

Five-Year Administrative Review of Christine Givner

Report from the Vice President for Academic Affairs

In 2009-2010, SUNY Fredonia engaged in a campus-wide administrative review process of Dr. Christine Givner, Dean of the College of Education. The periodic review process was established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the President, the VP Council in Academic Affairs, and the University Senate Planning and Budget Committee. Guidelines for this process were distributed in Fall 2009, and although the timeline was altered, the process was followed according to these guidelines.

Administrative Review Committee

The Administrative Review Committee members were appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, with the composition consistent with the review process guidelines:

Two from the College of Education	Kathleen Lesniak, Associate Professor, Curriculum & Instruction Anna Thibodeau, Associate Professor & Chair, Language, Learning & Leadership
One from a cognate unit	Nancy Boynton, Professor and Chair, Mathematical Sciences
One from outside Academic Affairs	Daniel Tramuta, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Service
One from VP Council	David Ewing, Dean, College of Natural & Social Sciences

Information Sources

The Committee was diligent in seeking and using information and perspectives from multiple sources:

- Administrative portfolio.* Dr. Givner prepared an electronic administrative portfolio, which was published on the Academic Affairs website on March 1, 2010. This portfolio provided information for the campus and the public about the areas identified in the process guidelines: unit mission, accomplishments, leadership, resource management, and staff development. The portfolio was available to external evaluators and to all who visited the site. The link for the survey was included on this site, so that participants would have the opportunity to review information about the College of Education and Dean Givner's leadership before they completed the survey.
- Online survey.* An electronic survey for all periodic administrative reviews was developed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs. It was piloted in two forms in the spring of 2009 and then, based on suggestions from multiple sources, revised to be used in this process. A link to the survey was sent in an email announcement to the Faculty/Staff Listserv at SUNY Fredonia on March 5, 2010. The survey was open until March 25, 2010. A total of 82 people started the survey, and 72 people completed each question:

Role at SUNY Fredonia	Response Percent	Response Count
Faculty member in the College of Education	23.5%	19
Faculty member outside the College of Education	30.0%	25
Professional or clerical staff member	35.8%	29
Administrator	9.9%	8

Once the survey closed, the survey summary (all ratings and all responses on open-ended questions) were shared in their entirety with Dean Givner and the members of the Administrative Review Committee.

3. *Individual sessions.* Members of the campus community had the opportunity to meet confidentially with members of the Committee to discuss their perceptions of the College of Education and Dean Givner's effectiveness. The Committee's report, which listed summary comments with any identifiers or direct quotations removed, did not indicate the dates, duration, or number of people who chose to participate in these interviews.
4. *External reviews.* The Vice President for Academic Affairs had solicited external evaluations, based on evaluators' reviews of the administrative portfolio. Some evaluators were nominated by Dr. Givner, and some were not known by Dr. Givner. Three evaluators submitted useful reports of their observations, perceived areas of strength, and suggestions to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and these were shared in their entirety with the Administrative Review Committee and with Dr. Givner:

Osman Alawiye	Dean, School of Education, SUNY Geneseo
Deneese L. Jones	Dean, College of Education and Human Services, Longwood University
Linda Rae Markert	Dean, School of Education, SUNY Oswego

Confidential Report

As directed in the guidelines for this process, the Administrative Review Committee submitted a confidential report to the Vice President for Academic Affairs on July 1, 2010. A copy of this report was given to Dean Givner for discussion with the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Results of the Process

Information gathered through this review was very valuable in the annual Performance Evaluation process that included Dr. Givner and the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Over several sessions, they discussed all details of the survey, external evaluations, and committee report. In addition to looking at the ratings items in the surveys, they also reviewed each of the comments submitted through the survey or reported to the Administrative Review Committee. They also discussed the questions posed by the Committee and the suggestions for future growth and possible further exploration. Perceived areas of both strength and improvement were reflected in the July 2010 Performance Evaluation and in the goals on the 2010-2011 Performance Program. Dean Givner found the review to be a useful way to reflect on her work over the past five years, to provide an opportunity for more faculty and staff to learn about the College of Education, and to see the areas in her own leadership and in her College that require her most immediate attention.

Lessons of the Process

Because this was the first round of five-year administrative reviews, all involved learned much from this process that will be useful for next time. The campus is not used to such a process, so communicating even more clearly about its purpose and encouraging people to bring ideas forward are essential. The participation level for the surveys and open sessions could have been better, and the VPAA should have been clearer about the ways individual sessions were to be conducted and the structure of the confidential report. The portfolio was intended to provide information as the basis for understanding the administrator's roles, approaches, and effectiveness, but it was not clear how many of those who completed the survey had looked at the portfolio. The external reviews were valuable, as the evaluators clearly understood the issues and roles of the Dean.