Merit Review Fairness Survey (N=52)

The Faculty Council sought to survey perceptions of equity and fairness in the UCSF SON merit review process. Questions were asked as to whether a) faculty view discrepancies between their perception of readiness for merit advancement and departmental assessment, b) if there were discrepancies concerning readiness for merit advancement, how concerned faculty are about these gaps, c) whether the merit process is perceived to be fair within departments, d) if the process is perceived as unfair within departments, why it was seen as unfair, e) whether the merit process is viewed as fair across departments, f) if viewed as unfair across departments, why it was viewed as such.

Quantitative Results were as follows:

1. A total of 52 faculty responded to the survey (37% from FHCN, 23% from CHS, 25% from PN, 10% from SBS, and 6% from IHA). 42% are clinical faculty, 46% are tenure-track faculty and 12% are adjunct faculty. As for rank, 27% are assistant professor, 23% are associate professor and 50% are full professor.
2. 73% of faculty surveyed reported that there were not discrepancies between faculty perception of readiness for merit advancement and departmental assessment
3. Of those who felt there were discrepancies, faculty were “somewhat concerned” about this fact. The reasons are covered in the qualitative analysis.
4. Within departments, faculty perceived the merit review process to be fair
5. Across departments, faculty perceived that their merit review process was very fair.
6. Almost ½ of faculty reported not being aware of their right to have their merit advancement re-reviewed by their Department and the Associate Dean for Academic Personnel when there was a disagreement with the outcome

73% of the faculty felt that the merit advancement process was fair and equitable (13% indicated don’t know or unsure). Of the 13% who reported that the process of merit advancement is not equitable (n=7) there were three main themes. These themes involved a) the need for clarity and education concerning the criteria for merit advancement b) increased transparency needed within the review process and c) the need for equitable application of criteria both within and across departments.

EDUCATION:

Faculty reported a) that the APM standards are vague in terms of criteria for merit advancement and need to be made more clear b) that Department Chairs can help by educating faculty on what the specific criteria are for advancement in their series for their merit

TRANSPARENCY AND EQUITABLE APPLICATION OF CRITERIA:

In terms of transparency, faculty reported that the following trends were seen as inequitable: a) some chairs and faculty members were viewed as displaying favoritism towards people with whom they have a good or personable relationship, rather than using objective criteria, b) there was some lack of transparency about the review process whereby a faculty member was denied or given merit, and this decision was made against
the faculty vote or the peer review committee's decision. Faculty felt that in such cases, there should an explanation for this, c) some perceived an uneven application of criteria for merit within departments, and d) a very small number of survey respondents expressed that there may be an uneven application of criteria for merit across departments.

**Recommendations**

1. Clarify what the criteria for merit advancement are in APM (Before merit review)

2. Educate faculty on criteria for advancement across academic series (Before merit review)

3. Educate faculty to advocate for themselves in terms of having their files reviewed for merit advancement if they meet criteria (Before merit review)

4. Educate faculty on their right for re-review if their Department disagrees with the outcome that the faculty thinks they are entitled to (Before and after merit review)

5. When Chairs’ votes differ from faculty votes: a feedback mechanism should be put in place where Chairs explain the reason divergence with the faculty committee decision or vote (During and after merit review)

6. Educate faculty and Chairs on how to evenly apply criteria to each person within Departments (Before merit review).