my entire career as an education professional by this standard alone, and it is the standard that I hope others will use to judge me.

3. Professionalism
· Remains professionally current by reading, attending conferences, conducting research and publishing, or maintaining involvement in other professional activities.

COMMENTS:
This past year, I attended several state and regional professional conferences, primarily to network with colleagues that might lead to leadership opportunities for me. I have completed training as a site visitor for NAST. I hope to attend one or more training workshops for academic leaders in the next year. I know myself well enough to say that I will never be highly productive in this area while I function as a department chair. The responsibilities of minding the store are simply too demanding, even in the best of situations. Even so, I continue to review books, direct and choreograph in the department’s season, develop new classes for the curriculum, and read whatever I can relevant to my teaching. I would say that I am meeting the expectations for professionalism that anyone could reasonably set for a department chair.

3. Judgment
· Generally makes sound judgments and involves others in decisions which affect them, basing those judgments on evidence rather than prejudice or personal convenience.

COMMENTS:
I believe that I base judgments on evidence, when I have it. When I don’t have it, I take the time to get it before taking action. In my second year, I certainly am better about knowing where to go to get evidence and how to interpret it more accurately. More importantly, I am constantly calling on my colleagues to use sound judgment. I have frequently posed questions like, “Why are we doing this?” “Why aren’t we doing this?” or “Is there a better way to get this done?” and then listening to explanations, evidence and opinions. These questions yield good conversations and changes (or affirmations to stay the course). When it comes to policy decisions, everything goes to the faculty for discussion and approval. Only then is it implemented. This is slow, painful work, but it ultimately yields a sound decision.

3. Communication
· Maintains an open line of communication for ideas and viewpoints.
· Is discreet and considerate in speaking to colleagues.
· Communicates in clear, concise, and correct language whether written or spoken.

COMMENTS:
It’s my impression that the culture of this department has not encouraged the kind of
transparency that I have long been accustomed to seeing in other institutions. In my second year, that impression has been profoundly confirmed about the culture of the entire institution—much to my dismay. I strive to keep everything about the department’s corporate life open, transparent and clear. I always hope to act this way. Several times in the past year I fell short in this regard, simply because it didn’t occur to me to communicate something. Only when someone asked me about a topic, did I realize that I had not gotten the word out. I can always do better at communicating. It is a never-ending point of struggle for anyone in a chair position.

4  8. Faculty/Staff Interactions
   · Provides for appropriate faculty/staff participation in decision-making and governance.
   · Approaches and makes decisions regarding faculty/staff in an open and unbiased manner.
   · Accepts diversity of faculty/staff.
   · Has good rapport with faculty/staff.
   · Supports faculty/staff activities in initiatives.

COMMENTS:
In my mind, this area of evaluation overlaps substantially with areas 1, 4 and 7. Again, prior to my arrival in this department I don’t think the bar was very high. I have bent over backwards to bring decisions to the table for everyone to decide. I think my colleagues sometimes grow weary of my efforts to empower them in the decision-making process. Ultimately, I will get them in the habit of doing so. As new faculty are settling into their positions, I expect this will come more easily to the whole group.

4  9. Student Interactions
   · Decisions reflect genuine concern for students.
   · Has good rapport with students.

COMMENTS:
I always get nervous when academics wrap themselves in the “I’m only concerned for the students” cloak. It can easily become a disingenuous tool for justifying virtually any kind of behavior, attitude or decision. I see a great deal of evidence that assures me that I have earned students’ respect. They know they can come to me and get action on a problem. They speak candidly to me about their concerns, so I can’t ask for any better rapport than that. Generally, students at Winthrop seem to be very gracious, patient and reasonable, and that makes solving problems proceed with minimal friction. The Chair’s Advisory Council has been a pretty effective process for hearing and acting upon issues that are important to students.

3  10. Liaison with the college and university administration, other units of the university, and outside agencies
   · Communicates information between the department and the administration of the college and the university.
   · Represents the department appropriately with outside agencies.
   · Effectively represents the department, the college, and the university to the community in a sound and efficient manner.
   · Works effectively with peers within the institution.

COMMENTS:
I am building far more bridges than I am burning. I have had many great opportunities this past year to connect with people across campus and in the community. I’m navigating the network with much more ease.
3.5  

11. Overall Effectiveness  
Based on all of the above, how do you rate your overall performance?

Generally, I believe I am exceeding expectations. In any area where I am not exceeding expectations, I hope to be able to attain that high level of competency in the near future. As with so much about this department, however, the bar was not set very high when I started. Still, I know how to do this job. I know what needs to be improved in this department. I know how to make those improvements. I know I am the right person to serve as the chair of this department. I know that the CVPA Dean’s office will support my efforts at improvement in the future. I expect to continue to be a very effective leader for this department for the foreseeable future.

Indicate your greatest strengths and areas that need development among the areas listed above.

A. Strengths

Organization. Transparent Administrative Style. Integrity.

B. Areas for development

Management/monitoring of financial data: The above survey did not directly address this issue, and it is the biggest area of concern for me. I feel very frustrated about this aspect of my position. I look forward to the presence of a college-level budget analyst at the “go-to” person for guidance on financial conundrums.

Technology: I need more training in web design. Specifically, I need a highly skilled mentor who can work with me on a regular basis, showing me more bells and whistles for the department’s web presence. I would like to know more about this kind of work, and someone in the department NEEDS to know about it.

In the next year, I will need to shift my leadership to a more active, visionary style. The department will be ready to look out to the horizon and chart itself a direction.

Please return this form to the dean.