Report to Faculty Senate
From: Senate Academic Policies Committee

Friday November 1, 2013

Committee Members
Lorna E. Grant- Chair, Ronald G. Penny, Andrea Woodson-Smith, Karen Grimwood, Melvin J Carver, Sherry C. Eaton, Jianping Hao and Kia Vernon.

Charge:
To review how departments across North Carolina Central University evaluate their faculty, whether by calendar year or academic year, and make recommendations on how to unify the process.

Method:
Senators in each department at North Carolina Central University were polled.
Peer institutions in the UNC system were surveyed.
The 17 Universities with which North Carolina Central University is peered were surveyed.

Findings:
A. North Carolina Central University
   1. 10 departments at NCCU evaluated on the academic year,
   2. 11 departments on calendar year
   3. 3 departments are in the process of changing to calendar year.
B. Peer institutions in the UNC system were surveyed.
   1. 15 Universities evaluate on an academic year
   2. 1 universities evaluate in the calendar year
   3. 4 universities evaluate on both systems.
C. The 17 Universities with which North Carolina Central University is peered were surveyed.
   Not enough response to draw a conclusion (response received from only 4 institutions)
Issues in changing from an Academic year to a Calendar year

1. **Change in Supervisor:** In academic departments, planned leadership changes most often occur at the end of the academic year. Academic year evaluations facilitate that type of transition since the May evaluation could occur prior to the leadership change. Calendar year evaluations do not facilitate planned transitions. Given that faculty and chair employment opportunities dictate that transitions will continue to occur in the summer and early fall, calendar year evaluations create more situations in which a faculty member is evaluated for a period from January to December by a supervisor that has newly transitioned into the position in August of the same year. This is not a best practice among evaluation systems.

2. **Evaluation as a Developmental Tool:** One of the purposes of the evaluation process is to aid in the development of employees. Obviously it is more practical and effective to evaluate at the end of the academic year. This would give time for faculty to re-tool for the next academic year. If evaluations are completed at the end of the calendar year, there would be limited time to re-tool before the next semester. (Summer break vs. Christmas break)

   Change in contract year: Currently, both the university tenure policy and the Code of the University of North Carolina have provisions which require notices to be given to Faculty with regards to their contracts by specified dates. Those notice dates make reference to the end of the "term". The word "term" in those documents refers to the contractual term of employment for faculty members. Since faculty contracts are synchronized with the academic year, the notice requirement terminating a faculty contract is also synchronized with the academic year. It creates unnecessary confusion to evaluate on a calendar year and then make personnel decisions with regards to continuation of contracts on an academic year.

   Change in period of Fiscal/Personnel Action: The state’s fiscal year ends June 30th. It is not unusual for administrators to be required to make allocation decisions and personnel decisions prior to the end of the fiscal year in order to start the next fiscal year. Faculty evaluations ending in May will provide more current data for decision-making than faculty evaluations that ended the prior December. In fact, it is somewhat unfair to make June personnel decisions on the prior December evaluation. This will not take into account any improvements that have occurred in the interim. In essence, the academic calendar synchronizes better with the fiscal year calendar of the state then the calendar year.

3. **Administrative Overload:** If done on the calendar year, in December, administrators will have the responsibilities to (a) decide on tenure and promotion (b) getting students out for graduation (c) ensuring that grades are submitted (d) preparation for the next semester, while evaluating faculty prior to the Christmas break. We are creating an administrative nightmare for departmental chairs.
Recommendations:

1. Base on the aforementioned the committee is recommending that NCCU evaluate the faculty on the academic year rather than the calendar year. This would be in keeping with the majority of the universities in the UNC System.

2. The faculty and the university would benefit if the evaluation was done on the academic year. There would be less conflict in procedure and keeping in sync with the fiscal year.
Curriculum and Academic Programs Committee (Proposed)

The Curriculum and Academic Programs Committee will review recommendations in matters concerning the establishment, merger, or discontinuation of departments, schools, and colleges; the establishment of new degree programs (including online programs); the elimination or consolidation of degree programs; and the establishment or discontinuation of majors and minors and certification programs. The Committee will also review policy as well as recommend policy in the aforementioned areas.