Office of the Vice-President Academic & Provost

To: Department Chairs / Directors of Schools
Faculty Relations Committee
Marie Armstrong, Associate University Secretary

From: Geoff McBoyle, Vice-President, Academic and Provost
George Freeman, President, Faculty Association

Re: Annual Performance Review Process

Date: November 22, 2010

The information sessions for Chairs and Directors during September 22nd and 24th on changes to the annual performance review process provided the Faculty Relations Committee with a good deal of constructive feedback about implementing the recommendations. Below is a summary of key aspects for Chairs and Directors to address, based on the ideas that emerged during these sessions:

- We confirm the University’s commitment to ensuring that Chairs and Directors will have a forum that facilitates their further input on the process as these changes proceed.

- We would also remind Chairs and Directors that the original report of the Provost’s Committee (http://www.fauw.uwaterloo.ca/Links/FacultyPerformanceEvaluation.pdf) included not only recommendations, but discussions of the reasons supporting each of the recommendations; these discussions, we suspect, will often be useful guides for how to understand the recommendations as you set about implementing them.

- Faculties that do not yet have a written statement outlining Faculty-wide expectations related to scholarship, teaching, and service must have developed one by Spring 2011. Those academic units in Faculties that lack a department or school statement must prepare a document specific to their own department or school in parallel with the preparation of the Faculty statement, with the goal of having the documented completed by September 2011. This document must be approved by all faculty in the unit, using whichever criteria (majority? Consensus? etc.) unit faculty deem appropriate.

- Recommendation 2.5 prohibits the inappropriate double counting of graduate supervision as both teaching and scholarship. The tasks involved in graduate supervision may be broken down into component parts that, individually, may count under research, teaching, or service. In this context, departments need to explain which aspects of graduate supervision are counted as research, teaching, or service, and that they can only be counted under one category.
• Recommendation 1.2 requires that units with 15 or more FTE faculty strike a committee to advise the Chair on annual performance evaluations. It is up to each unit to decide the size of the committee, the mix of membership, the length of term members will serve, and the procedure for selecting the committee.

• While Recommendation 3.1 has not yet been officially adopted at Faculty Relations, Chairs should be aware that it is likely to be adopted soon. It is worth emphasizing again the motivation for this change: Two-year evaluations for all tenured faculty and continuing lecturers will provide committees and chairs with sufficient time to write detailed, constructive feedback to pre-tenure faculty, without undue increase in the workload for Chairs.

With regard to other topics raised at the sessions, we would also note the following:

• Faculty members will be required to describe the nature and scope of their service contributions including an estimate of time spent on each item so that they can be properly evaluated.

• The Faculty Relations Committee has produced a guideline for departments as they achieve consensus on what departmental citizenship means in their particular units:

  “Departmental citizenship” includes, but is not limited to, mentoring new faculty members, being available in the Department/School, being willing to take on hard-to-cover courses, and being available to students. In keeping with Recommendation 4.1 of the Report of the Working Group on Faculty Evaluation, it is understood that internal service to the university (and in smaller units, to the department) is an essential duty of faculty members.

• Discussions concerning the implementation of Recommendation 3.1 (“Evaluate scholarship on the basis of a two to four year period, and evaluate teaching and service on the basis of work done since the previous evaluation”) are continuing at FRC.

• We will work with the Deans to ensure that they provide Chairs with information about expectations related to average overall performance scores, and the range around such averages, for their Faculties. In this manner, we believe greater transparency and accountability in the merit review process will be achieved.