

Faculty Concerns Executive Summary of the 2007-2008 IDEA Survey for Deans and Department Heads

Purpose

The Individual Development & Educational Assessment (IDEA) Feedback for Department Chairs system is a nationally available tool for evaluating and developing department chairs. It provides a comprehensive assessment of effectiveness. The IDEA Feedback for Deans is designed to assess key personal characteristics and administrative styles related to effective performance, while revealing the unique experiences and impressions of constituencies affected by the dean's decisions. This report describes the aggregate data obtained from the current administration of the IDEA surveys of department heads and deans. Data pertaining to individual Department Heads and Deans was sent to relevant administrators.

Methods

These surveys used online questionnaires, which included 60 quantitative questions for Department Heads and 44 quantitative questions for Deans. All of the Department Head items and 26 of the Dean items were rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5 where 1 indicates "definite weakness," 2 indicates "more weakness than strength," 3 indicates "in between," 4 indicates "more strength than weakness," and 5 indicates "definite strength." The remaining 18 Dean items consisted of opposing descriptors (e.g., "indecisive vs. decisive" or "disorganized vs. organized") which were rated on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 7 where 1 indicates "low" and 7 indicates "high." The two IDEA surveys were administered during spring 2008. The response rate for the Department Head survey was 82% of faculty members (this represents a mean response rate across departments). The response rate for the Dean survey was 77% of faculty members (this represents a mean response rate across colleges).

Results

Results for the Department Head survey are shown in Table 1. The three highest mean ratings were obtained from the following questions: "Honesty" (Q25; mean rating of 4.21), "Accessibility" (Q29; mean rating of 4.36), and "Supports Academic Freedom" (Q32; mean rating of 4.36). The three lowest mean ratings were obtained from the following questions: "Guides curriculum development" (Q17; mean rating of 3.66), "Knows/understands faculty" (Q60; mean rating of 3.70), and "Stimulates research/scholarly work" (Q10; mean rating of 3.72). The mean ratings across all Department Heads appear to be generally high with the lowest mean rating of 3.66 suggesting that the weakest ratings reflected a score amid "in between" and "more strength than weakness." However, high variability within items was observed, ranging from 1.20 to 5.00 on the same question (e.g., Q18: "Establishes trust"). Overall, the data suggests that faculty members who completed the survey are generally satisfied with the performance of their Department Head and there are more faculty who express very high levels of satisfaction than very low levels. However, measures of variability suggest that there are faculty members who are expressing a great deal of dissatisfaction with their Department Head.

Results for the Dean survey are shown in Table 2. Overall, there was minimal variability in the mean ratings for Deans, as evidenced by less than a 1-point difference between the highest mean rating and the lowest mean rating. The highest mean rating was found for the item "Implementing Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies" (Q26; mean rating of 3.84), and the lowest mean rating was found for the item "Arbitrating disputes between faculty and department heads" (Q22; mean rating of 2.96). Within items, there was also less variability than seen in the Department Head survey, indicating that no Dean was assessed as particularly higher or lower than other Deans. Overall, the data suggests that most faculty members who completed the survey are ambivalent to satisfied with the performance of their Dean. On the 18 remaining Dean items which consisted of opposing descriptors (e.g., "indecisive vs. decisive" or "disorganized vs. organized"), there were two items with mean ratings above 5.50 including "passive vs. aggressive" (Q42; mean rating of 5.50) and "lethargic vs. vigorous" (Q36; mean rating of 5.63). These higher ratings indicated that faculty members tended to see their Deans as more aggressive and vigorous than passive and lethargic. The item with the lowest mean rating was "autocratic vs. democratic" (Q32; mean rating of 4.13), indicating that faculty members tended to see their Deans as balanced between or both autocratic and democratic.

Table 1. IDEA Data for Department Heads

Question	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard Deviation
1. Guides faculty evaluation process	1.80	4.80	3.78	.71
2. Leads faculty recruiting	2.10	5.00	3.89	.80
3. Attends to administrative detail	2.00	5.00	4.13	.67
4. Fosters good teaching	2.10	5.00	3.90	.68
5. Facilitates external funding	1.80	5.00	3.51	.81
6. Leads department planning	1.60	4.80	3.82	.77
7. Communicates department's needs	1.90	5.00	4.15	.71
8. Fosters collegiality	1.50	5.00	3.76	.78
9. Encourages balanced faculty	2.10	5.00	3.82	.68
10. Stimulates research/scholarly work	2.20	4.80	3.72	.63
11. Guides organizational plans	1.60	4.80	3.78	.78
12. Improves on-campus image	1.30	5.00	3.92	.80
13. Fosters faculty development	1.70	5.00	3.79	.73
14. Orients new faculty/staff	1.60	5.00	3.90	.74
15. Communicates administrative expectations	1.80	5.00	3.99	.67
16. Stimulates faculty vitality	1.30	4.80	3.45	.75
17. Guides curriculum development	1.50	4.80	3.66	.76
18. Establishes trust	1.20	5.00	3.82	.84
19. Improves off-campus image	1.30	5.00	3.81	.86
20. Rewards faculty appropriately	1.80	5.00	3.80	.75
21. Interpersonal skill	1.50	5.00	3.88	.80
22. Problem solving ability	1.60	5.00	3.99	.75
23. Appreciation for department's history	2.10	4.90	3.97	.76
24. Patience in implementing change	2.20	5.00	4.00	.68
25. Honesty	2.00	2.00	4.21	.70
26. Practical judgment	5.00	5.00	4.05	.80
27. Listening	2.30	5.00	4.17	.71
28. Flexibility/adaptability	2.40	5.00	4.06	.66
29. Accessibility	2.70	5.00	4.36	.54
30. Fairness	2.00	5.00	4.10	.70
31. Allocates faculty duties wisely	2.00	4.80	3.99	.60
32. Supports academic freedom	2.70	5.00	4.36	.51
33. Reduces conflicts	1.60	5.00	3.76	.79
34. Helps faculty develop goals/priorities	1.60	4.80	3.80	.67
35. Suggests sound priorities	1.40	5.00	3.83	.83
36. Defends department well	1.60	5.00	3.83	.90
37. Steady in crisis	2.20	5.00	4.06	.70
38. Stresses faculty morale	1.60	5.00	3.83	.79
39. Easy to understand	1.90	5.00	4.10	.75

40. Tries out new ideas with faculty	1.90	4.80	3.87	.70
41. Does little things	1.70	4.80	3.76	.76
42. Sees that faculty work to capacity	2.10	4.50	3.75	.63
43. More a reactor than initiator	1.80	4.40	3.15	.69
44. Works without a plan	2.20	5.00	3.80	.68

45. Looks out for faculty welfare	1.70	4.80	3.89	.69
46. Communicates faculty expectations	2.50	5.00	4.04	.62
47. Treats faculty as equals	2.20	5.00	4.08	.70
48. Gains faculty input on important matters	2.40	5.00	4.10	.67
49. Sees that work is coordinated	1.80	4.80	3.83	.74
50. Explains basis for decisions	2.00	4.90	3.96	.71
51. Tells faculty when a good job is done	2.50	4.80	3.93	.65
52. Ensures own role is clear	2.20	5.00	3.87	.62
53. Stresses departmental accomplishments	2.30	5.00	4.02	.62
54. Maintains definite performance standards	2.30	4.80	3.96	.65
55. Puts suggestions into action	1.90	4.80	3.89	.64
56. Facilitates good faculty/staff relations	2.40	5.00	4.11	.66
57. Encourages faculty teamwork	2.30	4.80	3.94	.66
58. Encourages faculty ownership of department vision	1.60	4.90	3.87	.72
59. Provides faculty feedback	1.70	4.80	3.87	.72
60. Knows/understands faculty	1.80	5.00	3.70	.72

Table 2. IDEA Data for Deans

Question Rated on a 5 point scale: 1=Definite weakness; 2=More weakness than a strength; 3=In between; 4=More strength than a weakness; 5=Definite strength	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard Deviation
1. Providing balance among teaching, research and service	3.20	4.00	3.61	.34
2. Improving undergraduate program	2.80	3.90	3.54	.46
3. Improving graduate program	2.90	3.90	3.49	.34
4. Improving college's research and scholarly contributions	3.20	4.20	3.67	.37
5. Improving the quality of teaching	2.80	3.90	3.37	.43
6. Improving service to the public, profession, and/or discipline	3.00	4.10	3.70	.39
7. Gaining an appropriate share of the institution's resources	2.80	4.00	3.50	.42
8. Representing needs to those who control resources	3.10	4.30	3.67	.48
9. Assisting in the securing of gifts and/or grants	3.30	4.10	3.56	.35
10. Keeping faculty informed of	3.40	4.30	3.74	.34

important developments				
11. Obtaining faculty opinion on relevant issues or concerns	2.70	4.00	3.40	.40
12. Providing support services to the faculty	3.00	3.90	3.49	.32
13. Maintaining an appropriate sized staff in the Dean's Office	3.20	4.10	3.80	.32
14. Providing opportunities for departments to explain needs	2.90	4.20	3.61	.44
15. Leading in developing goals, expectations, and priorities	2.60	4.20	3.53	.60
16. Developing plans and strategies for achieving college goals	2.80	4.20	3.50	.57
17. Communicating goals and expectations to departments/divisions	2.80	4.00	3.41	.47
18. Keeping informed about status of each department/division	3.00	4.10	3.57	.46
19. Conducting regular, credible reviews of departments/divisions	2.50	4.10	3.30	.60
20. Allocating resources consistently with college's goals/priorities	2.80	4.00	3.50	.48
21. Selecting and retaining department or division heads	2.60	3.80	3.37	.45
22. Arbitrating disputes between faculty and department heads	2.30	3.80	2.96	.58
23. Assisting in recruiting new faculty members	2.70	4.10	3.53	.54
24. Making promotion and tenure recommendations/decisions	3.00	4.20	3.66	.53
25. Making appropriate efforts to retain outstanding faculty	2.40	3.90	3.29	.51
26. Implementing Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity policies	2.90	4.40	3.84	.51

Question Rated on a 7 point scale: 1=Low, 7=High	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Standard Deviation
27. Indecisive vs. Decisive	4.90	5.70	5.23	.36
28. Disorganized vs. Organized	5.10	5.90	5.47	.35
29. Remote vs. Approachable	3.50	5.40	4.60	.83
30. Untruthful vs. Honest	4.40	5.60	5.13	.54
31. Unfair vs. Fair	3.80	5.60	4.85	.73
32. Autocratic vs. Democratic	2.80	5.20	4.13	.73
33. Unfeeling vs. Caring	3.80	5.50	4.78	.71
34. Manipulative vs. Straightforward	3.90	5.90	4.97	.80
35. Inconsistent vs. Consistent	4.20	5.80	5.05	.64
36. Lethargic vs. Vigorous	5.10	6.20	5.63	.47
37. Ambiguous vs. Clear	4.30	5.80	4.98	.54
38. Self-centered vs. Institution- centered	3.70	5.80	4.98	.54
39. Insensitive vs. Understanding	3.60	5.70	4.95	.90
40. Opinionated vs. Receptive to ideas	3.60	5.50	4.83	.74
41. Untrustworthy vs. Trustworthy	4.50	6.00	5.32	.69
42. Passive vs. Aggressive	5.00	6.10	5.50	.46
43. Aloof vs. Warm	3.40	5.50	4.57	.85
44. Erratic vs. Predictable	4.40	5.80	5.17	.61