

Equity-Minded Reform of Faculty Evaluation Policies

Audit Resource



Audit Resource for Equity-Minded Reform of Faculty Evaluation Policies

This audit resource is intended to complement the research, examples, and solutions presented in two ACE reports on equity-minded reform of faculty evaluation policies.¹ Both tables below outline questions to ask or consider when examining faculty evaluation policies. Table 1 focuses on principles around equity-minded reform that should be applied throughout policies and procedures; Table 2 outlines specific areas or topics of policy documents to examine for equity. These questions are not exhaustive in nature but are intended to assist institutional agents leading or navigating reform efforts to create more equitable and just faculty evaluation policies and procedures.

Table 1: Guiding Principles for an Equity-Minded Audit of Faculty Evaluation Policies

Guiding Principle	Questions Applied to Existing Policies and Procedures
Transparency	Is salient information related to faculty evaluation intentionally shared, accessible, and accurate? If salient information is intentionally left out, is there a good reason?
Clarity	Is information provided in a way that is easily understood? Is there ambiguity that could invite bias, guessing, and misinterpretation?
Accountability	Are there responsible actors and steps identified if faculty evaluation policies and practices are not followed? Are there common enough deviations that might be foreseen, and is there a process for addressing them laid out in the policy?
Consistency	Are essential parts of the faculty evaluation process standardized and applied consistently so that when the same kind of activity is evaluated or procedure enacted, faculty can expect similar treatment? If units are allowed to differ, are there disciplinary/field reasons?
Context	Do the policies and practices provide ways to bring relevant contexts into view for the evaluation of faculty work? Does the evaluation invite comparisons that do not fit the circumstances?
Credit	Do faculty evaluation policies recognize mission-critical work (e.g., mentoring, institutional service, DEI)? Do policies provide a way to differentiate between levels of effort when it is important to do so?
Flexibility	Are faculty evaluation policies flexible enough to adapt to the new, different, and changing set of contexts shaping faculty careers and work?
Agency and Representation	Do policies ensure faculty rights for notification of the status of the case, along with clarification as needed? Do policies provide ways for candidates to represent themselves in ways advantageous to their cases? Can faculty expect that they will be evaluated by colleagues who understand the relevant contexts of their work (e.g., appointment type, field, methods, and epistemologies as relevant)?

¹ Reference ACE's report *Equity-Minded Reform of Faculty Evaluation: A Call to Action* and the forthcoming report *Translating Equity-Minded Principles into Faculty Evaluation Reform*.

Table 2: Areas of Faculty Evaluation Policies to Examine for Equity

Areas of Policies	Questions to Ask to Examine the Policy for Equity
Introduction and Purpose of Faculty Evaluation Policies	Do the policies communicate the purposes of the faculty evaluation process, the relationship between faculty evaluation and the mission of the institution, and the principles that guide the faculty evaluation process?
Holistic Assessment of Teaching	Is there a holistic assessment of teaching? Or is there an overreliance on student evaluations? Are advising and mentoring recognized and valued?
The Definition of Scholarship and Scholarly Products	Is a broader definition of scholarship provided? Is there recognition of alternative products and venues for dissemination of scholarship? Can candidates present their work in the medium for which it was created?
Measuring Scholarly Impact	Are there multiple ways candidates can document the impact of their scholarly work? Can candidates document, and evaluators consider, the intended purpose and audiences of scholarship in assessing scholarly quality and impact? Is international work privileged over local/regional impact?
Recognition and Weighting of Institutional Service	Do faculty evaluation policies articulate the value of campus service, define it, and lay out what is considered an appropriate amount of service? Do policies include what it means to meet and/or exceed service criteria relevant to different appointment types and ranks?
Recognition and Weighting of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work	Is there a way for candidates to note and committees to take into consideration work done by faculty that contributes to diversity, equity, and inclusion goals?
Scholarly Collaboration and Credit for Joint Work	Do the guidelines value collaboration or are they silent on the issue? Do the guidelines provide a way for candidates to acknowledge their contributions to co-authored work?
Work-Life Integration	Is there language supporting use of university work-life policies? Is there recognition of different career trajectories?
External Letters	Is the personnel committee informed about potential biases that could emerge in external letters? If external letters are part of the review, are external letter writers chosen for knowledge of candidate research? Are they provided clear guidance on the focus of the review? Are external letter writers informed about how to evaluate faculty who have taken advantage of work-life policies?
Alternative Tracks to Tenure, Promotion, and Longer-Term Contracts	Has the institution considered whether alternative tracks to tenure and promotion would improve equity for those heavily engaged in curricular, administrative, and DEI leadership? Are there opportunities to earn longer-term contracts over time?

