Requesting Human Resources' certification of departmental forms

The university's approach to appraising employee performance recognizes the diversity of business and operational environments that exist across campus and provides departments the opportunity to develop an approach to appraising performance that fits the department's unique needs. Once a process is certified by Human Resources, it becomes a part of the overall performance management system and is then available to other units that choose to adopt it. Departments may select one of the approaches currently certified or propose a new approach that helps them reach their unique operational goals.

First Step: Requesting HR Certification of departmental forms

To certify a performance appraisal approach, departments should make a written request to Human Resources (HR), Strategic Workforce Solutions. The request should include:

- A high level description of the performance appraisal approach
- A sample of the proposed instrument with instructions
- Expected outcomes for use of the proposed approach that are not addressed by a currently certified approach

The overview should also indicate if a cross-section of the organization was used to either develop or select the proposed approach. It is expected that soliciting employee input in the early stages of development will facilitate the implementation of a new system.

In addition, the request should touch upon the following factors which will be considered by HR in certifying the proposed appraisal approach:

- Describe how the proposed system reflects the department's core mission and objectives;
- Describe how the proposed system encourages two-way communication between supervisors and employees;
- Describe how the proposed system establishes mutually understood and relevant performance measures and timelines;
- Describe how the proposed system includes goal-setting and employee development components;
- Describe how the proposed system provides a system for differentiating between high and low performers and measuring success;
- Describe how the proposed system focuses on an employee’s strengths as well as deficits;
- Describe how the proposed system emphasizes ongoing dialogue; and
- Describe how the proposed system utilizes the three-scale rating consistent with other performance appraisal systems used by the university to allow for consistent comparison of scores across units.

Once a department has submitted the request to certify a departmental appraisal form, HR will review the proposed approach and may schedule a session to discuss the proposal. In general, provided the request satisfies the criteria listed above, HR will certify the performance appraisal form and it will become available to other university departments for use as well.

Second Step: Introduce the system to your employees.

Once the approach has been certified by HR, the department will be required to hold a kickoff event with employees to introduce the concept, ensure they understand what the levels mean, and answer questions. Departments may request that a representative from HR attend the kickoff meeting to serve as facilitator and help answer questions or respond to additional suggestions or concerns.

Third Step: Train supervisors to use the overall approach and form.

A key to the success of any approach will be the degree to which supervisors are trained to use the overall system and the form. Departments should plan to devote time and resources to an effective training component. One training objective should be to ensure supervisors understand what each rating level means and how to explain them to their direct reports. Training should specifically include the use of the appraisal form as a measure to determine merit and other performance awards. The university's three step rating system is adaptable to gradations by local departments and colleges for the purpose of even greater specific performance assessment and also to be used in making merit decisions.

Fourth Step: The system becomes a part of the university's performance management options.

Once the department’s unique approach is certified by HR, it becomes a part of the overall performance management system. It will be added to the options available for other departments that choose to adopt it.