



Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
Office of the Dean

February 17, 2016

To: Committee on Faculty Affairs, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences
From: Alan T. Dorsey, Dean
Re: Response to your memo dated 19 January 2016

Dear Colleagues:

At last month's Faculty Senate meeting, the Senate ratified a letter to me that outlined general principles for fair, clear and constructive annual letters of evaluation for all faculty. I appreciate your articulation of these principles, with which I agree, and I hope that our academic units will find them helpful as they develop their own unit-specific guidelines for annual performance evaluations.

Over the past month I have collected and reviewed existing annual evaluation and merit raise guidelines from our departments, centers, and institutes. Many of our units have robust and clear guidelines, consistent with the principles you have stated; other units still need to develop or clarify their guidelines. For the evaluations of 2015 annual activities, the Heads and Directors may use their previously established methods of conducting annual evaluations. During the spring 2016 term, I have asked the Heads and Directors to work with their faculties to develop evaluation standards that are consistent with their unit's discipline-specific criteria for meritorious work in the areas of research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

Finally, I would like to address the two specific recommendations in your letter:

1. *That the departments of the college be allowed to formulate and carry out their faculty evaluations in whatever manner best suits them, consistent with the principles stated in part I.*

Response: As noted above, this process is already in progress.

2. *That a grading system or scorecard, such as 'does not meet/meets/exceeds expectations', not be required.*

Response: To quote from Principle I.A in your letter, "to serve as a useful tool, the annual review must therefore be more than a summary of activity. It must contain an evaluative component." Also, to quote from Principle I.B, "Whatever the format for communicating information, the annual review must conclude with a clear statement that indicates how well the faculty member is performing." I agree with both points. Therefore, unit heads may use alternative language or methods to communicate their performance evaluations, but should do so in a fashion that is clear and consistent.

Sincerely,

Alan T. Dorsey
Dean