

**Evaluation Reformation at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Institute of
Agriculture and Natural Resources (IANR)
Susan Fritz**

Issue:

Over time, IANR evaluation processes had become increasingly complex and time-consuming. With decreasing faculty and staff support for the existing processes and some concern that the current processes won't help us accomplish our vision, it was time to determine if we needed to: re-engineer the personnel and programmatic evaluation process with emphasis on productivity and impacts; reduce faculty and administrator workload; reward team approaches; strive for fairness with objective performance differentiation; and consider changes in frequency and timing for senior faculty.

What has been done:

Using a variety of strategies to obtain feedback from approximately 400 IANR faculty and staff members, and administrators during the first half of 2011, the Evaluation Reformation Team (comprised of 5 IANR administrators, with Susan Fritz serving as the team leader) developed the following recommendations:

- Retain, but significantly modify, an e-submission process;
- Restructure faculty evaluation timing;
- Narrow the IANR evaluation window to provide more timely feedback;
- Reward team accomplishments by identifying and recognizing contributors;
- Manage research, teaching, and extension FTE at the unit level;
- Broaden UNL promotion and tenure guidelines to include intellectual property;
- Revamp the staff evaluation process;
- Implement promotion in grade for staff members; and
- Implement processes to define performance differentiation.

Impacts/New Partnerships: Too soon to tell.

Outcome of Project (societal impact/ measure of increased quality of life)

The recommendations were considered at an IANR-wide retreat of administrators and the University Chancellor on July 24 and 25, 2011. Those recommendations that will be immediately adopted will be announced at an all-IANR meeting on August 26. Other recommendations may take longer, more deliberate action to implement.

How has your project been aided by your FSLI experience?

My project has been aided by my (renewed) appreciation for the following:

Acceptance that processes need to change if institutions are going to implement sustained change; Without inclusion of those that have been and/or will be impacted in defining the problem and solutions, there is little hope of generating buy-in for changes;

If you embark on a change process, you must deliver something visible and soon or followers will lose faith in the leader and the process ('academic time' is deadly!); and

Without assessment feeding a change process, the leader trades on goodwill and trust to convince followers that change is really happening.

Contact information:

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