

Proposal

Faculty Senate Ad-Hoc Committee on Administrative Reviews

Context and Rationale:

Portland State has recently seen a movement towards a more communicative and collaborative relationship between the faculty and the other key constituents of the campus community, including the Board of Trustees. We are walking an increasingly constructive and effective path in shared governance and shared leadership, where transparency and trust are being valued and emphasized and which provides us with optimal conditions to continue to envision and strategically design processes to further strengthen our institution. Such strategic thinking to project us into the kind of university that we want, need, and can be in the future in accordance with our mission and values is particularly important in the present moment, as we face multiple challenges caused or aggravated by the COVID-19.

An essential component of a healthy and highly functional university is the ability to establish and implement methods of self-assessment and adjustment not only in its instructional dimension but also in its administrative one. As such, it is important to design and maintain regular review processes, in order to provide our administrators with the opportunity to receive constructive feedback from the campus community on their progress and effectiveness as leaders, for their personal development as well as the development and enhancement of the institution. The faculty play an essential role and hold a great responsibility in this assessment process, both as reviewers and reviewees. As the report by the American Association of University Professors on Faculty Evaluation of Administrators states, "their [faculty] 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". The report further explains that "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."¹

While some elements of administrative review are currently in place at PSU, we still lack a Faculty Senate-centered, comprehensive and consistent mechanism for effectively utilizing faculty expertise in assessing and enhancing PSU's leadership on aspects such as progress in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion; promoting shared governance, communication, and collaboration among university constituents and involving them in decision-making; ability to embrace innovation and ensure that PSU

¹ See <https://www.aaup.org/report/faculty-evaluation-administrators#2>

effectively serves students, the city, and the global community; alignment with our mission and strategic goals; impact on institutional priorities, and other important leadership components. The need for the PSU faculty to examine our current procedures and practices, identify gaps and establish a solid administrative review process became evident during the conversations on PSU's leadership and administration that took place in Fall 2019 as part of the Special Meeting of the Faculty on November 6th and continued in connection to the Faculty Forum on May 18th, 2020, where faculty members provided extensive feedback on this subject, prompting the steering committee to present this proposal.

Motion Recommended by the Faculty Senate Steering Committee:

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee recommends the creation of an exploratory Ad-Hoc Committee on Administrative Reviews to

- Examine the mechanisms already in place at PSU for the review of Chairs, Directors, Deans, Associate Deans, Provost, Vice-Provosts, and other members of our administration, identifying areas of need and improvement.
- Explore models of administrative review being successfully implemented at other public universities comparable to PSU, reflecting on best practices that could be adapted to the specific needs of our institution.
- Make recommendations to the Faculty Senate for the creation/implementation of an administrative review process consistent with the context and rationale stated in this proposal, including a timeline and specific steps to collaborate with the administration and relevant constituents in setting this process (e.g., creation of a permanent administrative review committee)

This committee shall consist of 6 to 8 members chosen by the Committee on Committees from among nominations and self-nominations by faculty. It will present a report with its recommendations to Faculty Senate by the end of the academic year 2020-2021.