Report of the Boulder Faculty Assembly Administrator Appraisal Committee Concerning David Ikenberry, Dean of the Leeds School of Business Spring, 2016 Administrator Appraisal Program

The Administrator Appraisal Program (AAP) of the Boulder Faculty Assembly (BFA) seeks to provide substantive feedback about administrators based on a high rate of response reflecting a representative survey of the faculty. Faculty members have the opportunity to provide AAP feedback to the review/reappointment process when the president, chancellor, provost, or the dean of their school or college is undergoing the third- or fifth-year review.

This was the fifth-year review of David Ikenberry, Dean of the Leeds School of Business.

Methods of Review

The Office of Planning Budget and Analysis (PBA), under the direction of the AAP committee, administers an online questionnaire, including the option for open-ended responses, to the faculty under the administrator and to faculty nominated by the administrator. Details about the survey are given in Appendix A.

All faculty rostered in the Business School designated as eligible by the BFA were sent an e-mail requesting that they complete the online administrator appraisal questionnaire. These raters are call the "General Population" or "Population" herein. In keeping with past practices, the AAP Committee requested the Dean to nominate as raters people he judged especially likely to be knowledgeable about his role. These will be referred to as the Administrator--nominated (AN) raters.

Dean Ikenberry nominated 14 faculty of whom 10 (71%) responded to the survey. One (10%) described themselves as "somewhat familiar" and the rest as "very familiar" with the Dean.

There were 85 invitations sent to the Population with 68 respondents (80%). Of these, Seven (10%) said that they were "not at all familiar" with the Dean; neither item ratings nor comments were gathered on these faculty. Thirty-one (46% of the general population and 51% of the general population who provided ratings) regarded themselves as "somewhat familiar" with the rest rating their knowledge as "very familiar."

The AAP Committee and BFA have agreed, on the advice of faculty who specialize in survey methods, that a 60% return rate is needed for a representative statistical study. This survey meets this requirement.

David Ikenberry

Item	Means: Pop	AN	Pop	AN
1. Actively promotes Business School initiatives	4.3	4.7	🟦	🟦
3. Acts constructively on student concerns	3.7	4.2	🟦	🟦
21. Acknlgs & enforcs polcs/regs rel to univ compl	3.4	4.4*	⬜	🟦
11. Positions School as leader among AAU peers	3.5	4.2	⬛	🟦
17. Rewards high quality rsrch/schlrshp/crtve wrk	3.6	4.1	🟦	🟦
13. Provides leadrshp/infrastr/resrcs for research	3.5	4.0	🟩	🟦
9. Leads indstry/professn not just follow/keep up	3.3	3.8	🟨	🟦
7. Solid undstndng faclty gov, univ policies/budgt	3.3	3.7*	⬛	🟩
15. Provides leadrshp/infrastr/resrcs for teaching	3.4	3.6	⬛	⬛
4. Acts with integrity	3.2	3.8*	⬛	🟦
10. Makes decisions in a timely manner	3.3	3.6	⬜	⬛
16. Rspnds timely/rspctfl manner to faclty inqurs	3.2	3.6*	⬜	🟦
14. Provides leadrshp/infrastr/resrcs for service	3.4	3.3*	🟩	🟩
19. Rewards high quality teaching	3.0	3.6	🟨	🟦
12. Promotes diversity	3.0	3.5	🟨	⬛
8. Involves faculty in decision making	2.9	3.4	🟨	🟦
20. Supprts recrtment & retentn of undrrep faculty	2.9	3.4	🟨	⬛
18. Rewards high quality service	3.2	3.0	⬜	⬛
2. Acts constructively on faculty concerns	2.8	3.4	🟨	⬛
5. Earns faculty trust	2.6	3.5	🟥	🟩
6. Fosters an equitable merit−based salary system	2.6	3.2	🟥	⬛

Key:
* fewer than 10 raters
Pop: General population of faculty
AN: Administrator nominated faculty

No consensus	⬜
Bimodal (more than one of the above)	⬛
Areas needing improvement (40% or more ratings of 1 or 2)	🟥
Issues to be mindful of (25% to 39% ratings of 1 or 2)	🟨
Assets to protect (50% to 59% ratings of 4 or 5)	🟩
Strengths to build on (60% or more ratings of 4 or 5)	🟦

Item Responses

Figure 1 presents abbreviated item content and item means and categories separately for general population and AN faculty. The items are ordered by the average of the general population and AN means. Asterisks in the "Means" columns denote items with fewer than 10 respondents.

As with past AAP surveys, AN gave significantly higher (i.e., more favorable) ratings than Population faculty. The mean item responses were 3.3 for the Population and 3.7 for the AN faculty. For AN faculty, the item means were all above or equal to the central rating of 3.0. Most items fell into the highest category ("strengths to build on"), but a noticeable number of items were "bimodal." That is, they fell into one of the two higher categories as well as one of the two lower categories. No items fell exclusively into the either of the lowest two categories.

For general population raters, three items were in the highest group and two in next highest group. Of the remaining items that could be placed into a category, six were regarded as "issues to be mindful of" and two as "areas needing improvement." Five items had means below the central point of 3.0.

Despite differences in means, AN and Population faculty agreed very well in the rank order of items (correlation coefficient = .78). Both sets of raters gave the Dean high marks for promoting the Business School and being concerned about students. Other strengths were understanding and enforcing campus and University policies on compliance, positioning the School among the leaders in the AAU, and rewarding research and scholarship.

The lowest ratings all involved faculty matters. The lowest for both AN and Population faculty was "fostering an equitable merit-based salary system." Earning faculty trust, acting constructively on faculty concerns, and rewarding service were also rated very low, particularly among the Population respondents.

Typical of past ratings, there was a large principal component that accounted for 69% of the variance in item ratings. All items loaded large and positive on this component suggesting that the major source of variance in ratings was a general dimension of good versus bad.

Analysis of this dimension by type of rater (AN versus Population) and familiarity (somewhat versus very) revealed no interaction but a marginally significant main effect for type of rater $t(64) = -1.71$, $p = .08$). Consistent with Figure 1, AN raters gave higher ratings (mean = .48) than Population raters (mean = -.08).

Comments

It is crucial to recognize that individuals who comment—as well as the nature of their comments—are self-selected and do not necessarily reflect a consensus of faculty opinion. In relevant areas, the proportion of positive, mixed and negative comments must be judged against the appropriate items where all faculty are given a chance to provide a rating. For example, on several occasions in the past, a majority of faculty gave 4 or 5 ratings on diversity, yet almost all comments were negative.

In analysis of past AAP reports, those who comment tended to give lower ratings than those who did not comment. Comments that are exclusively positive tend to be short, many only a single phrase or sentence. Finally, longer comments and a greater number of issues raised were associated with poorer ratings. Nevertheless, comments can provide important feedback to both an administrator and the general CU community about areas of strength and weakness of the administrator and his/her unit.

Thirty-three faculty, nine AN and 24 General Population, submitted comments about Dean Ikenberry. Twenty-three raters indicated that they were very familiar with Dean Ikenberry, while ten indicated that they were somewhat familiar.

First, we coded each respondent's comment broadly as "overall positive" (N=13) or "overall critical" (N=14). The remaining comments (N=6) were neutral or mixed, either commenting on matters related to Business School operations that may be beyond Dean Ikenberry's control (e.g., *When it comes to resources for hiring, we have recently had some disconnect, although I don't know at what level that was created or even what exactly happened.*); or offering both positive and negative assessments within the same comment (e.g., *The Dean has been leading the Business School to strong improvement during his tenure. My only negative rating was about fostering equitable merit-based salaries.*).

Next, we conducted a more systematic thematic analysis of these comments using NVivo, a computer program for qualitative data. We read through each comment, paying attention to patterns that were consistent across various raters. If at least two people made a statement that could be interpreted in the same way we developed a code to categorize these statements. This resulted in eleven sub-themes to capture all rater comments.

Finally, we collapsed these sub-themes into four meta-level themes to characterize Dean Ikenberry's overall leadership. Every comment is captured by at least one code; some comments are connected to more than one code. Table 1 lists the sub-themes and representative comments for each meta-theme, as well as the total number of individual respondents that contributed to each meta-theme. The number of individual responses that contributed to each meta-theme exceeds the total number of survey respondents because some individuals offered lengthy comments that contributed to more than one meta-theme.

Combined with the initial coding above this demonstrates that the positive comments about Dean Ikenberry converge around one meta-theme (strong leadership), while the negative comments are distributed across three meta-themes (questionable leadership, confusing leadership, and toxic leadership).

In general the comments about Dean Ikenberry are polarized—even within individual respondents (e.g., *Best dean we have had in decades. Just wish he could find a way to respect women.*). Some respondents praise his leadership of the business school, while others are extremely critical, even to the point of saying they will leave if his contract is renewed.

The overall impression is of a strong dean whose ambition, vision, and aggressive leadership are appreciated by some while detested by others. The caveat here is that these comments represent less than thirty percent of the eligible respondents for this assessment, and commenters are not necessarily

representative of the broader sample population or the Business School faculty as a whole. The thematic analysis does provide a more in-depth look at the comments that were submitted and it offers insight regarding the perceptions of key Business School members, but it should also be balanced with the numerical survey results and other measures of assessment for Dean Ikenberry.

Conclusion

Probably, the best description of the faculty's impression of Dean Ikenberry is "mixed." The items, while generally positive in their means, have an unusually high number of bimodal ratings. This indicates important disagreement among respondents over whether the item represents a strength or a weakness. Similarly, comments were split equally between positive (13) and negative (14).

Dean Ikenberry received very high marks for moving the Business School forward and for curricular innovations at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. On the other hand, a significant number of items, especially for the General Population respondents, fell into the "issues to be mindful of" category. Here, comments suggest that micro-management was a concern. The lowest scoring items indicate that the Dean has not been sensitive enough to faculty concerns, particularly with the merit-based salary system.

Of concern is his treatment of women faculty. In his three year AAP review, the committee suggested that "the Dean must seriously reflect on his behavior [toward women] and improve his efforts in this direction." There were no items specifically addressing women faculty in the current survey, but there were five comments, four of which were not forwarded to the Dean, that contained the word "women." All of them were negative. The Dean's relationship with women faculty and staff is a major concern of the AAP committee.

The vote on the committee was also mixed. Three voted for meeting expectations while five voted for not meeting expectations. The committee, however, has strong agreement that Dean Ikenberry has areas of excellence as well as areas of weakness, so that neither type of vote was indicative of all of the Dean's performance. A professional plan might be considered in the major areas of weakness.

Table 1. Summary of comments about David Ikenberry, Dean of the Leeds School of Business.

META-THEME	SUB-THEME	REPRESENTATIVE COMMENT
Powerful Leadership	Strength	"Being a dean is not an easy job. Ikenberry has shown strong leadership and has been moving the Business School in the right direction since his arrival."
	Ambition-Visionary	"In terms of laying out a vision for the Business School, and then building a plan and tracking it, I think he is better than any Dean I've been associated with."
	Innovative	"Dean Ikenberry has worked hard to bring the Business School into the 21st century with a number of notable achievements: Business Minor program; innovative undergraduate curriculum; new MS programs; evening MBA program in South Denver."
Questionable Leadership	Micro-Managing	"Dean Ikenberry micro-manages many decisions that do not warrant his involvement, resulting in delays and missed opportunities."
	Punishment and Fear	"He has created an environment of fear among the faculty. Individuals who have disagreed with him have been shipped out, causing most people to simply tell him what they think he wants to hear, rather than end up in his crosshairs."
	Demanding	"He's accomplished some great things, but it's been on a house of cards through high pressure and unrealistic expectations. Short term and not sustainable. The culture around Business School is very downtrodden and tired."
Confusing Leadership	Unclear	"The dean can send mixed signals about the priorities regarding research and teaching in his hiring and tenure decisions."
	Faculty/Unit Assessment	While UTD ranking and FCQs have some value, they should be used with other metrics to be meaningful.
Toxic Leadership	Sexism-Discrimination	"Dean Ikenberry has behaved in a manner that is, in my opinion, unethical, and in some instances clearly discriminatory. He has shown repeatedly that he does not fully value the capacity of women at Leeds; in some cases he denigrates women. Although he presents himself as an advocate of diversity, he appears incapable of responding positively when challenged with different views, especially when challenged by women."
	Unethical	"Dean Ikenberry is an unethical narcissist. I have never heard a positive word spoken about him."
	Ambition-Selfish	"His decision making more and more reflects resume building efforts to the detriment of the Business School."

Appendix A: Procedures

The administrator appraisal survey (posted at http://www.colorado.edu/pba/aap/index.htm) contained 19 core items addressing the effectiveness of the administrator's performance in key areas, such as administrative/leadership style; support for teaching, research, and service; meeting faculty, staff, and student concerns; and making progress toward diversity goals. Administrators have the option of submitting additional items on topics they consider of importance to their roles and performance. One item was added to the survey (acts constructively on staff concerns). Faculty members responded to the items using a 5-point Likert type scale (5 = Strongly agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly disagree), with the option of answering "Don't know/not applicable." Higher scores indicate a more positive evaluation.

In addition, space was provided for respondents to write open-ended comments about the administrator's performance. The rater had an option to have the open-ended comments transcribed and transmitted to the administrator or to have them available only to the AAP committee. The questionnaire was completed online.

In keeping with past AAP practices, item responses were categorized as:

a) *Strengths to build on*: items rated "agree" or "strongly agree" by a substantial majority of the faculty (60% or higher of respondents gave a rating of 4 or 5 on the scale)
b) *Assets to protect*: items where at least half of the respondents responded "agree" or "strongly agree" (50% to less than 60% of respondents gave a rating of 4 or 5 on the scale)
c) *Issues to be mindful of*: items rated "disagree" or "strongly disagree" by a sizeable minority of respondents (25% to less than 40% of respondents gave a rating of 1 or 2 on the scale)
d) *Areas that need improvement*: items rated "disagree" or "strongly disagree" by a large portion of respondents (40% or more of respondents gave a rating of 1 or 2 on the scale)
e) *Bimodal*: items that meet criteria for two of the above categories. Note that one of these categories must be (a) or (b) and the other (c) or (d). Hence, a bimodal category implies significant disagreement among the group about the administrator's strength or weakness in an area.

The percentages used to construct categories were based on all non-missing values and excluded raters who responded to an item with "Don't know/not applicable."

Members of the AAP committee were Robin Bernstein, Gregory Carey (chair), Bud Coleman, Dan Gustavson, Jennifer Hendricks, Matt Koschmann, Kai Larsen, Chuck Rogers, Dan Schwartz, Lorrie Shepard, and James Williams. Frances Costa was the PBA liaison and Cathy Kerry was the PBA analyst and data manager.