

## 5. Faculty and Staff Focus

### 5.1 Work Systems

#### 5.1a Organization and Management of Work

##### 5.1a(1) Organizing and managing work

The **UCO Faculty Handbook** was produced by the Office of Academic Affairs as a reference tool for all UCO faculty members. It contains information, policies, and procedures relevant to the academic functions of the university. In particular, it describes the roles and responsibilities of the university's senior leaders, the deans, chairs, and individual faculty members. It defines policies for the hiring of academic deans, chairs, and faculty, as well as providing process descriptions related to faculty tenure and promotion, evaluations, dismissal and suspension, disciplinary actions, grievances, faculty merit-credit, classroom policies, grade appeals, and benefits. The **UCO Employee Policy Handbook** was produced by the Office of Administration and Finance for UCO staff and contains information about employee benefits, leaves of absence, work hours, wages and salaries, employment/termination policies, disciplinary actions, and grievance procedures. These two documents, both available on-line, serve as the primary policy guides for the majority of UCO's faculty and staff.

UCO's management structure (Figures ORG-1 through ORG-6) is divided into one academic division (Academic Affairs), and three service and support divisions (Student Affairs, Information Technology, and Administration and Finance). Internally, each division divides into smaller administrative units. Academic Affairs is the largest and most complex of these with its graduate college, five undergraduate colleges, and underlying collection of academic departments. Each administrative unit operates under a guiding mission and set of aligned strategic goals developed through the strategic planning processes described in 2.1a. Oversight occurs in the approval of each unit's strategic plan and in the annual assessment process of each plan's results. Within this framework, administrative units manage their own financial, personnel, and administrative processes allowing a modest amount of flexibility in response to changing situations.

Within each division, CQI and Lean processes have led to reorganization and reallocation of resources to improve organizational performance. Examples of these are described in 1.1a(3). Others include reorganization in the administrative areas to create an Office of Employee Relations and Training and the creation of a Transfer Representative in the Office of Prospective Student Services.

UCO's Faculty Senate plays a key role in the shared governance of the university. The majority of faculty senators are elected from the ranks of full-time faculty, with the number of representatives from each undergraduate college chosen based on the number of full-time teaching faculty within that college. Two other units, the library professional staff and the full-time advisors, also elect senators. UCO's full-time professional administrators name three additional senators from their ranks and the Student

Senate names a nonvoting representative. The Faculty Senate forwards proposals, based to careful study within investigative committees, to the President and Vice Presidents for consideration. Representatives from the Faculty Senator also serve on many of the university's task forces, action teams, and advisory councils. One of the action items that emerged from UCO's CQIT process was the establishment of a staff council to complement the faculty senate.

##### 5.1a(2) Using ideas, cultures, and thinking

Committees, task forces, and action teams are formed from divisions and units across campus to ensure diverse representations of interests and backgrounds. Depending on the nature of the issue, representatives may also be included from the student government, the Faculty Senate, or external stakeholders.

##### 5.1a(3) Achieving effective communication

Best practices are shared between academic departments through "Best Practice" panels at University Chair's Meetings, CQI and Lean University training, and training presentations by faculty and staff at Faculty Enhancement Day.

The majority of communication occurs through email, websites, and face-to-face meetings. Other avenues of communication include announcements in **Centralities**, an electronic email messaging system that is distributed to faculty and staff at least once per day, and the **VISTA**, UCO's campus newspaper which reaches the student population as well. A number of campus offices and organizations produce paper and electronic newsletters that distribute information about their activities.

#### 5.1b Faculty and Staff Performance Management System

Although Oklahoma is an "at will" work state, UCO follows a **Progressive Disciplinary Policy** approach to resolving work issues with its faculty and staff. This approach allows a supervisor and employee to come up with mechanisms to correct problems through progressively more intense reviews before a termination is deemed necessary. Potential problems are identified in the performance review processes, one for faculty and the other for staff, described below.

##### Faculty performance management system:

Performance management for faculty begins at the time of hire and is tracked by the faculty member's career progression. For most, this **Tenure and Promotion (T&P) Process** follows promotion steps through three academic ranks: 1) New faculty with terminal degrees are hired in as Assistant Professors and placed on "tenure track;" 2) After four years they are eligible to be tenured and promoted to the rank of Associate Professor; and 3) After another four years they are eligible to be promoted to the final rank of Full Professor. Frequent exceptions occur in this process. For example, some faculty have been hired into their positions while still working on completing their doctorate. Others come to UCO with sufficient prior experience to warrant hiring in at a higher level than Assistant Professor.

The procedures for regulating the faculty tenure and promotion process are fully described in the Tenure and Promotion Process in the Faculty Handbook. The faculty tenure and promotion process is reviewed by a Tenure and Promotion Task Force that reviews the process periodically to determine whether it is performing as expected and to recommend changes where it is not. This review is currently underway and will be completed during the 2005-06 academic year.

The process starts when a faculty mentor is assigned to help integrate the new faculty member into the department. With the help of the mentor and the chair, a performance contract is developed which divides the new faculty member's time between the three areas of teaching, research, and service. At UCO, in line with its mission, the teaching category always carries the most weight. This becomes the basis for the new faculty member's annual evaluation and, after four years, the decision on their tenure and promotion. Annual evaluations of tenure-track faculty are performed by both the chair and dean. After four years, the tenure-track faculty member produces a dossier describing his or her achievements since being hired. Separate tenure and promotion committees are then formed from the members of the department to review and vote to approve or deny tenure and/or promotion. If tenure and promotion are approved, the faculty member completes a second dossier four years later describing accomplishments since his or her previous promotion. This is submitted to a Promotion Committee to determine whether the faculty member should be promoted to Full Professor.

Every three years, tenured faculty are reviewed by the chair, by a committee of faculty peers, and by the dean. The procedures for this process are outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Non-tenured faculty are reviewed annually.

The SPIE surveys [3.1a(3)], which provide student input on faculty classroom performance, are used in the tenure and promotion process, as well as in the 3-year review of tenured faculty and annual review of non-tenured faculty.

#### Staff performance management system:

UCO is in the process of completely changing its approach to evaluating and rewarding staff performance. In the past, an employee's performance appraisal was matched directly against that employee's job description. Performance ratings, however, seldom led to merit pay increases because of a UCO's perennial lack of resources. Instead, in a given year, pay raises have either been applied equally to all staff or indiscriminately to various selected staff positions. The lack of a systematic approach to providing pay increases led to inequities in pay scales for similar positions across campus and an inability to for employees to realize regular pay increases. For example, the only way that administrative secretaries could get an increase in pay was to leave their departments and move to an office in an administrative area.

The new approach, called the **Individual Performance Plan (IPP)**, is a performance management system that will ultimately tie into a new staff promotion/merit pay system. The IPP system provides for mutually agreed upon employee development while encouraging greater supervisor-employee

communication. The first phase of the IPP process is the Performance Planning Phase during which the employee and supervisor agree on the employee's key job responsibilities, major goals and objectives to be achieved in the coming year, the most important characteristics that the employee must display, the employee's development plan, and any resources that the employee needs to ensure that objectives are met. Over the next year, two intermediate performance appraisals take place between the employee and supervisor. The IPP can be adjusted to reflect changes during these meetings. At the end of the academic year, the supervisor makes a final evaluation of the employee's performance and the process is repeated for the following year. The IPP process will be initiated in the 2005-06 academic year leading to initial results in May 2006. The promotion/merit pay system will be implemented once the IPP system has been established. New staff hires must initially go through a 6-month probationary evaluation period before starting the IPP process.

Faculty salaries are computed using a university-wide salary schedule (often called the "pay card") that uses academic rank, time-in-service, and educational training to determine annual pay.

UCO annually recognizes faculty that have demonstrated excellence in teaching, research, and service and staff that have demonstrated exceptional commitment to the university. For example, the students can nominate an **Outstanding Mentor Award** for faculty members that have exceptional mentors in student research and classroom activities. These awards carry monetary stipends as well as public recognition at one of the semi-annual university-wide faculty and staff meetings. Outstanding teachers have been recognized at the university level for a number of years through the **Neely Excellence in Teaching Awards** and the **Modeling the Way Awards**. Through a half million dollar estate gift, awards to faculty demonstrating excellence in teaching will be distributed, one per college, beginning in Fall 2005.

Another set of awards directed at faculty members, called **Faculty Merit Credit Awards**, provide recognition and give the faculty or staff member spending authority over a small amount of university funds. These funds can be used to purchase supplies, to purchase computer hardware and software, for travel, or for a host of other university related items. Each Friday, an office or individual is recognized with a **Bronze and Blue Spirit Award**. Other recognitions at the college or department levels include awards for teaching, research, and service, and for number of years employed at UCO.

#### *5.1c Hiring and Career Progression*

##### 5.1c(1) Identifying characteristics and skills

Departments determine faculty needs based on their strategic plans. Individual faculty skills are chosen to meet the specific goals and objectives outlined in those plans. More often than not, a faculty member must be brought in to replace a vacancy and the skills needed are already built into that department's curriculum. Occasionally, when a department

expands its offerings or changes its direction, new faculty are brought in to support that change.

Staff skill sets for many of UCO's administrative support positions have become much more complex with the advent of Banner. This has led to an increased need for many staff positions to have greater expertise in computer software skills. Because of this, new staff members face significantly longer periods of training, with more technically difficult material, than their predecessors of a few years ago. With an increased investment in the training of individual staff members, UCO has recognized the necessity of working harder to retain these employees.

#### 5.1c(2) Recruiting, hiring, and retaining faculty and staff

In 2005, UCO moved to a web-based application process for all UCO faculty and staff positions. The software that drives the Human Resource (HR) website can automatically filter candidates that do not meet specified qualifications and those that have incomplete applications. Posted applications are also posted on several job boards, including the Oklahoma Employment Commission and area newspapers, encouraging applications from a broader, more diverse pool of applicants. Faculty positions are simultaneously advertised in the Chronicle of Higher Education and appropriate professional journals to ensure a national pool of candidates. Staff positions are advertised in *El Nacional News*, a Hispanic publication and the *Black Chronicle*. UCO follows Equal Employment Opportunity guidelines in all of its hiring processes.

In the event of a faculty vacancy, such as a retirement or a faculty member leaving to take another position, the vacated position is not automatically replaced. Instead, the position returns to a larger pool that is reallocated, along with requests for additional new faculty positions, to academic departments based on identified need. Because the university is currently facing a severe shortage of faculty across campus, there is a great deal of competition between the academic colleges and the departments for new and replacement positions. Academic Affairs, in consultation with the deans of the colleges, prioritizes faculty requests and authorizes those that meet UCO's budgetary constraints.

Once an academic department has been granted permission to initiate a search, the department follows the hiring procedure outlined in the Faculty Handbook. A department screening committee is formed to handle the mechanics of the hiring process. The university's Equity Officer and HR representative meet with all screening committees to ensure that non-biased and fair hiring practices are used in the applicant review process. The screening committee produces a short list of candidates who are interviewed by phone. From this, candidates are chosen for a short that will be offered on-site interviews. These prospective candidates meet with academic administrators at each level. The department screening committee and chair makes a recommendation to the dean regarding the hiring of one of the candidates. The dean forwards this recommendation to the Office of Academic Affairs which proffers an offer based on a salary schedule computation.

Several mechanisms are in place to develop and retain faculty. Departments utilize faculty mentoring programs to help new faculty keep on track with their professional goals and objectives, as well as to ensure that those goals and objectives match the mission and goals of the department, college, and university. UCO's modest benefits package includes health, life, and disability insurance. It also includes a voluntary retirement program (allowing employees to use private retirement programs instead of the university program if so desired). Employees also receive half a semester of free tuition at UCO for themselves, a spouse, or one of their children.

In the event of a vacant staff position, the affected unit processes a Request for Support/Professional Position (RSP) with the Hiring Unit in Administration and Finance. Upon approval by the department manager and budget office, the unit advertises the open position. The unit also updates the listing for open professional and staff positions on the HR website. For staff positions, units may use a screening committee or simply hire directly through the unit supervisor. Whichever approach is used, the Equity Officer and HR representative ensure that equal opportunity hiring practices are followed.

Since student workers represent a significant part of UCO's work force, Employment Services maintains a separate set of student hiring policies which are posted on its website. These provide guidelines for the maximum number of hours that students are allowed to work based on their particular situation.

#### 5.1c(3) Planning effective succession and career progression

UCO's senior leaders have established the series of leadership training programs described in 1.1a(3) to help train its future leaders. Moreover, the advisory committee structure outlined in 1.1a(1), which occurs in the upper level of the administration and is mirrored vertically throughout the larger university divisions, directly involves lower level leaders in the planning and decision-making processes that take place at higher levels. Leadership experiences that take place on CQIT action teams, Lean University process improvements, university-wide task forces, and the multitude of supervisory positions that take place within the smaller units of the university, also contribute to building leadership skills in the faculty and staff that carry them out. In addition to developing progressive leadership experiences, all of these processes play a role in helping to identify and evaluate future university leaders.

## 5.2 Faculty and Staff Learning and Motivation

### 5.2a Faculty and Staff Education, Training, and Development

#### 5.2a(1) Faculty and staff education, training and action plans

The **Faculty Enhancement Center (FEC)** sponsors Faculty Enhancement Day during the week before classes begin in the Fall Semester. In addition to bringing in an external speaker to provide a keynote address, the day centers around numerous training workshops and activities. The Office of Assessment sponsors an **Assessment Seminar** that brings in

a keynote speaker and provides activities and training sessions related to assessment.

#### 5.2a(2) Faculty and staff education and training and key needs

UCO's faculty and staff development process provides training to help employees successfully manage new positions and responsibilities. Training is directed toward the everyday work practices of faculty and staff, as well as for the university's senior, midlevel, and lower level leaders. For example, UCO's Faculty Enhancement Center (FEC) provides a Faculty Orientation for incoming faculty members at the beginning of each academic year. The FEC also provides university-wide orientation directed toward adjunct instructors. New staff members receive an Employee Orientation presented by HR. Leadership training, directed at chairs and supervisors, is described in 1.1a(3). Additional training and development is provided through UCO's CIF group. Academic colleges and departments have presented leadership and ethics training to their leadership teams and faculty. Additional training on hiring and interviewing practices, on preventing sexual harassment, and on confidentiality are available from administrative offices on request.

Five years ago, UCO received a grant through the Title III program. One component of this grant was to promote, through faculty training and practice, greater sensitivity to student diversity. By strengthening faculty and student sensitivity to issues about cultural diversity and learning styles, UCO aims to increase student success and retention rates. These are accomplished through diversity training workshops organized by the Multicultural Curriculum Coordinator, and by curriculum plans developed by individual faculty that identify and correct potential problems in meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds. Other initiatives promoting diversity are described in 1.1a(2). UCO maintains a number of policy manuals, all accessible through the university's website, that maintain standards for appropriate conduct. Many guidelines are collected in the faculty, employee, and student conduct handbooks. Additional guidelines are maintained by various divisional offices. For example, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety maintains guidelines for safety in workstation ergonomics, electrical-related work, welding, noise and hearing, blood borne pathogens, portable ladders, and skateboarding on campus. Additional offices maintain guidelines for students with disabilities, for faculty that teach students with disabilities, for computing, for website construction and many others.

#### 5.2a(3) Seeking input from faculty and staff

All Faculty Enhancement Center (FEC) sessions are evaluated by the participants who are asked about the relevance and quality of the FEC's programs. Participants are also asked to suggest additional topics for presentation. The FEC's Advisory Council compiles these evaluations and provides recommendations to the FEC director. The majority of FEC workshops and training programs are conducted by UCO faculty and staff. In this way, the FEC makes use of the

education and experience of one group of employees to provide training and support to another.

A major step in obtaining input on the training and development needs of staff will be being put in place with the IPP program described in 5.1b. Staff members, in consultation with their supervisors, specifically build training and development into their work plans.

#### 5.2a(4) Delivering education and training

The FEC serves as the centerpiece for faculty training and development. While its biggest impact is during Faculty Enhancement Day during the week before classes begin each Fall Semester, the center supports additional training opportunities throughout the year. These, and training opportunities provided by other areas, are delivered in the form of workshops, seminars, webinars, on-line, and email. Most such training involve evaluations which ask whether the delivered approach was adequate and appropriate.

The faculty and staff performance evaluations described in 5.1b directly assess whether the learning and support processes for which they are responsible are being accomplished. Corrective mechanisms are built into these processes.

#### 5.2a(5) Reinforcing new knowledge and skills

Most unit support staff maintain their own office guidelines that describe day-to-day tasks and repetitive processes that take place throughout the year. Some of these have become automated with the adoption of the Banner system. Banner has also led to the creation of other tasks. These guidelines help replacement staff get up to speed with regular office procedures.

Faculty and staff that leave the university, for reasons other than retirement, are given exit interviews that request information about satisfaction while at UCO as well as reasons for leaving the university.

#### 5.2a(6) Effectiveness of education and training

Evaluations of training activities (see 7.4a[2]) indicate participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of the training. Final evaluations of staff IPP reports will indicate the effectiveness of training in staff performance.

#### *5.2b Motivation and Career Development*

UCO is able to maintain highly motivated faculty and staff because it is able to hire highly-qualified personnel in its hiring processes. By working through the tenure and promotion process for faculty and the IPP process for staff, employees and supervisors are able to identify mutually agreed upon professional goals and development. This allows employees to set high expectations that produce clearly measurable results. Faculty beyond the tenure and promotion stage continue to be evaluated through the Post-tenure Review process.

UCO encourages professional development in its faculty and staff through travel funds for professional meetings, modest amounts of research support, and occasional reassignment from courses. Additional training is provided through

Faculty Enhancement Day and other training opportunities. Full-time faculty members meeting specific criteria are eligible to apply for a sabbatical leave. These leaves are authorized by BOROC to promote continued professional growth in its faculty. The length of a sabbatical is either one academic year (two semesters) or one academic semester, and faculty are on half-pay during the length of the sabbatical. The leave must be approved by the university through an application process.

UCO encourages staff development by providing travel funds for staff to attend professional meetings and through training opportunities through seminars and workshops managed by each of the university's divisions. With the initiation of the university's new IPP approach to employee evaluation, this training can be included as part of the employee's expected performance improvement plan.

### **5.3 Faculty and Staff Well-Being and Satisfaction**

#### **5.3a Work Environment**

##### **5.3a(1) Workplace health and safety**

UCO institutes guidelines and policies that minimize incidents of health, safety, and security problems. General approaches to addressing campus safety concerns are outlined in 1.2b(1). One specific mechanism that was introduced to increase safety is UCO's **Safewalk** program operated by the Department of Public Safety (DPS). This is a 24-7 campus courtesy service which will escort students, faculty, staff, and visitors to and from any campus location. Emergency outdoor phones, well-lit and easily visible, are located strategically across campus allowing an instantaneous connection with DPS.

Beyond the health insurance package, described in 5.3b(2), UCO provides several programs that promote health across the university community. The Nursing Department offers, for a small fee, annual health screenings for faculty and staff. The Student Health Center serves the campus community and makes flu shots available each fall. Recently, UCO began participating in the **Corporate Assistance Program (CAP)**, a confidential employee support service managed by Integris Mental Health, Inc. CAP helps employees and their families manage personal issues such as parenting concerns, emotional stress, alcohol and drug problems, marital and family problems, legal and financial difficulties, job-related issues, and similar sources of personal problems. CAP representatives are chosen, based on their expertise with the particular problem or issue, to help the employee or family member clarify the problem and implement a plan of action. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety will, upon request, evaluate workstation ergonomic requirements and conduct ergonomic training within a unit.

##### **5.3a(2) Emergency preparedness**

University emergency plans are maintained on the Department of Health and Safety. Each campus classroom and office area posts emergency guidelines produced by this office. Campus tornado safe areas have been identified and posted in each building. Additional disaster preparedness efforts are described in 1.2b(1).

### **5.3b Faculty and Staff Support and Satisfaction**

#### **5.3b(1) Determining key factors**

Key factors related to faculty and staff satisfaction, well-being, and motivation are elicited from surveys, Faculty Senate proposals, CQI and Lean processes, and action teams investigating these issues. Key factors are currently determined by ExCom, and its accompanying divisional advisory groups using the collected data

#### **5.3b(2) Supporting faculty and staff**

UCO's approach to performance improvement of faculty and staff is designed to produce better employees that positively influence each student's ability to learn. This is accomplished by assisting each employee, whether faculty or staff, to develop personal goals and strategies for achieving those goals.

The university, through its Human Resources (HR) office, provides health care and retirement packages to its employees, including sick leave and personal leave. HR maintains a Sick Leave Bank where employees can contribute unused sick leave hours to other employees who are facing emergency situations. Though primarily for students, the university's Student Health Center provides support to faculty. The Wellness Center allows faculty members to purchase and make use of its services. Many faculty and staff take advantage of the university's half-day preschool program, numerous cultural and fine arts activities, and athletic events. All relevant information related to policies, benefits, and services are available on the UCO website. These are easily identified by arranging the information in separate employee and faculty handbooks.

Many benefits have choice options that allow individual employees to self-select plans that best meet their needs. Others are added benefits that an employee may elect to purchase or not. For example, this past year, the faculty's TIAA-CREF retirement option that has been provided by the university for many years was turned into an optional elective. Those faculty who feel that they can invest this money through other mechanisms, or who do not need the additional retirement money, were able to receive the cash directly through their paychecks. This is also true of the medical benefits for those faculty and staff that are covered by better health plans through a spouse.

#### **5.3b(3) Formal and informal assessment methods**

Mechanisms for assessing faculty and staff well-being, satisfaction and motivation exist through a series of surveys. Faculty satisfaction surveys help the Office of Academic Affairs to identify those areas that faculty find most critical. Likewise, staff satisfaction surveys are used by each of the support divisions to identify key issues for staff. Data from both surveys are collected and disseminated through the Office of Institutional Research. Data reported back to the individual divisions are used in subsequent strategic planning processes. The performance review interviews in the processes described in 5.1b above also provide direct

information about faculty and staff satisfaction. Relating assessment findings

The Office of Institutional Research and the Office of Assessment make performance results available, including those related to faculty and staff support, to the appropriate divisions and units for their strategic planning processes. Priorities for improving the work environment emerge from these processes, as well as from CQIT and Lean processes.

