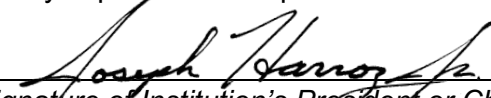




Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

Institutional Template

The enclosed Quality Initiative Report represents the work that the institution has undertaken to fulfill the quality improvement requirements of the Open Pathway.



Signature of Institution's President or Chancellor 05/18/2022
Date
Joseph Harroz, Jr., President

Printed/Typed Name and Title
University of Oklahoma

Name of Institution
Norman, OK

City and State

The institution uses the template below to complete its Quality Initiative Report. The institution may include a report it has prepared for other purposes if it addresses many of the questions below and replaces portions of the narrative in the template. This template may be used both for reports on initiatives that have been completed and for initiatives that will continue and for which this report serves as a milestone of accomplishments thus far. The complete report should be no more than 6,000 words.

The report must be submitted by June 1 of Year 9.

Submit the report as a PDF file at hlcommission.org/upload. Select "Pathways/Quality Initiatives" from the list of submission options to ensure the institution's materials are sent to the correct HLC staff member. The file name of the report should follow this format: QIReport[InstitutionName] [State].pdf (e.g., QIProposalNoNameUniversityMN.pdf). The file name must include the institution's name (or an identifiable portion thereof) and state.

Date: May 16, 2022

Contact Person for Report: Susannah Livingood

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Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

Recent organizational changes and campus community discussions have revealed widely held concerns that the University of Oklahoma (OU)'s current annual faculty evaluation processes and procedures do not adequately and equitably support our faculty, and, by extension, our mission and the OU *Lead On* strategic plan (<https://www.ou.edu/leadon>). One element of the plan calls for the university to, "Forge new standards of performance evaluation for faculty," to facilitate outcomes and goals related to success of students, faculty, the university, and the community.

Thus, the University of Oklahoma Quality Initiative Project (QIP) proposed an examination of peer aspirational institutions to benchmark processes of faculty annual evaluation at these institutions, as a precursor to revising the OU faculty annual evaluation system. To meet the purpose, we identified 11 universities and requested process and procedure data from each institution regarding faculty annual evaluations. The initial proposal suggested that OU would "identify three sets of aspirational peers, one each for area of special focus – research, teaching, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)" – then gather information on those institutions' annual faculty evaluation policies and guidelines. However, in the efforts to discuss potential institutions with university stakeholders and collect publicly available information, the team recognized that attempting to categorize each institution as representing only one area of focus was not feasible, as institutions who are attending to concerns of faculty representation generally attend to multiple components of the evaluation. In addition, the difficulty of locating institutions that had robust DEI evaluation through our publicly available data collection did not result in a clear set of candidates. Thus, in our efforts to identify institutions, we placed emphasis on aspirational peer institutions and institutions that reflected strong valuing of research, teaching, and DEI evaluation more holistically, resulting in a set of 11 universities.

Through the team's collection and analysis of data, several main results were found that summarize peer institution practices of faculty annual evaluation. First, most institutions do not use centralized and standardized policies in faculty annual evaluation processes. In addition, communication and sharing of faculty evaluation results differs across the selected institutions. Our findings indicate that all institutions evaluate their faculty based on the three main evaluation criteria: research, teaching, and service (or similarly titled elements of faculty performance). While most institutions include recognition of DEI-related efforts in their faculty evaluation procedure document, the implementation of this value is often neglected in practice. In terms of specific processes, many institutions have different procedures and timelines for pre-tenure and post-tenure faculty evaluations. Finally, some institutions have specific evaluation scale categories to rate faculty annual performance, which vary across institutions. Additional details about these findings are provided in section 7 below.

Based on the findings, we conclude with suggestions and recommendations to improve the current faculty annual evaluation policies and procedures at OU, and potentially at other institutions. In addition, we describe possible next steps at OU to improve faculty annual evaluation, based on an NSF ADVANCE proposal currently under review.

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative's hypotheses and findings.)

The purpose of the OU QI project was to understand faculty annual evaluation processes at peer institutions to inform efforts to revise OU's faculty annual evaluation policies and procedures. To meet the purpose, we (1) identified aspirational peer institutions, (2) collected publicly available information, (3) generated a questionnaire related to faculty evaluation policies and procedures, (4) contacted those institutions with the questionnaire and collected their responses in writing and/or through an interview, and (5) coded the responses. More detailed information about each activity is provided below.

First, the team coordinated internal university stakeholder meetings to gain input on the list of peer institutions. The stakeholders included campus representatives focused on research/creative activity (e.g., Vice President for Research and Partnerships), teaching (e.g., Vice Provost for Instruction and Student Success), and diversity/inclusion (e.g., Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) (see below for details). These meetings led to identification of 11 peer institutions, some of whom represented aspirational AAU peers and some of whom represented universities with reputation for innovative faculty policy. Specifically, those institutions were U Washington, U Michigan, U Colorado-Boulder, Iowa State U, U Oregon, IUPUI, U California-Santa Cruz, U Kansas, Florida International U, U Utah, and U Texas.

Second, two Graduate Student Research Assistants collected publicly available information from those institutions regarding faculty annual evaluation policies and processes, created a shared repository for this information, and documented findings from this effort.

Third, we carefully generated a questionnaire related to faculty annual evaluation policies and procedures in consideration of the purpose of the Quality Initiative Project. The initial draft was created by Dr. Seulki "Rachel" Jang and it was reviewed and revised by six other team members. The finalized questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.

Fourth, we contacted the members of the Provost's Office at the selected institutions, requesting responses to the questionnaire. However, the email response rate was very low and only a few institutions shared relevant answers. Thus, we decided to conduct a 30 to 60-minute interview with each institution. Dr. Lori Snyder led the interviews, took notes, and gathered relevant information. We conducted interviews with 7 institutions and received written responses from three institutions. However, two of these institutions did not provide a majority of the information requested and therefore were not included in the coding of responses.

Fifth, Dr. Seulki "Rachel" Jang coded institutional responses gathered from the interviews and the email exchanges in an excel document and summarized the main findings. Note that the summary is provided in #7 in this document.

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

The purpose of the initiative was to collect benchmarked information to inform possible future actions within the University. Thus, while there are no changes currently in place because of the initiative, OU is now at a more knowledgeable initial point to begin consideration of revision of faculty annual evaluation processes. Section 9 discusses our next steps in this effort.

4. Explain any tools, data or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative

Data resulting from the initiative include notes from the interviews and the email exchanges, and a summary coding document based on those notes. In addition, the shared repository of publicly available data provides institution-specific information regarding faculty annual evaluation procedures. Tools were not developed as part of the QIP.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

We encountered multiple challenges in conducting the planned initiative. First, it was not easy to identify the administrator who oversees faculty evaluations at each institution, who would serve as the best contact regarding faculty evaluation policies and procedures. Second, after identifying the correct person to contact, receiving a response from these individuals and gathering relevant information via email was challenging. Third, although we switched to using an interview approach, scheduling the interviews was difficult given the busy administrator schedules. Fourth, during the actual interviews, there seemed to be some reluctance to share details at some institutions. Also, there was a lack of common vocabulary regarding faculty annual evaluations, resulting in a need to ask the same question several times in different ways in some cases to access the target information. The scope of the subject matter was also such that it was nearly impossible to cover in 30 minutes and even 60 minutes was often somewhat shorter than ideal.

We also encountered multiple opportunities. First, this initiative allowed us to have an in-depth understanding of faculty evaluation policies and procedures across the different institutions and to recognize the differences. Our expectation of normative faculty annual evaluation processes was challenged and expanded through this experience. In addition, it served as an opportunity to establish relationships with other administrators at comparable Provost's Offices and build informal social networks. The information collected from this initiative will be shared with those peer institutions and possibly help OU and those peer institutions recognize potential problems regarding the current faculty evaluation policies and procedures. Eventually, we hope that this effort leads to healthy conversations about faculty evaluation policies and procedures across different universities and helps improve those policies and procedures.

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.

Individuals at OU involved in the planning and implementation of the initiative include:

Jill Irvine (past Provost), Lori Snyder (interim Vice Provost for Faculty), Seulki "Rachel" Jang (Faculty Fellow, Provost's Office), Nancy LaGreca (Faculty Fellow, Provost's Office), Susannah Livingood (Associate Provost and Director, Institutional Research and Reporting), Jennie Clary (Policy Analyst, Institutional Research and Reporting), Megan Elwood Madden (Director, Center for Faculty Excellence), Joshua Nelson (past Faculty Senate chair), Keegan McMillan (Graduate Student Research Assistant), and Melody Reese (Graduate Student Research Assistant).

Individuals involved in determining the institutions to consult include: Tomás Díaz de la Rubia (Vice President for Research and Partnerships), Ann West (Associate Vice President for Research and Partnerships), Randy Hewes (Dean of Graduate College), Mark Morvant (Vice Provost for Instruction and Student Success), Kathleen Shea Smith (Associate Provost for Academic Advising), Belinda Higgs Hyppolite (Vice President of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), Jane Irungu (Associate Provost for Inclusive Excellence), Lori Snyder (interim Vice Provost for

Faculty), Megan Elwood Madden (Director, Center for Faculty Excellence), and Joshua Nelson (past Faculty Senate Chair).

The individuals involved perceived the goals of the initiative to be timely and worthwhile, and contributed enthusiastically to the project.

7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

The primary findings resulting from the initiative are described below.

Centralization

First and most importantly, to our surprise, we found that over half of institutions interviewed *have a highly decentralized faculty annual evaluation process*. In particular, the process of faculty annual evaluation tends to differ substantially across colleges/units/campuses. For example, one of the interviewees indicated that “there is no central oversight of annual reviews: no expected criteria, no rating rubric, not even processes.” At many institutions, there is a requirement for regular faculty annual evaluations that may stipulate the need to include certain characteristics discussed below but leaves many fundamental decisions about the process up to the colleges, or departments. In many institutions, there is no common scale/rubric on which faculty annual evaluation is rated. This decision is left up to units, with the result of evaluation scales differing across the university. As a result, as one interviewee noted, “Units may have their own process, different form, ask different questions, value different things, use different sources.”

Inconsistent faculty annual evaluation processes lessen the value of evaluation results. Giving individual colleges and/or departments the ability to create their own evaluation scales renders the results useless for institution-wide comparison, or analysis. Within an academic institution, the meaning of such categories as “meets expectations” and “exceeds expectations” must be defined for each discipline (e.g., music vs. civil engineering), but once defined, consistent application of these basic standards becomes possible. Clearly and explicitly defining categories by unit, and documenting the standardization of application across organizational structures, then allows institutional leadership to ensure department/college accountability for the validity of the ratings (e.g., that the rating accurately represents a faculty member’s achievements by minimizing chance of positive, or negative bias). A consistent evaluation framework allows for those ratings to be confidently used in such personnel decisions as merit raises without perpetuating bias. Creating a standard documentation process also helps to alleviate logistical and tracking challenges. For instance, one institution interviewed for this project has campus-wide software to track faculty personnel decisions but chooses not to use it to house faculty annual evaluation documents because there is no agreed-upon rating standard. As a result, ease of access to evaluations by various levels of leadership is limited.

Many institutions expressed that an effort to centralize the faculty annual evaluation process would be challenged by the colleges or departments, with one interviewee indicating, “there’s a general conflict between trying to standardize and the need for local control”. Few institutions seemed to be making efforts toward more centralized processes and appeared not to consider this as a viable option. However, it is clearly possible to achieve, as OU and several other institutions do have such a process in place. We address the need for further work on standardization versus specification in section 9.

A second finding related to centralization concerns the *use and sharing of faculty evaluation results*, which differs substantially across the selected institutions. Specifically, some institutions must offer formal faculty evaluation reports and meetings between departmental leadership and the faculty member. For instance, at one of the institutions, faculty annual evaluation results must be shared in person and on paper and faculty members must acknowledge that they received

them. However, other institutions have more flexible policies. At one institution, each faculty member is expected to have a formal faculty evaluation meeting with a chair or a dean, but it is not required. Transmission of the faculty evaluation results to upper levels of administration also differs across institutions, with some universities requiring all documents to be housed in a software tool accessible in the Provost's office, and other universities housing evaluation results in colleges, with little to no communication of results to the Provost's office. This additional lack of centralization can cause challenges with oversight. For example, one institution noted that a department was found not to have conducted faculty annual evaluations for seven years. Almost half of institutions in the initiative had no process by which the Provost's office tracked faculty annual evaluations to ensure they are being completed. Use of faculty annual evaluations can also relate to their inclusion in other decision processes. Almost half of institutions interviewed for the initiative indicated that faculty annual evaluation outcomes are not included in the tenure and promotion process. These evaluations were viewed as entirely separate from the tenure and promotion process, which focuses on the perspectives of external evaluators. At other institutions it was clear that faculty annual evaluation and the resulting information on progress toward tenure were seen as evidence toward tenure and promotion case, and if, for example, five years of positive evaluations were followed by a tenure denial, this would be viewed as a potential violation of the process intended to provide faculty with feedback toward their tenure review.

Decentralized process also resulted in variable policies regarding who conducted faculty annual evaluations across almost half of institutions. In these universities, it could be the chair of the department who solely conducted the evaluation and assigned any rating, or it could be a committee of faculty. This was up to the discretion of the department. In one more centralized institution, all faculty in the department at rank or above voted on the annual faculty evaluation for every other faculty member in the department. The decision of who conducts faculty annual evaluations is an essential aspect contributing to the fairness and accountability of the system. Using only one rater/reviewer may have a greater potential for bias or leniency, particularly if this person is not well trained in how to evaluate performance, and in the specific process in use. On the other hand, having potentially 20 or more faculty vote on each other faculty member in the department appears to be an approach that would take exceeding amounts of time, and have the potential to cause power struggles, or schisms within the department.

Content of Evaluations

Our analyses revealed trends regarding similarity in content of evaluations across institutions. All institutions included in the initiative *evaluate their faculty based on the three main faculty evaluation criteria: research, teaching, and service* (or similarly titled elements of faculty performance). In some cases, categories are further divided, for instance, with service being assessed separately as university and public service vs. professional activities at one institution.

Our QIP included a particular focus on the extent to which DEI work is included in faculty annual evaluations, and how these types of performance are integrated into evaluation systems. Our findings reveal that most institutions do include DEI-related statements in their faculty annual evaluation procedure document, and that many of the institutions have prompted their colleges to contemplate ways in which DEI efforts can be represented in their systems. However, there do not seem to be corresponding actions within the process that implement these aspirations at most institutions. For example, although DEI statements are found in the faculty evaluation document at one of the universities, the interviewee indicated that practicing DEI-related missions is not a university requirement, and thus not explicitly valued in evaluations. At another institution, the personal statement submitted by the faculty member at the time of evaluation must describe contributions to DEI. However, these contributions do not impact overall evaluations or rewards, which has generated some controversy and questions as to the institution's true commitment to DEI. Some institutions indicated their efforts to incorporate DEI work into the annual evaluation

process led them to contemplate adding a fourth area of performance beyond research, teaching, and service. A concern expressed about this addition is it might portray DEI efforts as “other” than regular faculty work. This would not match their actual experience, in which the majority of DEI-related activities do directly relate to teaching, research, and/or service.

Specific Approaches to Evaluation

Institutions in the initiative reported having *different evaluation processes for pre-tenure and post-tenure faculty evaluations*. This may include frequency or depth of the evaluation. For instance, the majority of institutions had detailed evaluations for pre-tenure faculty, with some including a specific statement of progress toward tenure. In addition, most institutions required third year reviews for pre-tenure faculty. In contrast, post-tenure review processes were generally described as less detailed and sometimes less frequent. In addition, some institutions use *different timelines for pre-tenure and post-tenure faculty evaluations*. Specifically, one of the interviewees shared that “reviews are every two years for assistant professors and most associate professors, three years for the most advanced associate professors and full professors, and four years for distinguished professors.”

We also found that *specific evaluation scale categories* are used by some institutions, but vary widely. See the summary below, which includes the number of institutions that used each method in parentheses (). Five institutions that reported a high degree of decentralization, used only a very basic rating of satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Four other institutions did have a common rating scale that included between two and five categories:

(1) Five categories: Excellent/Very good/Good/Marginal/Poor

(2) Four categories:

- Exceeds expectations – a clear and significant level of accomplishment beyond what is normal for the institution, discipline, or unit; Meets expectations – level of accomplishment normally expected; Does not meet expectations – a failure beyond what can be considered the normal range of year-to-year variation in performance, but of a character that appears to be subject to correction; Unsatisfactory – failing to meet expectations in a way that reflects disregard of previous advice or other efforts to provide correction or assistance, or involves prima facie professional misconduct, dereliction of duty, or incompetence
- Excellent/Very good/Effective/Not satisfactory

(1) Two/three categories: Excellent/Outstanding, if neither of these, does not meet expectations is assumed

(3) Two categories: At the university level, the only categories are Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory; units may have more granular evaluation categories that are unique

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical and technological resources that supported the initiative.

The Provost’s office supported the achievement of the initiative via financial resources to compensate two Graduate Research Assistants from Summer 2020 to Spring 2021, as well as a faculty fellow during 2019-2020 and Spring 2022. Institutional Research and Reporting contributed time and effort for guiding and supervising the graduate students and organizing the implementation of the initiative.

Plans for the Future (or Future Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.

Based on the multiple findings identified through this initiative, institutions should contemplate several topics regarding the structure of their faculty annual evaluation systems. It is common for universities to persist in using an existing system for processes such as annual evaluation, as this is easier and generates less resistance from faculty and academic leadership than proposing and developing a revised system. However, failure to consider the implications of the choices embedded in the evaluation system may lead to a variety of negative outcomes, including bias, lack of validity, failure to provide developmental feedback, and possible legal ramifications (Kline & Sulsky, 2009).

Clearly, the broadest choice that should be considered is the centralization of the faculty annual evaluation system. This struggle between standardization versus specification, or between rigor and loss of local control, is a persistent and universal concern within universities based on this initiative. Indeed, it seemed that many institutions included in this project had given up on the possibility of centralizing the system, even to a moderate extent, due to fear of resistance. However, it should be acknowledged that while this choice may keep conflict low, in many cases it causes the purpose and efficacy of the annual faculty evaluation system to be questionable.

Institutions can better use performance evaluation results by following best practices identified in general performance evaluation literature (Austin et al., 1995; Bernardin & Wiatrowski, 2003; Levy & Williams, 2004; Murphy & Cleveland, 1991). A review of the literature reveals broad agreement on the importance of holding meetings between the leader(s) and the faculty member to share evaluation results and discuss next steps (Cederblom, 1982). Thus, post-evaluation meetings between unit leaders and faculty should be mandatory, particularly for pre-tenure faculty. This step is essential to capturing the benefit of the performance evaluation process. Without “closing the loop” by discussing evaluation outcomes and subsequent goals and action steps, the impact of the evaluation process cannot come to fruition, and development cannot be expected by the time of the next evaluation. Further, to promote accountability and ensure the evaluation process is being completed according to requirements, Provost’s offices are advised to develop a system by which results can be tracked and stored to be accessible to the faculty member, unit and college leadership, and higher administration.

More centralized decision-making about who should conduct evaluations, as well as broader awareness of evaluation best practices, will improve the quality of yearly annual evaluations, which in turn would promote more valid outcomes. Ideally, more than one individual would be involved in determining annual evaluation outcomes, to serve as a check for both positive and negative bias (London & Beatty, 1993). Many institutions use a small team or committee, an approach which may be viewed as providing more consistent and reliable evaluations. Techniques like 360-degree feedback may also be considered but are more commonly used as one input for a larger evaluation process (London & Beatty, 1993). Research also demonstrates the positive impact that evaluator training has on the validity and effectiveness of evaluations (Woehr & Huffcutt, 1994). Any individual or committee involved in the evaluation process should be trained to spot common biases in ratings, including unconscious bias, as well as to develop a common understanding of the standards for categories in the evaluation system (e.g., frame of reference training; Schleicher et al., 2002).

Institutions should further consider the content of evaluation and specific approaches used in the process. For instance, what impact would result from more explicitly valuing DEI work in the evaluation process? How could this goal be concretely implemented within units? Are the processes used for pre- and post-tenure review fulfilling their intended purposes? What alternate

or additional approaches could better achieve these purposes? Do the timelines required for evaluation contribute to their effectiveness? What is the impact of the currently used scales or rubrics on evaluation? Are these applicable across all units (or could they be made so)? Does the effort required to use this scale/rubric match the usefulness of the outcomes of the process?

In addition to the implications of the findings of this initiative, existing literature in the field of performance appraisal provides the following recommendations (Austin et al., 1995; Bernardin & Wiatrowski, 2003; Levy & Williams, 2004; Murphy & Cleveland, 1991), which may be considered in terms of relevance for future faculty evaluations:

Prior to the Evaluation Process

1. Different dimensions of performance (research/teaching/service) should be clearly and consistently understood by the reviewer and the faculty member prior to actual evaluations.
2. Performance standards for each dimension of performance should be communicated in writing (e.g., what does meeting research standards mean?).
3. A consistent rating scale should be developed across different units and each anchor in the scale should be clearly defined to reduce potential errors and biases. For example, a 5-point Likert scale (Far Exceeds Expectations/ Exceeds Normal Expectations/ Meets Normal Expectations/ Below Expectations/ Unsatisfactory) should define what each level of performance means in all three performance criteria (i.e., research/teaching/service).
4. Raters/reviewers should be carefully selected. Even with limited resources, faculty evaluations would ideally be conducted by at least three raters/reviewers (rather than one or two raters/reviewers).
5. If possible, all raters/reviewers should be trained before they engage in actual evaluations. If not possible, at least written instructions should be given for conducting the performance evaluation. In the faculty performance evaluation training, possible biases and errors that are likely to be made by raters/reviewers should be discussed. For example, the information about halo error (the tendency to use general evaluation of a ratee in evaluating dimension-specific criteria), recency error (the tendency to weight the most recent observations of ratee), first impression error (the tendency to weight the initial interactions with ratee), and similar-to-me error (the tendency to favor a ratee who is similar to the rater/reviewer) should be shared with raters/reviewers.

After the Evaluations Process

1. A repository for faculty evaluation results to be submitted to administrators in the Provost's Office will promote accountability.
2. Faculty evaluation results should be communicated with the faculty member being evaluated, both in writing and in a meeting. Communicating faculty evaluation results is crucial not only for legal reasons, but also for faculty personal and professional development. This should not be optional, but mandatory.
3. Faculty members should have an avenue to appeal evaluation outcomes.
4. The institution should examine whether marginalized groups (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, and disability) are disadvantaged in faculty performance evaluations. If potential biases and discrimination are identified, the institution should investigate revising the evaluation system or specific performance criteria.
5. Ideally, the evaluation results will be connected to specific methods of recognizing and valuing faculty effort.

Future Actions

A multi-disciplinary team at OU has taken initiative to explore options through an NSF ADVANCE proposal for future actions to systematically revise the faculty annual evaluation at OU, as well as to provide guidance for other institutions seeking to re-envision their processes. This effort is intended to counter the fact that there is a lack of clear evidence-based guidance to inform institutions that wish to improve the equity and transparency of faculty evaluation systems. This NSF ADVANCE proposal creates a multi-step process to develop a comprehensive faculty annual evaluation and workload distribution toolkit, sharable and scalable to other institutions. This process begins with the development of a comprehensive toolkit, including equitable and transparent faculty evaluation tools for Teaching, Research, and Service, as well as a customization process to assist units in applying the general evaluation principles to their disciplinary perspective. Additionally, it provides a set of training modules for faculty and for unit leadership regarding the purpose and process of faculty annual evaluation. These efforts then feed into conversations with individual units and faculty groups to: (a) build ownership and prepare for culture change; and (b) identify and address resistance and pockets of challenging perspectives. The draft tools and processes are then tested in volunteer units to study the impact on outcomes, resulting in further refining of the toolkit. We hypothesize that training, combined with customizing the evaluation tools and workload distribution within units, will result in better understanding of the evaluation process, less biased evaluations, and more positive engagement of faculty and leaders in this process. The toolkit will be shared with other institutions via a project website and webinar.

One step that remains in our proposed QIP is to gather feedback on the current peer benchmarking project from various stakeholders on campus (i.e., Faculty Senate, Center for Faculty Excellence, Deans, etc.) to establish an agreed upon set of recommendations for proposal to the Provost and President. Given the timing of the anticipated NSF ADVANCE project at OU (potential start date of 7/1/22), the Provost's office and QIP team agreed to pursue this step in conjunction with the efforts of the ADVANCE team to ensure emphasis on the most relevant and impactful recommendations. It is expected that this will be accomplished by December, 2022. The implementation of the recommendations will then be overseen by the ADVANCE team and the Provost's office.

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10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

We have offered to share our final report with all participants in our interview process, all of whom expressed interest. This transfer of information will provide other institutions with benchmarked data to enable their own institutional reconsideration of their faculty annual evaluation processes.

Appendix A. Email Questionnaire

Questionnaire

(Note. We understand that specific practices may differ across campuses and colleges. We would like to know general and common practices that apply to all units.)

1. Does your university have centralized policies and processes regarding the regular faculty annual evaluation, or does each unit have its own policies and processes? If a hybrid approach, please explain.
2. Describe the way in which faculty are evaluated annually. What type of scale is used to assess faculty performance (e.g., a categorical scale)? What areas of performance are rated (e.g., three categories: research, teaching, and service)? How many categories are on the scale and what are the scale anchors (e.g., a 5-point Likert scale: 1=unsatisfactory to 5= far exceeds expectations)? Is a composite or overall score included?
3. How is each area of performance listed above assessed? What criteria or standards are used and where do these criteria originate?
4. What materials or sources of information are considered as part of the faculty annual evaluation?
5. How many people are generally on the review committee for faculty annual evaluation? Who are the review committee members (the composition of the review committee)? How are they chosen? What are their roles and responsibilities? Do they take any training, such as unconscious bias training, prior to engaging in actual reviews?
6. After the annual faculty evaluation process, what positive or negative outcomes may result? How are any merit-based rewards (e.g., salary increases, additional compensation, and benefits) distributed among the faculty? Are the annual faculty evaluation results used for tenure and promotion decisions in the future? If a faculty member receives a poor rating, what action is taken? If a faculty member does not agree with their rating, what actions are taken?
7. How are the evaluation results communicated with the faculty member being evaluated: in writing, in an individual meeting, in a group meeting, a combination of these, or some other method? Are there expected steps by the faculty member or leadership following the communication of results?
8. Are there any faculty evaluation policies, rules, practices, or evaluation criteria that explicitly address diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) (e.g., research alignment with DEI goals; participating in training, committees, or events; mentoring underrepresented minority students; community outreach projects)? Are such efforts included in official quantitative tabulations, or are they bracketed out in a separate section?
9. Please share a copy of the document/instrument used for assessing faculty annual evaluation.