dents: A = 41.13%, B = 42.73%, C = 11.82%, D = 3.64%, and F = 0.68%. Data from other courses show similar results for completion rates, failure rates, GPA's, and grade distributions.

Since 1986, 90 students have completed the 20 semester hours from the Food Science course list necessary for USDA Food Technologist certification. Many students are still working to complete the requirements for certification.

In general, adult students, especially USDA employees, are motivated and mature individuals who participate in this program because it gives them the opportunity for professional advancement. The GPA'S are high, indicating the students' motivation and ability to learn from the video-taped course, and their interest in the field and the future of food quality control.

Recognizing Kansas State University's efforts, the National University Continuing Education Association presented the KSU Division of Cont. Ed. with the Region V New Credit Program Award. The KSU "USDA Food Technologist Certificate Program" received this award in 1987 and 1988.

In conclusion, food industry employees need more training and education to meet increasing pressure on the food industry to provide a safe and wholesome food supply. The video-taped and guided independent study program at KSU is helping food companies and employees meet this need without sacrificing work hours or company time. Past success of using video-taped courses shows a willingness by individual students and Kansas State University to invest in the education of food industry personnel. Besides meeting USDA-FSIS requirements for meat and poultry inspectors, other food science personnel such as quality control people, dieticians, institutional food handling employees, and public health employees are benefitting from the courses.

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Dissection of An Academic Merit Pay System

Tony Seykora and Janet Donlin

Abstract

Thirty faculty and administrators at the University of Minnesota, Waseca were surveyed in regard to the merit pay system. Of the twenty-one criteria presented for a merit system, all were rated as being important. Criteria that were deemed most important were that the system be non-discriminatory, judged by competent, unbiased evaluators, that the process not demoralize faculty and encourage cooperation among faculty. The merit system currently being used was not rated well on many of the criteria. Faculty and administrators were optimistic that a merit system could be developed that would be beneficial to both the faculty and the University.

Introduction

Merit pay is a method for recognizing and rewarding excellence (Burrill, 1989). Idealistically, the outcome of a merit system would be to eliminate the mediocre and increase the incidence of excellent teaching. Unfortunately, merit pay systems often have not delivered the promised outcome but instead caused fragmentation of faculty, adversarial relationships between faculty and administration, and demoralization of many (Burnside, 1989).

A structured merit system has been used at the University of Minnesota, Waseca (UMW) for eight years. It was originated by a committee of faculty and administrators. A merit evaluation form was developed that is completed by the faculty member for annual review. The completed forms are objectively evaluated and assigned points by a three member committee of administrators based on the following criteria: Teaching, 60 pts.; Scholarly Activity, 20 pts.; Service, 15 pts.; and Professional Growth, 5 pts. and merit pay is awarded from the pool of merit money based upon points assigned. Faculty members are basically ranked from top to bottom. If one faculty member gets a high merit raise, there is less money available for the rest of the faculty. Merit pay accounts for about one-half of the total salary increases given each year. The system has undergone several revisions and refinements throughout the years but has not gained popular support from the faculty. In fact, the level of acceptance by faculty has decreased dramatically over the years.

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Have UMW faculty prioritize possible criteria of merit/salary adjustment systems.
2. Have UMW faculty judge the present merit system

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relative to how well it meets different criteria.
3. Survey the UMW faculty regarding their general perceptions on how well the merit system has worked.

Materials and Methods

A list of twenty-one possible criteria of merit pay systems was compiled from gleaning the literature (Brown, 1984; Burrill, 1989; Douglas, 1984; Evangelkauf, 1984; and Magnusen, 1987.) Using a confidential survey instrument, thirty faculty and administrators were asked to rate the criteria using a scale of 1 to 9 (1: not important, 3: somewhat important, 5: important, 7: very important, 9: extremely important). In a second column, they were asked to indicate how well they felt the present merit system met the criteria using a scale of 1 to 9 (1: not at all, 3: somewhat, 5: well, 7: very well, 9: extremely well). In addition, ten questions were compiled to address general attitudes toward a merit system. These ten questions were answered using a scale of 1 (disagree) to 9 (agree). Background data was asked relative to gender, rank, years of service and current salary.

Results and Discussion

Receiving a rating of 8.2, "standards of performance are free of discrimination" was ranked highest of the 21 criteria presented in the survey (Table 1). There was a slight difference based on gender. Female faculty/administrators gave it a rating of 8.9, while male faculty/administrators rated it at 8.0. Ranked second with an average rating of 8.1 was "Judged by competent, unbiased evaluators". Ranked third and fourth (rating 8.0) were "Merit review process does not demoralize faculty" and "Encourages cooperation among colleagues". "Equitable to all faculty regardless of term of appointment" was ranked 5th. Of the twenty-one criteria listed, even those ranked last were rated as being important by faculty. The lowest ranking criteria received an average rating of 5.5 which puts it in the "important" range on the scale used. This would indicate that all criteria were deemed important and should be considered when devising and implementing a merit system.

The general dissatisfaction with the current merit system is reflected in the overall low scores it received for meeting the various criteria (second column in Table 1). The current merit system was rated highest on confidentiality (criteria #15 in Table 1), free from discrimination (#1) and consistency of the process (#17). The system scored lowest in preventing demoralization of faculty (#3), encouraging cooperation (#4) and giving assistance to faculty receiving low ratings (#11). The average rating of the current merit system for the 21 criteria was only 3.2 on the 1 to 9 scale. Failure to meet criteria deemed important by the faculty and administrators probably accounts for its poor acceptance by the faculty.

The faculty and administration's general perceptions on the merit system are presented in Table 2. The average score on many of the items fell into the neutral range. However, the respondees did feel rather strongly that the present merit system does not work well (item #10). It received an average score of only 2.7. Not surprisingly, the faculty who said that they typically fell into the bottom one-third on merit scored the statement "Our present merit system has worked well", the lowest (1.3 on a 1 to 9 scale). Even so, the faculty who stated that they ranked in the top one-third on merit only

Table 1. Criteria of Merit Systems Ranked by UMW Faculty

Avg. Rating of Importance*	Criteria Met by Present System**	
8.2	4.3	1. Standards of performance are free of discrimination (gender, age, marital status, etc.).
8.1	2.9	2. Judged by competent, unbiased evaluators.
8.0	1.9	3. Merit review process does not demoralize faculty.
8.0	2.0	4. Encourages cooperation among colleagues.
7.7	3.4	5. Equitable to all faculty regardless of term of appointment (12 month vs. 9 month appointments).
7.7	3.4	6. There is mutual agreement (between the director and individual) on the criteria that will be used for the evaluation process.
7.5	3.4	7. Encourages excellence by rewarding meritorious performance.
7.4	3.3	8. Does a good job of evaluating and rewarding diverse attributes and activities.
7.4	3.1	9. Safeguards against exaggerations or misrepresentations on merit review forms.
7.3	2.3	10. Prevents adversarial relationships between faculty and administration.
7.3	2.0	11. Faculty receiving low ratings should be given developmental assistance.
7.3	3.8	12. A process that is simple and easy to understand.
7.2	3.2	13. An adequate appeals process in place to provide opportunity to challenge merit rating decision.
7.2	3.5	14. Results of the review returned in a timely fashion.
6.9	4.7	15. Confidentiality is maintained at all times.
6.5	2.7	16. Annual review of performance with supervisor separate from merit/salary adjustment review.
6.4	4.1	17. Consistency of the process (forms, standards don't change year to year).
6.1	3.7	18. A minimum amount of time is necessary to complete the forms.
6.0	3.2	19. Consistency in amount of merit or salary adjustment monies that are available one year to the next.
5.8	3.5	20. Merit rating established by peers.
5.5	2.6	21. Recognizes past salary inequities.

* Criteria rated on scale of 1 (not important) to 9 (extremely important).
** Present systems ability to meet criteria from 1 (not at all) to 9 (extremely well).

Table 2. General Perceptions on the Merit System.

Avg. Score*		
3.6	1.	Overall faculty performance would decline without a merit system in place.
2.4	2.	Overall, our present merit system has been beneficial to both the faculty and UMW.
6.0	3.	I believe a merit/evaluation system could be developed that would be beneficial to both the faculty and UMW.
5.3	4.	Merit raises should be a one time bonus, rather than added to the base salary.
5.6	5.	An annual merit review process segments a faculty member's career unnaturally - a longer time span (2-3 years) should be utilized to get a clearer picture of performance.
3.9	6.	A person's base salary should be taken into account when deciding if that person deserves a raise or "merit".
6.0	7.	Our present system undervalues the importance of "years of experience" (teaching, industry, etc.) when making rating decisions.
3.4	8.	Faculty of higher rank should be financially rewarded more than they presently are compared to faculty of lower rank.
5.5	9.	There should be an automatic salary adjustment for faculty earning advanced degrees while at UMW.
2.7	10.	Our present merit system has worked well.

* Scored on 1 to 9 scale with 1 being "disagree", 5 "neutral", and 9 "agree".

scored the statement an average of 3.1 indicating general dissatisfaction throughout the faculty.

The respondees felt the merit system has not been beneficial (#2 scored 2.4), that overall faculty performance would not decline without a merit system in place (#1 scored 3.6). Even though there was dissatisfaction with the present merit system, faculty and administrators remained somewhat optimistic that a merit system could be developed that would be beneficial to both the faculty and the University (item #3 received an average score of 6.0).

Conclusions

The present merit system in use has demoralized faculty, ranking many low without resources available for developmental assistance. The competitive nature of the system has discouraged cooperation among faculty and lead to an adversarial relationship with the administration.

Discussion is currently underway to develop a new merit system at UMW. Hopefully, by considering the 21 criteria listed in this survey in the development of the plan, a useful system can be developed that will truly help motivate and encourage excellence in teaching.

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SURVEY

Retention of Poultry Faculty And Poultry Departments

Joe Berry, Richard Reynells, Mike Hewlett, Tony Pescatore and Don Bell

The number of poultry faculty positions has gone down in many universities across the United States. This loss of positions has not come without warning (Reynells, 1988). A decline of teaching positions can probably be linked with a reduction in student numbers (Pescatore, 1988). To improve student numbers an active recruiting program may be needed, or at least efforts may need to be directed toward prospective students to acquaint them with industry needs. To improve success in recruiting efforts it may be appropriate that members of particular youth groups be targeted. Bradley (1988) suggested that a majority of students majoring in poultry science have a farm, 4-H, or Future Farmers of America background. University teaching programs are usually reviewed in reference to declining student numbers, however, since research is also a vital university function it must be considered a factor in the loss of poultry positions (Cook, 1988). Another university function, extension education, should also be addressed in reference to meeting industry needs and determining what the employment needs of the industry are and may be in the future. Smith (1988) suggested that extension may need to move away from production oriented programs and provide more focus on the area of public policy.

In an effort to gain some insight into the cause and determine what might be done to continue to provide well-trained students to the poultry industry, a university and industry survey was conducted. The industry survey was conducted among poultry companies to determine the background of current employees and their future needs in order to assist universities in doing a better job of training students to meet industry needs. The university survey was conducted

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