

## Fact Brief

# Performance Management and Promotion Processes at Universities

Profiled Institution	Industry	Faculty Size	Location
A	University	1,300	United States
B	University	1,100	United States
C	University	1,200	United States

### Key Questions

What performance management processes, criteria, and strategies do universities utilise?

What effect has performance management had on academic staff?

What promotion processes, criteria, and strategies do universities utilise?

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### Issue Overview: Developing Individuals and Organisations

Research reveals that academic work loads are increasing and academics experience increasing pressure to “publish or perish.” In addition, a 2002 *Australian Journal of Management* survey of 178 academic and general staff at fifteen universities found that academic staff reported a dramatic increase in job-related stress; one of the most frequent causes of this stress was poor management.<sup>1</sup>

With the added pressures of increasing work loads and research and publishing productivity, university faculty would benefit from a strong management system, which could lessen job-related stress. One method of ameliorating all of the above mentioned sources of stress is to guide faculty towards professional development and improvement.

Performance management systems assist in identifying areas for development and, when linked to promotion processes, can reward those faculty who have “raised the bar” on research productivity.

More than a development tool, performance management, when aligned with broad organisational goals, can assist individuals in understanding these goals and how their actions lead toward organisational achievement. A 2002 Council study also finds that employee understanding of performance standards is one of the major drivers for influencing change in employee behaviour.<sup>2,3</sup>

The following research brief examines how three profiled universities utilise performance management and promotion processes to enhance both their academic staff and the university.

Catalog No.:  
**CLC11K04U6**

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This project was researched and written to fulfill the specific research request of a single member of the Corporate Leadership Council and as a result may not satisfy the information needs of other members. In its short-answer research, the Corporate Leadership Council refrains from endorsing or recommending a particular product, service or program in any respect. Sources are contacted at random within the parameters set by the requesting member, and the resulting sample is rarely of statistically significant size. That said, it is the goal of the Corporate Leadership Council to provide a balanced review of the study topic within the parameters of this project. The Corporate Leadership Council encourages members who have additional questions about this topic to assign short-answer research projects of their own design.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

*Detailed in the enclosed brief are the performance management and promotion processes at three U.S. universities. The brief outlines the performance review processes, administration, and criteria, performance management's organisational impact, and promotion processes at these universities.*

ADMINISTRATION AND PROCESSES	ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS	PROMOTION PROCESSES
<p data-bbox="134 472 584 499"><b>STRUCTURE AND CRITERIA</b></p> <p data-bbox="134 520 584 714"><b>Centralised Versus Decentralised Management</b>—Two profiled universities operate a decentralised performance management system, citing the varying roles of faculty as the driving force. One university manages the process centrally while allowing departmental input on competencies.</p> <p data-bbox="134 735 584 840"><b>Performance Criteria</b>—All profiled universities evaluate faculty against criteria in three major areas: research, service, and teaching.</p> <p data-bbox="134 861 584 888"><b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW</b></p> <p data-bbox="134 909 584 1035"><b>Process</b>—None of the profiled universities utilises online performance management systems. The general practice is to have faculty meet with department heads to discuss performance and development.</p> <p data-bbox="134 1056 584 1161"><b>Process Accountability</b>—Profiled universities do not have strong repercussions in place to incent department heads to complete reviews.</p> <p data-bbox="134 1182 584 1308">At University C, department budgets are based on research and teaching productivity, so it behoves deans to regulate the development and performance of faculty to receive more budget support.</p>	<p data-bbox="584 472 1034 499"><b>UNIVERSITY GOAL ALIGNMENT</b></p> <p data-bbox="584 520 1034 714"><b>Cascading Organisational Goals</b>—University A's organisational goal is to increase research productivity. This goal then translates into departmental goals to increase patents, research, <i>etc.</i> Performance evaluations for faculty members identify development areas that will assist in achieving these goals.</p> <p data-bbox="584 735 1034 934"><b>Faculty Development</b>—Profiled universities encourage faculty development by offering training courses on core competencies. University A also places poorly performing faculty on remediation, which could end in termination if faculty fail to improve. Interestingly, this process is partially governed by faculty's peers.</p> <p data-bbox="584 955 1034 982"><b>UNCLEAR EXPECTATIONS</b></p> <p data-bbox="584 1003 1034 1203"><b>Clarifying Review Criteria</b>—Faculty complaints about performance management at profiled universities developed from a lack of understanding of performance expectations. University C incorporated faculty input into the criteria development to clarify expectations.</p>	<p data-bbox="1034 472 1482 499"><b>OVERVIEW OF PROCESSES</b></p> <p data-bbox="1034 520 1482 693"><b>Promotion Criteria</b>—All universities evaluate faculty in research, service, and teaching for promotion. Supporting evidence for these areas includes the following:</p> <ul data-bbox="1034 619 1482 693" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Published works</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of faculty</li> <li>▪ Teaching awards or prizes</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1034 714 1482 741"><b>PROMOTION PROCESS VARIANTS</b></p> <p data-bbox="1034 762 1482 867"><b>Administrative Faculty</b>—Profiled universities utilise various policies regarding the promotion of academic administrators, as described below:</p> <ul data-bbox="1034 867 1482 1108" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>University A</b>—Administrators' evaluations focus on the area of service</li> <li>▪ <b>University B</b>—Administrators have no academic profile, and do not receive promotions</li> <li>▪ <b>University C</b>—Supervisors, such as deans or the Vice Provost, develop performance guidelines for their academic administrators</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="1034 1129 1482 1276"><b>Promotion Appeals</b>—University A's appeals process involves a Faculty Senate Grievance Committee, a group of faculty's peers who act as one reviewing level in the appeals process before it advances to the Provost.</p>
<p data-bbox="134 1323 584 1350"><b>MERIT INCREASES</b></p> <p data-bbox="134 1371 584 1476"><b>Directly Linked</b>—Interviewed individuals state that merit increases and performance are closely aligned, as performance reviews are often the basis for merit bonuses.</p>	<p data-bbox="584 1224 1034 1251"><b>FACULTY RECRUITING AND RETENTION</b></p> <p data-bbox="584 1272 1034 1434"><b>No Direct Link to Recruiting or Retention</b>—Interviewed individuals state that performance management is not used as a recruiting tool, and could in fact deter academic candidates who dislike a strong "managerial" environment.</p> <p data-bbox="584 1455 1034 1581">Regarding faculty retention, individual development that results from performance reviews can increase the probability of earning tenure, which could serve as an indirect retention tool.</p> <p data-bbox="584 1602 1034 1644"><b>DEVELOPING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ADVOCATES</b></p> <p data-bbox="584 1665 1034 1843"><b>Department Head Training</b>—None of the profiled universities have programmes to develop internal performance management champions. However, University C offers department heads frequent training that covers advising and reporting processes for performance reviews.</p>	<p data-bbox="1034 1302 1482 1329"><b>ALIGNING THE PROMOTION PROCESS</b></p> <p data-bbox="1034 1350 1482 1476"><b>Performance Management</b>—Performance reviews offer documented evidence of productivity and previous activity. These reviews are often used during promotion decisions.</p> <p data-bbox="1034 1497 1482 1623"><b>University Goals</b>—At University C, the University goal is to increase its research reputation. As such, performance reviews focus mainly on research productivity, and research is the main criteria for promotions.</p>

<b>Administration and Processes</b>	<b>Organisational Implications</b>	<b>Promotion Processes</b>
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## Performance Management Structure

The typical university structure, with various colleges and campuses, lends itself to decentralised management of faculty development programmes.

University B and University C have devolved the management and administration of performance management to the college level. However, University A operates a centrally managed performance management system. The following section details the performance management practices at each profiled university.

### Programme Management: Flexibility of Criteria

**KEY FINDING:  
Necessity of Decentralised Management**

**Variety of Faculty Roles—** Universities with multiple colleges, or schools, may find it difficult to create performance standards that are applicable to all faculty. The central HR group at University C realised the impossibility of developing one universal set of performance/productivity guidelines, due to the widely varied nature of faculty roles.

#### Decentralised Management

University B and University C manage their performance management programmes decentrally. According to the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs at University C, this is the most efficient management method because performance management is based upon faculty productivity guidelines, the development of which was also the responsibility of the various colleges.

Below is a description of the development of University C's productivity guidelines and their use in the performance management system:

#### University C: Faculty Productivity Guideline Development

**Situation: Centralised Development Attempt—**Two years ago, the University's central HR department attempted to create universal productivity guidelines for performance management for all faculty.

**Challenge: Preclusions to Universal Guidelines—**The University soon realized the impossibility of developing performance guidelines against which to measure all faculty, because the missions of each department, college, and discipline are too varied.

**Result: Department Specific Guidelines—**The University's solution was to decentralise the development of the guidelines and allow each department to create their own productivity guidelines for faculty. The department heads develop the Faculty Professional Responsibility (FPR) guides, the department dean approves the FPRs, and they are then the basis for that department's performance management.

#### Centralised Management

The HR Director of Policy and Employment at University A explains that the university manages performance management centrally. University system level policy (applicable to all nine university campuses) dictates the review criteria, frequency, and submission dates. However, the performance management policy also allows for some department-level input as to the pertinent competencies included in reviews as each department or school has different expectations for their faculty. Below is an excerpt from University A's performance management policy:

#### University A: Performance Management Policy

*"Faculty will be judged with respect to the proposed rank and duties considering their record of performance in teaching, research and other creative achievement, and service...Evaluations must be built around an analysis of the assigned tasks as well as any responsibilities initiated by the faculty member during the review period...While the evaluation of faculty will be based on criteria established by this policy statement, different departments and schools may have different expectations with varying definitions and emphases for teaching, research and other creative activity, and service..."*

Administration and Processes	Organisational Implications	Promotion Processes
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## Performance Management Administration

The criteria used to evaluate faculty at profiled universities fall into three categories of teaching, research, and service. The following section details the performance expectations for faculty in these areas.

### Performance Review Criteria

University A, University B, and University C all evaluate faculty based on teaching, research, and service criteria. For example, University C, in its efforts to increase its reputation as a research-centred institution, bases its review criteria heavily within research productivity and research as it relates to teaching and service. A description of University C's evaluation criteria follows:

#### Evaluation Criteria at University C

**Research and Other Creative Activities**—Faculty are expected to contribute to the intellectual life of their department, discipline, and profession. Performance expectations include the following:

- Communicate basic and/or applied scholarship to their peers
- Demonstrate professional competence in their field of specialisation
- Engage in activities that stimulate their own productive and insightful thinking, such as active participation in academic societies
- Keep abreast of relevant literature in their field and contribute to it
- Make substantial contributions to the advancement of knowledge in their field

**Service**—Faculty are expected to demonstrate a willingness to assist in various types of internal and external service opportunities. Examples of such services to their profession include the following:

External	Internal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviewing research and article submissions to professional journals</li> <li>• Reviewing research and grant proposals for federal agencies</li> <li>• Serving as editors of professional journals</li> <li>• Serving on committees of national or international academic/professional societies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advising students or serving as a faculty advisor to student organizations</li> <li>• Chairing or serving on departmental or University committees</li> <li>• Supervising various department activities</li> <li>• Writing letters of recommendation for students</li> </ul>

**Teaching**—All academic disciplines involve classroom and research-based teaching. At a research-focused institution faculty typically teach fewer courses per semester than in institutions with different missions or objectives.

The criteria for developing classroom-based course loads at University C is left to the departments. According to University C's policy handbook, "Such variation in classroom-based teaching and in criteria for setting such teaching loads is crucial if a research university is to remain competitive..."

**KEY FINDING:  
Performance Criteria**

**Widely Used Performance Criteria**—All profiled universities evaluate faculty in three areas: research, teaching, and service.

**Focus on Research**—Within these three areas of performance, some universities place a more weighted focus on faculty research productivity.

**Effect on Performance Expectations**—For example, University C requires research-focused faculty to teach fewer courses during the semester.

<b>Administration and Processes</b>	<b>Organisational Implications</b>	<b>Promotion Processes</b>
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## Performance Management Processes

The general performance management process at all profiled universities involves department heads or chairs reviewing faculty and department deans signing off on the review. However at each organisation there are variations within the process, as detailed below.

### Performance Review Processes

The following section outlines the actual performance management processes at each profiled university.

As previously mentioned, University A manages the performance management process centrally with system-wide policies. Below is the performance management process at University A:

**Table 1: University A's Performance Management Process**

<b>Utilization of Online Reviews</b>	No—As there is no standard evaluation form for all departments, the university utilises paper forms. These paper forms are rarely purged, and some are maintained on microfilm.
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↓ In April, the HR Director of Policy and Employment sends the department heads a list of faculty to evaluate and corresponding labels to track evaluations for HR filing purposes.</li> <li>↓ Upon completing the performance evaluations, department heads schedule meetings with faculty and go over results.</li> <li>↓ Deans review evaluations and may choose to meet with an underperforming faculty member.</li> <li>↓ The dean forwards the review to HR, who then make an electronic notation of receipt, and the process ends.</li> </ul>
<b>Formalised Process Accountability</b>	<p><b>Accountability</b>—HR makes an electronic notation when deans submit completed faculty evaluations. They can then run a programme to determine which reviews are missing. Reminders are sent to those who have failed to submit the reviews.</p> <p>While there are no repercussions for those who neglect their performance management duties, promotion and tenure processes require the review of faculty members' past evaluations. The absence of past reviews would be highly evident and reflect poorly on the dean.</p> <p><b>Communication</b>—These policies are located online in the faculty handbook</p>
<b>Managing Poor Performance</b>	<p><b>Peer Review</b>—If faculty receive two unsatisfactory reviews in two years, or three in a five year period, further review by all tenured faculty at the same level and above is required. These faculty members review their peer's performance and determine if it has been unsatisfactory.</p> <p><b>Remediation Policy</b>—This review can result in the faculty member being put on remediation, a two-year period that involves working with a committee of tenured faculty to resolve performance issues.</p>

#### Frequent "Check-Ins"

To encourage continued feedback, some organisations encourage performance review "check-ins" as frequently as possible. These regular check-in meetings serve a dual purpose:<sup>4</sup>

- To ensure that an employee's objectives align with the organization's strategy
- To determine an employee's progress toward achieving those goals

#### KEY FINDING: No On-line Performance Reviews

**In-person and Paper-based Reviews**—None of the profiled universities utilises online performance management systems. The general practice is to have faculty meet with department heads to discuss performance and development.

**Background for Absence of Technology**—Interviewed individuals cite the following reasons for not using on-line systems:

- Departments do not use a standard evaluation form, which impedes an easy transition to an online system
- Privacy issues concerning on-line storage of sensitive information encourage the use of paper-based reviews

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## Performance Management Processes

The performance review process at University B is less structured than that of University A in that there is no organisation-wide method of ensuring accountability for the completion of the reviews; department heads are not required to demonstrate that they have completed the reviews.

### Performance Review Processes (continued)

The following section outlines the performance management processes at University B:

**Table 2: University B's Performance Management Process**

<b>Utilization of Online Reviews</b>	No—The performance review process is completed on hard copies which are stored in faculty's personnel file at the department level.
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↓ Annually, every faculty member has a performance review discussion with the department head.</li> <li>↓ The department head writes a summary of the review session.</li> <li>↓ Faculty members receive a copy of the review and must sign it to indicate that they have seen it.</li> <li>↓ The review is a departmental document, and goes no further within the university. The reviews are kept in faculty's personnel files.</li> </ul>
<b>Formalised Process Accountability</b>	<p><b>Accountability</b>—The responsibility for scheduling and completing performance reviews lies with the department heads. The University can only assume that they take place; the best way to learn of process failure is to receive complaints from faculty.</p> <p><b>Communication</b>—These policies are located in the online faculty handbook. Deans also communicate the importance of completing reviews through memos to the department heads.</p>

**KEY FINDING:  
 Linking Accountability and Budgets**

**Process Accountability**—Profiled universities do not have strong repercussions in place to incent department heads to complete reviews.

**Productivity Based Budgets**—At University C, departmental budgets are based on the number of courses taught and faculty research productivity.

Any decrease in faculty performance levels would have a direct effect on the department's finances.

The performance management process at University C, while also decentralized, entails more accountability than that of University B. The review process is results focused, as reviews also have actionable consequences on faculty's future goals and departmental roles, as described below:

**Table 3: University C's Performance Management Process**

<b>Utilization of Online Reviews</b>	No—While department heads and faculty may download review forms from the University's Web site, they are submitted in paper form, due to privacy issues.
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>↓ Annually, the department head holds a review session with each faculty member. They review the previous year's research productivity and performance and discuss how the faculty member will use their time in the coming year. Faculty time is divided between the three university missions of teaching, research, and service. The division of time between these three areas varies by discipline and rank.</li> <li>↓ Department head determines the number of classes the faculty member will teach in the coming year, and the faculty's service plan.</li> <li>↓ Department head writes a summary of the faculty plans for the year and sends to the dean.</li> </ul>
<b>Formalised Process Accountability</b>	<p><b>Accountability</b>—Departmental budgets are based on the number of courses taught and departmental research productivity. Therefore it behoves deans to complete the performance review process to ensure that faculty are developing and improving.</p> <p><b>Communication</b>—These policies are located in the online faculty handbook.</p>

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## Performance Management Results

Perhaps the most important step in the performance management process is creating actionable results from the reviews. This allows participants to view a clear link between their performance and their organisational role. This section discusses how universities act on review results and link these reviews to merit increases.

**KEY FINDING:**  
**Linking Merit Pay and Research**

**Focus on Research**—All profiled universities align performance reviews with merit increases for faculty.

At University C, there is a direct link between research productivity and merit increases. Performance reviews give more weight to research, and these reviews determine merit pay.

### Performance-based Merit Compensation

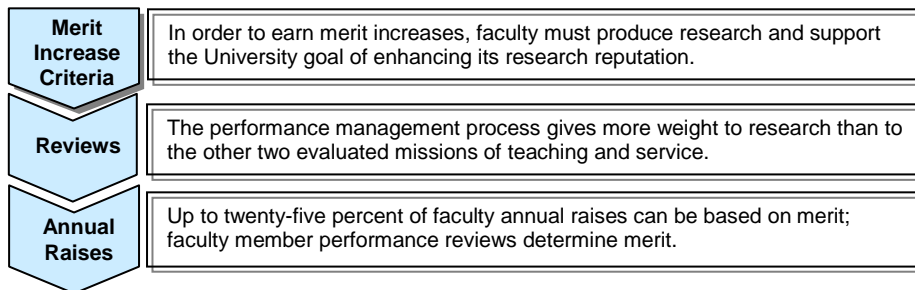
Creating a link between compensation and performance management encourages employees to engage in actions that support business goals, as they are personally rewarded for their actions.<sup>5</sup> All interviewed individuals state that performance reviews are directly aligned with merit increases for faculty.

The HR Director of Policy and Employment at University A explains that while there is no set formula to link performance with compensation at the institution, merit increases are dependent upon satisfactory performance, which reviews determine.

**Integrated Nature of Performance and Merit Pay**—At University C, the organisational focus on research affects the merit increase policy. Faculty must be research productive in order to earn a merit increase; the performance review examines research activity.

Performance reviews for research productive faculty at University C will indicate that the faculty member has a strong performance record (assuming they perform at satisfactory levels in the teaching and service missions). This review will then lead to the faculty member earning a merit increase. Details of this policy are below:

**Figure 1: Aligning Faculty Performance to Merit Pay**



### Acting on Review Results

Although all profiled universities tie performance management to merit increases, University C's review process has the most actionable consequences for faculty. University C's performance reviews determine a faculty member's role within the department for the next year, be that as a teaching- or research-focused contributor. This strategy is detailed below:

#### Determining Faculty's Areas of Focus

**Average Course Loads**—The Associate VP for Academic Affairs at University C explains that each department has established average teaching loads; for example, in one department two courses per semester might be the average.

**Determining Use of Faculty Time**—As University C is a research-focused institution, any faculty whose review determines that their research productivity is not at acceptable levels may be required to increase their course load.

**Result**—In this way, departments are able to maintain course load levels while allowing research—productive faculty more time to increase departmental levels of research production. This strategy helps to ensure that departments receive favourable budgets, as the budgets are based on department productivity.



## Performance Management and University Goal Alignment

The alignment of performance management with broader goals is critical for an organisation's ability to achieve its goals. The first step in creating a link is clear communication; this section discusses how profiled universities utilise performance evaluations to communicate and help achieve university goals.<sup>6</sup>

### Linking Performance and University Strategy

According to the interviewed individuals at profiled universities, their institutions loosely align performance management to broader university goals. This section details these strategic alignments.

### Increasing Research Productivity through University Goal Alignment

University A and University C have broad university goals to increase their institutions' reputations as centres for research by increasing faculty productivity.

University A's current strategic agenda to increase research and scholarly productivity has numerous goals for the development and growth of the collective faculty. These goals are translated into department-level goals. These goals then become the basis for performance evaluations. This alignment is depicted below:

Figure 2: Goal Alignment at University A



### National Merit Scholarship<sup>7</sup>

**Definition**—The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. High school students enter the program by taking the PSAT/NMSQT test.

**Recognition**—Test takers with the highest scores are named National Merit Scholars. Scholarship finalists can receive up to US\$2500.

### Challenges in Forging Meaningful University Goal Alignment

The Director of Assessment at University B explains that it is difficult to align the performance management process with university strategies because individuals have so little effect on overarching organisational goals. He gives the following example:

**University Strategy**—Increase market share among National Merit Scholars (explained at left) through freshmen seminars

**Effect on Performance Reviews**—Even if a department poorly executed their participation in this strategy, it would have no effect on individual faculty members reviews

## Identifying Faculty Development Needs

A focus on career and professional development can brand the university as an “employer of choice” for top performers; therefore many universities are placing more importance on professional development. Universities are beginning to adopt a more comprehensive and formal staff development scheme.<sup>8,9,10</sup>

### Linking Performance Management and Faculty Development

The driving purpose of the performance management processes at all profiled universities is faculty development, although profiled universities vary in the degree of alignment between faculty development and performance management, as detailed below:

#### Loose Alignment of Performance Review and Faculty Development

At University B performance reviews and development are loosely aligned, although the Director of Assessment states that development is one purpose of the review process. For example, if an individual receives poor evaluations regarding teaching, the department head would ideally determine areas for development and create concrete strategies to improve teaching performance.

#### Clear Performance Review and Development Alignment

University A and University C utilise formal policies to ensure a link between performance management and faculty development and improvement. These policies are detailed below:

#### **KEY FINDING: Peer Involvement in Faculty Development**

**Reviewing Peers**—At University A, poorly performing faculty receive a review from a committee of their peers. This group has the ability to place the faculty member on a development plan for a period of two years.

**Developing Peers**—Faculty members work under the committee’s supervision to develop performance problem areas.

**Terminating Peers**—After two years of working to develop a poor performer, the peer committee has the ability to make a recommendation for termination to the Provost.

#### **University A: Increasing Faculty Peer Development Responsibility**

**Remediation Policy**—Faculty at University A must receive a review from a committee of peers if they have two unsatisfactory reviews in two consecutive years or three unsatisfactory reviews in five years. If this committee upholds the faculty member’s unsatisfactory performance review, the individual begins the remediation process, described below.

**Developing Performance**—While on remediation, faculty must take the following actions:

- Create a personal development plan and submit it to the committee for review
- Work under the committee’s supervision over two years to accomplish improvement goals

**Consequences of Failure**—If after two years the committee finds that the faculty member has failed to make a significant effort towards improvement, the committee will make a recommendation for termination to the Provost.

University C utilises performance reviews to identify skill gaps in newer faculty and develop them accordingly, as explained below:

#### **University C: Developing Newer Faculty Towards Future Goals**

**Promotion, Tenure, and Reappointment (PTR) Guidelines**—For newer faculty, performance reviews are included in the PTR guidelines, which cover basic teaching skills.

**Developing Basic Skills**—Faculty whose teaching performance is not satisfactory and are in need of developmental assistance must attend the University’s Institute for Teaching and Learning. This resource assists faculty in developing the following areas:

- General instruction and teaching methods
- Presentation skills
- Speaking skills

**Result**—By identifying and improving areas of weakness in newer faculty performance, these individuals are able to increase their ability to achieve promotion, tenure, or reappointment in the future.



## Organisational Responses to Performance Management

Council research finds that over three quarters of employees and managers are 'somewhat satisfied' or 'not satisfied' with their organisations' performance management system, particularly with employee development-related components, including providing the basis for career and development planning and promotional decisions. This section will examine the response to performance management systems at profiled universities.<sup>11</sup>

### **KEY FINDING:** **Disgruntled Faculty**

**Common Complaint**—The most frequent complaint of faculty at profiled universities regarding performance management is a lack of understanding of performance expectations.

**Impact of Understanding**—Council research finds that increasing employees' knowledge and understanding of the criteria by which they are evaluated results in a 36 percent improvement in their performance.<sup>13</sup>

**Profiled Strategy**—To ensure understanding of criteria, University C involved faculty in the development of performance criteria.

### **Cultural Challenge: Unclear Performance Expectations**

Research reveals that including managers and employees in the design of performance management systems increases buy-in for the system and results in a system that is more relevant, meaningful and appropriate for the organization.<sup>12</sup>

Interviewed individuals at University A and University B indicate that the main source of faculty resistance to performance reviews is a lack of clear understanding of performance expectations.

**Problem: Imbalanced Understanding of Criteria**—University B surveyed faculty and department heads on various topics, including performance reviews. The statement, "Are merit raise criteria clearly stated at your department?" elicited the following results:

- 72% of Department Heads agreed with the statement
- 27% of faculty agreed with the statement

**Solution: Increasing Faculty Support and Understanding of Criteria**—In their effort to avoid faculty resistance to and gain support for performance management, University C engaged faculty in the development of their departmental Faculty Professional Responsibilities (FPR). This process is detailed below:

#### **University C: Involving Faculty in Performance Criteria Development**

**Finalizing FPR Drafts**—As previously explained, department heads at University C developed drafts for their departments' FPRs. After obtaining deans' support, these drafts are sent to HR for finalization.

**Soliciting Faculty Input**—To incorporate faculty feedback, the Assistant VP for Academic Affairs emailed faculty members drafts of the FPRs to gather their insights and suggestions.

**Result**—Since faculty had a role in the development of their evaluation criteria, these criteria should be clear to all faculty members and the university should meet less resistance to the evaluation process as a result of unclear expectations.

Administration and  
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## Organisational Responses to Performance Management (continued)

Research reveals that effective performance management programmes can increase retention in by improving the performance and commitment of employees.<sup>14</sup> A strong focus on developing the skills of faculty through effective performance management could also serve as a tool to attract and retain a quality workforce in the academic arena, as well. However, none of the profiled universities closely link these functions to performance management at this time.

### Performance Management Not Currently a Recruiting and Retention Tool

As noted, none of the interviewed individuals indicates that their university utilises performance management as a recruiting or retention tool for faculty. Below are explanations for this rationale:

**KEY FINDING:**  
**Faculty Opinion of  
Performance Management**

**Faculty Deterrent**—Interviewed individuals indicate that performance management would serve as a poor recruiting and retention tool for faculty. They further explain that faculty often view this process as being too “managerial.”

**Perception of Performance Management as a “Management” Tool**—The Director of Assessment at University B explains that advertising performance management processes could: “*repel faculty and academics, as they frequently have no desire to be ‘managed’.*”

**Indirect Retention Tool**—While none of the interviewed individuals view a strong correlation between performance management and faculty retentions, the HR Director of Policy and Employment at University A hypothesises that if faculty are aware of their performance and are continually developing and improving, they are more likely to receive tenure or reappointment. Therefore, performance management can have an indirect effect on faculty retention.

For performance management to have even this indirect effect on retention, however, the process must be well executed and championed from higher levels within the university. The following section discusses methods to increase department head support of the process.

### No Development of Internal Performance Management Advocates

At all profiled universities, the execution of performance reviews falls under the responsibilities of department heads, with some supervision by deans. However, none of the interviewed individuals state that their institutions offer any programmes aimed at increasing department head/dean support for performance management.

The Associate VP for Academic Affairs at University C explains that although training programmes do not focus specifically on performance reviews, department heads and associate deans do have frequent training available that incorporates this topic, as discussed below:

**Frequent Department Head Training**—Every year department heads and associate deans have the opportunity to attend any of six management training sessions. Although these sessions are not mandatory, nearly two-thirds of these groups attend any one session.

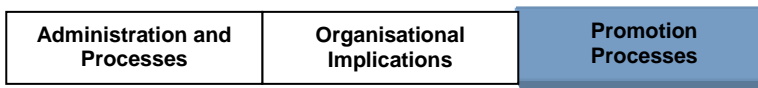
**Training Curriculum**—Performance management topics covered in these training sessions include the following:

- Advising
- Handling difficult faculty members
- Reporting processes

### Training for Program Success<sup>15</sup>

**Performance Management Training**—Council research finds that best practice companies provide company-wide training for all performance management participants.

**Reiterating Importance**—This training further communicates the importance of performance management programs to employees and also assists managers in delivering valuable feedback.



## Overview of University Promotion Processes

Reviews of faculty performance during annual performance management processes have a direct effect on academic faculty promotions. These reviews give insight into individual development and improvement and overall activity and organisational contributions.

Similar to the performance management process, all profiled universities utilise categories of research, service, and teaching to evaluate faculty for promotions. These performance areas highlight regular faculty responsibilities and reward those who demonstrate exceptional strength in any one area. Evidence to support faculty excellence includes lists of published works, service on University or faculty committees, and acting as an advisor to students. University B also includes outreach as an evaluation category for faculty promotions; this category examines faculty's ability to link their academic interests with the needs of their surrounding community.

This following table details the promotion processes at profiled universities.

**Table 4: Promotion Processes at Profiled Universities**

	University A	University B	University C
<b>Promotion Frequency</b>	Annual	Annual	Annual
<b>Promotion Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research—heavy emphasis</li> <li>▪ Service</li> <li>▪ Teaching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research</li> <li>▪ Service</li> <li>▪ Teaching</li> <li>▪ Outreach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Research—heavy emphasis</li> <li>▪ Service</li> <li>▪ Teaching</li> </ul>
<b>Do you utilise automatic promotions to any level?</b>	No—All promotions are earned, not based on length of service	No	No
<b>What are examples of the type of objective evidence required to support criteria?</b>	<p><b>Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ List of published books, articles, chapters, etc.</li> <li>▪ Original creative works, such as plays or poetry</li> </ul> <p><b>Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Journals edited</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of students and faculty</li> <li>▪ Student organizations advised</li> <li>▪ University service: department, college, Faculty Senate</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contributions to textbooks</li> <li>▪ Student evaluations</li> <li>▪ Teaching history</li> <li>▪ Teaching awards or prizes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research/Creative Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documentation of publications or exhibitions</li> <li>▪ Scholarly publications</li> </ul> <p><b>Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assisting in the implementation of new academic programmes</li> <li>▪ Participating in departmental, college, or University governance/committee work</li> <li>▪ Recruitment of faculty</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Curricula design</li> <li>▪ Pedagogical publications</li> <li>▪ Student and peer evaluations</li> <li>▪ Teaching awards</li> </ul> <p><b>Outreach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Direct application of knowledge to human need and societal problem</li> <li>▪ Link to human need and societal problem</li> <li>▪ Utilization of professional and academic expertise</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Laboratory or museum work</li> <li>▪ Lectures, or papers presented at professional meetings</li> <li>▪ Membership and activity in professional societies</li> <li>▪ Publications</li> </ul> <p><b>Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Willingness and ability to assist in the various types of service a University renders, in the answering of inquiries, the giving of advice, [and] the conduct of surveys...”</li> </ul> <p><b>Teaching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to excite interest and evoke response in students</li> <li>▪ Encourage the faculty in criticism</li> <li>▪ Student advising</li> <li>▪ Student educational assistance beyond he classroom</li> </ul>
<b>How does the promotion process fit with the university profile?</b>	There are no university promotion goals or targets; all promotions are based on individual cases	There are no university goals or targets; promotions are based on departmental criteria and faculty performance	There are no university goals or targets; promotions are based on merit
<b>Are systems merit-based, or conditional on budgetary circumstances?</b>	All promotions are merit-based	All promotions are merit-based; there are no limitations due to budget constraints	Merit-based; each department allocates a portion of their budget for merit increases



## Aligning Promotions and Performance Management

Factors involved in promotion decisions typically include performance records, length of service, and supervisor recommendations.<sup>16</sup> Reviews completed during performance management offer insights into an individual's performance in their current role and their readiness for promotion. This section examines how profiled universities synchronise performance management and promotion processes.

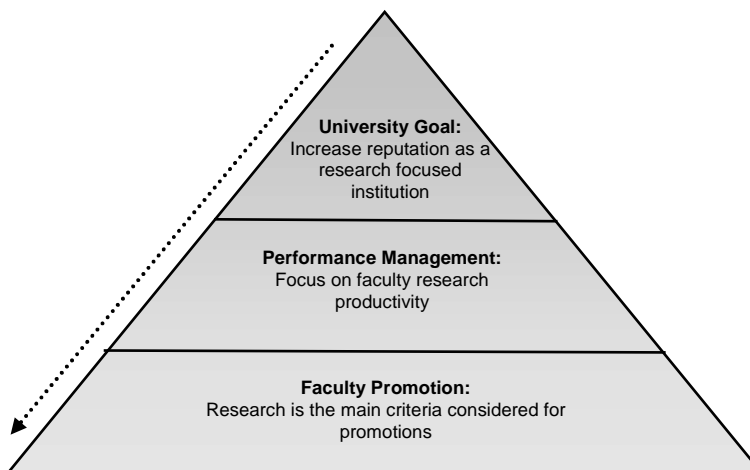
### Promoting Faculty for Performance Excellence

As promotions are so dependent upon faculty performance in the three core areas of research, teaching, and service, performance management is closely aligned to the promotion process. All interviewed individuals state that their universities link performance evaluations to faculty promotions.

**Supporting Documentation**—The HR Director of Policy and Employment at University A explains that a faculty member's previous performance reviews are simply included in the supporting documentation for promotions, in addition to the previously listed accepted evidence to support promotions.

**Aligning Promotion with University Goals**—According to the Associate VP for Academic Affairs at University C, faculty promotions are aligned both with performance management and university strategic goals. This cascading goal alignment, depicted below, is similar to University A's strategy for linking performance management to University goals, as detailed on page nine.

Figure 3: Promotion Alignment at University C



Administration and Processes	Organisational Implications	Promotion Processes
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## Promotion Process Variants

The promotion processes and criteria on the previous page specifically apply to the daily activities of academic and research focused faculty. However, these criteria may not apply to faculty who have a more administrative role within a university. Also, faculty may not agree with evaluations of their performance in these areas, and wish to contest their reviews. This section examines how profiled universities handle variants in the promotion process, such as administrative faculty reviews and promotions and promotion appeals.

### Review and Promotion Processes for Administrative Faculty

The faculty review and promotion criteria at all profiled universities are research, teaching, and service. Evaluations of academic administrators, however, can not fairly include these criteria, as their role within the university precludes them from teaching courses or producing research. Below are profiled universities' tactics for fairly evaluating these academics:

**No Promotions During Administrative Service**—The Director of Assessment at University B explains that his university does not promote for academic administration, as faculty do not have an active scholarly profile during their time as an administrator.

**Role-specific Performance Guidelines**—The Associate VP for Academic Affairs at University C states that most academic administrators are tenured faculty members. As such, their supervisors—usually a dean or the provost/vice provost—develop individualised performance guidelines on which the administrators' performance reviews are based.

Since University C is an academic and research focused institution, it is impossible for an academic advisor to reach Associate Professor or Professor through administrative duties.

**Tailored Utilisation of Regular Criteria**—The HR Director of Policy and Employment at University A explains that academic administrators' evaluations follow the same three areas of criteria: research, service, and teaching. Acting as an academic advisor at the university constitutes service, and evaluations account for this service; an example of this policy is at left.

Although University A rarely has Associate Professors serving as academic administrators, the HR Director of Policy and Employment notes that it would be possible for an Associate Professor to receive a promotion to Professor, if they demonstrate excellence in two of the three promotion areas.

**KEY FINDING:**  
**Defining Promotion Criteria  
for Administrative Faculty**

**Acknowledging Service**—  
University A's faculty handbook states the following in regard to "non-traditional" faculty roles:

*"Contributions to the welfare and mission of the University such as leadership, collegiality, and mentoring may be easily substantiated, but not easily categorized within the existing framework of criteria; the value of these contributions can be significant and should be both documented and considered."*

Administration and Processes	Organisational Implications	Promotion Processes
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## Promotion Process Variants (continued)

If faculty fail to receive a promotion that they feel they earned and deserve, universities allow for an appeals process to re-evaluate faculty accomplishments, contributions, and performance. This section details the appeals process at profiled universities.

### Promotion Appeals Processes

In order to ensure a fair promotion process for faculty, the appeals process allows those who perceive their promotion/appointment decisions to be unwarranted or unjust an opportunity to rectify aberrations in the promotion process. All profiled universities include appeals processes in their faculty policies which outline the procedures faculty must follow to submit an appeal.

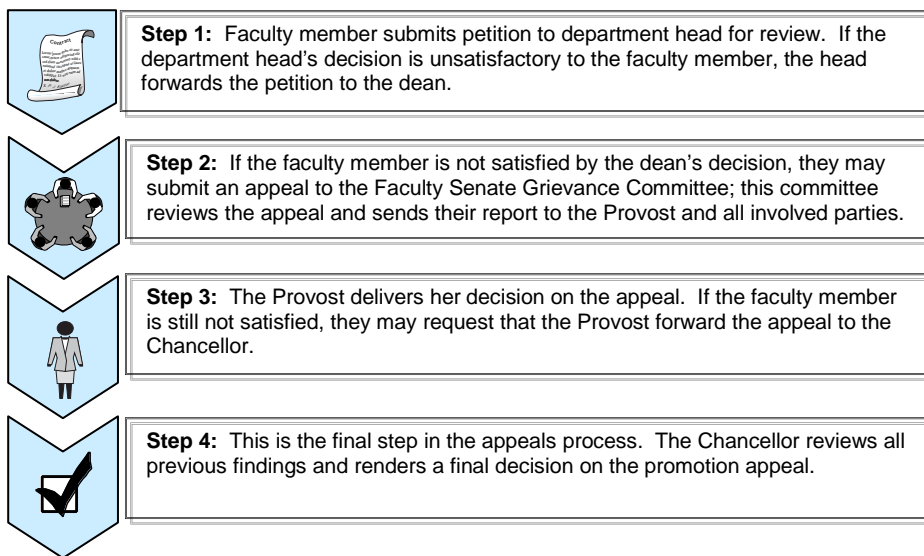
**KEY FINDING:**  
**Grievance Committees**

**Committee Duties**—The Faculty Grievance Committee at University A has the following authorities and duties:

- To hear complaints of faculty members regarding salary, promotion, tenure, and unfair treatment
- To decide if a faculty petition warrants investigation, and to conduct such investigations
- To report findings and recommendations to involved parties and all levels of administration that have participated in the case
- To keep confidential all grievances and findings of the committee

**Involving Faculty Peers**—At University A, faculty members appeal promotion decisions by submitting a written petition of appeal to their department head/chair; if the department head's decision is unsatisfactory to faculty, petitions go to the dean for review. If the appeal remains unresolved at this level, it continues to the Faculty Grievance Committee. Below are details of this process:

**Figure 4: University A's Appeals Process**



**Faculty Senate Grievance Committee Members**—This committee of faculty peers consists of nine tenured faculty members, chosen by the faculty nominating/selection committee. Chairs and heads of departments, deans, and directors are ineligible to sit on the grievance committee.

## THE RESEARCH PROCESS IN BRIEF

### Research Methodology

The Corporate Leadership Council conducted a comprehensive search of published materials regarding the performance management and promotion processes, drawn from previous Corporate Executive Board research, trade press journals, other research organizations and the Internet. Council staff then interviewed human resources professionals at three US Universities. This report represents the findings from these secondary and primary sources.

### Project Aims

1. To what extent is performance management managed centrally versus devolved to faculties or departments? Please provide a brief description of the administration of the university's management process.
  - A) How has accountability for performance management been formalised at the university?
  - B) How does the organisation communicate this accountability?
2. Is the performance management process aligned with broader university goal setting and or strategic planning?
3. Do universities use performance management to identify and provide development needs for academics?
4. Do universities link performance management systems and remuneration for academic staff?
5. Do universities face cultural challenges to the performance management process? What steps does the university take to mitigate this resistance?
6. Do universities use the performance management system to help attract and retain academics?
7. How do universities develop and support academic supervisors so that they become local champions for effective performance management?
8. Please describe the promotion process at the university.
9. Do universities link the performance management system to academic promotions?
10. Is the promotion process aligned with broader university strategic goals?

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**WAS THIS BRIEF USEFUL?**

*The Corporate Leadership Council welcomes feedback as a vital part of our continuous improvement. If you would like to comment on the quality of this brief—in general, or specifically regarding usefulness—please e-mail CLCshortanswer@executiveboard.com.*

**Professional Services Note**

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- <sup>1</sup> Anthony Winefield, "Unemployment, Underemployment, Occupational Stress and Psychological Well-Being," *Australian Journal of Management* (1 December 2002). (Obtained through Factiva).
- <sup>2</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Closing the Performance Gap*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (2002).
- <sup>3</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Building the High-Performance Workforce*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (Fall 2002).
- <sup>4</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Performance Review Frequency and Format*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (November 2001).
- <sup>5</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *High Performance Reward Cultures*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (June 1999).
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- <sup>9</sup> Angela Forest, "University Officials Seek to Encourage Employees to Take Courses," *The Herald-Sun* (22 April 2002). (Obtained from Lexis-Nexis, a division of Reed Elsevier, Incorporated).
- <sup>10</sup> Author Unknown, "Cranfield University Staff Development," *Cranfield University* (2002). (Obtained through <http://www.cranfield.ac.uk/admin/personnel/staff.htm>). [Accessed January 11, 2003].
- <sup>11</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Closing the Performance Gap*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (Winter 2002).
- <sup>12</sup> Gregory A. Stoskopf, "Taking Performance Management to the Next Level," *Workspan* (February 2002).
- <sup>13</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Building the High-Performance Workforce*.
- <sup>14</sup> Norman Clark and Lisa Johnson, "It Pays to Focus on Employees' Attitudes," *New York Law Journal* (20 May 2002). (Obtained through Lexis-Nexis, a division of Reed Elsevier, Incorporated).
- <sup>15</sup> Corporate Leadership Council, *Supporting Employee Development through Performance Management*, Washington: Corporate Executive Board (November 2002).
- <sup>16</sup> *BNA's Human Resources Library on CD*, [CD-ROM], "Promotion Policies and Practices." Available: The Bureau of National Affairs, Incorporated. [Accessed 29 January 2004].