

**Faculty Development Subcommittee**  
**IU School of Informatics Strategic Planning**  
**November 15, 2007**

**Membership**

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The Faculty Development Subcommittee of the Indiana University School of Informatics Strategic Planning process was charged with examining key issues in Faculty Development, collecting pertinent data from the faculty, and isolating the key questions and critical policy issues. While the Subcommittee's work has naturally come up with sample approaches to some of these issues, we have identified our task principally as one of delineating the policy issues and identifying selected possible solutions. The tasks of proposing specific new policies, administrative actions, and exhaustively delineating solution options are assumed to be the subject of the next step in the Strategic Planning process. The initial list of issues presented to the Subcommittee included the following:

- o Are there important ways in which we need to improve our mentoring of junior faculty?
- o Are there any key needs to improve our policies and procedures regarding faculty review?
- o Are there issues regarding teaching loads, teaching quality and/or course buyout that are important to address?
- o How do we create an environment where all senior faculty are expected to make a full contribution to the School, perhaps in varying ways, and are rewarded fully for doing so?
- o What approaches should we take to develop future leaders from the faculty?
- o Do we need to address the availability of graduate students to junior faculty?

The starting point for the Subcommittee's analysis process was to identify existing literature on employee satisfaction, and to integrate that into a slightly different

framework of questions and issues that seemed to address all the substantive issues in the initial charge to the Subcommittee. A particularly relevant piece of literature was a study by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman of the Gallup organization, who conducted two large research studies addressing the question: “What do the most talented employees need from their workplace?” Gallup interviewed over a million employees and came to the following conclusion: *“Talented employees need great managers. The talented employee may join a company because of its charismatic leaders, its generous benefits, and its world-class training programs, but how long that employee stays and how productive he is while he is there is determined by his relationship with his immediate supervisor.”*<sup>1</sup> Twelve issues were presented as key, and six particular questions were identified as having the most direct effect on employee satisfaction and productivity. A synopsis of these questions and the findings of Buckingham and Coffman are included in the Appendix; the Subcommittee has attempted to focus on issues raised by this study throughout our analysis.

For example, the promotion and tenure paradigm does have issues very similar to those found important in industry: Pretenure faculty members must know what is expected of them in the process. They, their administrators, and the grant support structures of the School must identify the necessary resources for success. They should receive frequent feedback from people who are invested in their development and who care about their success.

However, the academic framework also deliberately sets faculty members on a path toward autonomy. They are expected to become leaders in their areas of research; after achieving tenure, they presumably no longer need as much structure or supervision in order to carry their academic interests forward. They may have few real peers in their academic knowledge and may feel that administrators and other senior faculty do not need to guide their continued development. Nevertheless, they still need to feel connected and accountable to a larger organization or endeavor.

In an interdisciplinary field such as Informatics, senior faculty should become “hubs” of research and scholarly endeavor. They should reach out to junior faculty members, who need a great deal of guidance as they pursue tenure. After junior faculty members achieve tenure, they also need to commit to continued meaningful contribution. Despite the expectation of autonomy, a commitment to continued contribution is more likely to occur if they feel that the organization is invested in them and that their contributions are recognized.

Not all senior faculty members will seek or be suited for management responsibilities related to junior faculty; for those who do, the junior faculty development process should include:

1. Facilitating the association of junior faculty with senior faculty who are skilled and invested in mentoring

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<sup>1</sup> Buckingham, M., and Coffman, C. (1999) *First, Break All the Rules*, Simon & Schuster (New York), introduction and chapter 1, pp. 11-12

2. Connecting faculty to administrative leaders who can help them network, secure resources, and evaluate their contributions in a School-wide context and
3. Connecting faculty, at all stages of development, to one another so that new research can emerge through regular academic dialogue
4. Situating all faculty members in a culture of accountability and contribution

The School of Informatics is in transition at this time. New personnel and administrative procedures are in place. Relationship-building is underway. The Bloomington Campus and the Indianapolis Campus have clearly distinct issues and concerns, as well as very different proportions of tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty who are concerned with their personal development. The Subcommittee's analysis, rooted in Buckingham and Coffman's work, and based on our evolved list of issues reflecting the questions of the initial charge, suggests the following policy issues and suggestions as critical to the Faculty Development process:

**Teaching and the General Work Environment (Big idea: striving to get the best effort from everyone)**

- Develop policies acknowledging the effort of preparing new courses and labs and developing online courses
- Standardize guidelines for course buyouts and teaching loads
- Reaffirm through rewards, recognition, and quality controls the importance of teaching to the academic mission of the School
- Identify ways to involve, support, and reward non-tenure track faculty in the scholarship of teaching and learning and in the academic affairs of the unit
- Create, implement, and maintain a system of faculty records and transactions related to appointments, teaching, funding, and service
- Ask each tenure track and non-tenure track faculty member to answer the six questions posed by Buckingham and Coffman; if there are obvious gaps in the answers to those questions, formulate plans to address them. (See Appendix)

**Promotion & Tenure (Big idea: address, as much as possible, the need for clarity in a process that cannot be entirely transparent)**

- Regularly review the policies on Promotion and Tenure for faculty
- Begin to collect statistical data on career paths
- Review and post a variety of resources in an online P & T repository; delineate responsibility for the accuracy and maintenance of that repository
- Incorporate the creation and regular maintenance of dossiers into the faculty review process from the date of employment. (Templates are being developed on the IUPUI campus that may be helpful.)
- Provide assistance to junior faculty members on identifying funding sources and networking for interdisciplinary research.
- Facilitate admitting and identifying students to work on faculty research projects
- Provide guidelines on time management
- Resolve to provide suitable administrative support for the production of all dossiers

**Faculty Mentoring (Big idea: the need to provide robust mentoring for faculty at every level; providing mentors with specific objectives)**

- Identify the senior faculty members who are open to mentoring and have the skill sets to do so
- Provide administrative support and a reward structure for faculty mentoring
- Develop career path mentoring procedures and objectives
- Give adequate time and appropriate rewards to senior faculty who shoulder this important responsibility
- Create policies and structures that provide an environment for the development of future faculty leaders and mentors. (Big idea: where will the next generation of committee chairs and deanlets be drawn from?)

**The School's Mission and Strategic Plan (Big idea: missions and strategic plans are living things; faculty need to be in synch; planning needs to take into account existing personnel)**

- Provide mechanisms by which faculty members' energy and activities can refine the evolving mission of the School
- Identify, on a systematic basis, any resource deficits that are preventing faculty members from participating in or supporting the mission

**A Culture of Accountability and Contribution (Big idea: cultivate the expectation that everyone contributes to the success of the School)**

- Link recognition and reward to accountability
- Systematically identify what constitutes reward and recognition for each of several types of faculty
- Identify mechanisms for increasing and rewarding involvement of senior faculty in School activities

**Conclusion:**

It is clear from the issues identified by the Faculty Development Subcommittee that personal and tangible resources are required throughout the School to assist non-tenure-track, tenure-track, and tenured faculty to achieve their diverse potential and to create an environment that is professionally predictable and satisfying. Tenured and tenure-track faculty must guide and support the non-tenure track faculty, while the tenured faculty and administration have many responsibilities to ensure in particular that the junior faculty have adequate guidance and support. The administrators need to facilitate the satisfaction and morale of the older faculty, and to identify and develop each upcoming generation of effective Department and School administrators and leaders. We note in conclusion that, in our academic units, where the number of staff members is a substantial fraction of the number of faculty, the overall success of each unit depends not only on job satisfaction and development of the faculty, but also on the job satisfaction and personal development of the staff as a whole. There is much to be done.

## **Appendix material**

### **SWOT Analysis**

#### Strengths

- New leadership
- Faculty are open to most new initiatives, with the possible exception of a codifying a certain dollar value for grant activities

#### Weaknesses

- Hiring has not produced clear cut research themes or depth
- Some senior level faculty are not engaged; some have unrealistic expectations of junior faculty
- P&T guidelines are not well understood

#### Opportunities

- Faculty members are excited about new leadership
- Faculty members are asking for clear cut guidelines

#### Threats

- Shortage of senior leaders to mentor junior faculty
- Shortage of research students for junior faculty
- Mentoring of new media faculty is difficult; their career paths are less clear than traditional science faculty
- Long term leadership of IUPUI campus is still to be decided; faculty may not be sure if decisions made now will be implemented later
- IUPUI Executive Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Faculties is demanding more grant activity; teaching, as one of two core activities, has been devalued to the point where it is rarely discussed

#### **Seven initial questions:**

1. Are there important ways in which we need to improve our mentoring of junior faculty?
2. Are there any key needs to improve our policies and procedures regarding faculty review?
3. Are there issues regarding teaching loads, teaching quality, rewards and recognition for teaching and/or course buyout that are important to address?
4. How do we create an environment where all senior faculty members are expected to make a full contribution to the school, perhaps in varying ways, and are rewarded fully for doing so?
5. What approaches should we take to develop future leaders from faculty?
6. Do we need to address the availability of graduate students to junior faculty?
7. How do we support, recognize and reward the work of non-tenure track faculty members, particularly their contributions to the teaching and service efforts of the school?

## **Buckingham and Coffman**

Buckingham and Coffman<sup>2</sup> asked how the world's great managers find, focus, and keep talented employees. Gallup interviewed 80,000 managers in companies of different sizes, chosen by performance criteria. These were the core elements identified as necessary and sufficient to needed to attract, focus, and keep the most talented employees:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?
2. Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right?
3. At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best everyday?
4. In the last seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does my supervisor or someone at work seem to care about me as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
  
7. At work, do my opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?
9. Are my co-workers committed to doing quality work?
10. Do I have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
12. This last year, have I had the opportunity at work to learn and grow?

Each of the twelve questions was statistically important to one of four business outcomes: productivity, profitability, retention, and customer satisfaction. Ten of the twelve had direct links to productivity; eight of the twelve to profitability; five of the twelve to retention. The authors say that **the first six questions** have the most links to the most business outcomes and are, therefore, the most powerful questions. If the employee's relationship with his or her direct supervisor was poor, no amount of company encouragement could correct that situation.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Buckingham, M., and Coffman, C, (1999) First, Break All the Rules, Simon & Schuster (New York), introduction and chapter 1, pp. 11-12

<sup>3</sup> Buckingham, M., and Coffman, C, pp. 11-49.