

Provost's Performance Survey Report (Spring 09)

Faculty Senate Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance

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Quantitative Report Introduction Summary:

298 of the 638 eligible faculty members accessed the Provost's survey. A total of 264 faculty members answered at least one question on the Provost's survey, resulting in a return rate of 41.4%. No Provost/Academic Vice-

The four highest scoring questions were: 18.ii, 19.ii, 20.ii, and 23.i. The first three deal with management style that promotes diversity in faculty, staff, and student activities, with the fourth dealing with ensuring that university policy is available and transparent to faculty. The scores in order are: 3.65, 3.60, 3.78, and 3.93. The Provost scored highest on question 23 relating to faculty.

Of the 24 replies in the 3 to 3.5 range and the 19 in the 2.5 to 3 range there is no easily discernible pattern but for two questions not including the lowest scored question: 21. These two questions, 17 and 27 had scores of 2.55 and 2.54 and concerned consulting faculty before making important decisions and providing supervisory leadership to the dean or director of the academic unit. The two questions are similar to question 21, whi

Q #	Question Text	Mean (Average) Score	Standard Deviation	N (Total # of Respondents for this question (no opinion/no answer*))
3.	The Provost actively promotes policies that foster the activities of your department or academic unit.	2.64	1.36	249, 12/2
4.	The Provost actively promotes the University's academic mission to: i. The local community ii. The western Illinois region iii. Beyond the region	3.12 3.07 2.90	1.33 1.34 1.40	161, 87/16 150, 93/18 133, 108/22
5.	The Provost manages the University's resources well.	2.99	1.31	192, 59/9
6.	The Provost actively promotes resource development for academic affairs.	3.13	1.33	191, 59/8

Overall job efficiency:

Several positive comments were phrased in terms of nonspecific statements about the Provost's performance. These include comments such as he is doing a wonderful job, he should be commended and he is a refreshing change from the previous Provost. One person exclaimed that he was a great hire. Others lamented that the Provost inherited a "mess," and is quite limited by the resources available to him. Many felt Provost Thomas was doing a very good job in light of the extremely limited budgetary situation and given administrative decisions made by the previous Provost. Many also remarked that there is too little information to provide a fair assessment of job performance at this point.

While many commented on the heavy learning curve the Provost faced, at the same time several were concerned with an apparent lack of understanding of Western Illinois University, its history and issues facing particular departments. A couple comments voiced a concern about a lack of promoting academic excellence, and there were related concerns about the continuing deteriorating infrastructure that hinders the teaching process and perceived lower standards for admissions.

Comments about specific topics:

Two initiatives were clearly identified as very positive. One was the initiation and use of the Provost's Advisory Committee, which was identified as an example of the Provost's desire to improve communication. A second initiative receiving very extensive and strong positive feedback is the newly implemented provision for Provost Travel Grant awards, for which several faculty members voiced appreciation.

Receiving the most negative attention was criticism of the way the recently revised Professional Achievement Awards implementation process took place. Some sympathy was voiced for a poor contract to work with, yet concerns were raised about the lack of understanding of the contract language and apparent inability to grasp particular concerns of various disciplines. A particular aspect of the contract questioned by a few faculty members was the use of student evaluation scores as a measure of teaching performance.

Another topic receiving significant negative attention was the increase in administrative positions, especially in light of limited budgets. The newly created Assistant Vice President position was identified as a particular concern, with criticism regarding not only the creation of the position, but also the salary and the process used in hiring.

Finally, several faculty members questioned the value of the newly implemented fall meeting at the beginning of the semester, commenting that it was not an efficient use of time and in particular the speakers were not beneficial.