Summary of President Benjamin J. Allen's Five-year Evaluation by University of Northern Iowa Faculty

prepared by the UNI Faculty Presidential Review Committee April 17, 2012

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Introduction

The University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate authorized faculty review of the university president on October 18, 1976. Evaluations of the president in the fifth year of service have been conducted since then as appropriate. President Benjamin J. Allen began his service to the University of Northern Iowa in the Fall of 2006. Due to a number of circumstances, the review that would normally have taken place in year five was delayed until this, President Allen's sixth year. This is a summary of that presidential review.

The University of Northern Iowa is a complex organization with 13,168 students in Fall 2011, including 11,408 undergraduate students and 1,760 graduate students. The full-time voting faculty is approximately 600. The annual operating budget exceeds \$200 million. During the President's tenure, state appropriations to the university have fallen significantly, with a \$23.6 million reduction in general fund appropriations since July 1, 2008.

The Chair of the UNI Faculty Senate organized the Review Committee and the committee then managed the review process. The committee was organized September 31, 2011 and met during the Fall Semester to develop a protocol that included administering a structured questionnaire to the voting faculty and personal interviews of senior administrators who report directly to the President. The committee met with President Allen on Wednesday, January 11, 2012 to discuss the review process. The committee's intent throughout was to systematically collect feedback and suggestions related to President Allen's performance.

Faculty Questionnaire

For the first time in a UNI Presidential Review Process, the faculty input was solicited electronically rather than through paper surveys. The electronic questionnaire was developed based primarily on the questionnaire used in previous reviews of UNI Presidents, particularly the instrument used in 2005. The questionnaire (Appendix A) was shared with President Allen for his input during the development process. Between February 6 and February 21, 2012, the Faculty Questionnaire was publicized electronically and made available to the voting faculty through the MyUNIverse site.

During the 2011-12 academic year, the University of Northern Iowa is undergoing a series of cuts to academic programs. Worth noting is the fact that the Faculty Questionnaire closed one day prior to the first announcement of any proposed cuts; the potential for cuts, however, had been announced prior to the beginning of the data collection period. The following day, February 22, the announcement of the plan to close the Malcolm Price Laboratory School was made public. Because the collection of data ended before any public announcement of academic program cuts, any association between recent decisions and responses on the questionnaire is unknown.

The final number of completed questionnaires was 212, for a return rate of 35%. This return rate is comparable to the return rate of the 2005 review of then President Koob which had a 34% return rate, seeming to suggest that recent events did not significantly impact the response rate. Faculty participation was anonymous, confidential and voluntary. The Center for Social and Behavioral Research staff performed data item tabulations of the faculty responses. Open ended responses were collated and analyzed by the members of the Presidential Review Committee.

Demographic Distributions of the Respondents

Table 1 summarizes the demographics of the respondents. The total percentage includes all responses, while in the subgroup percentage the data were recalculated to exclude the "no response" category. The respondent group was approximately representative of the UNI Faculty by academic rank, tenure status, gender, college affiliation and minority status (Appendix B). Demographics for the UNI faculty were provided by the Office of Institutional Research.

Faculty Survey Results

The questionnaire was organized in terms of 7 major categories: Leadership - Overall, Leadership - Faculty, Leadership - Representing the University, Communication, Management, Other Activities, and Overall Performance. A five point scale was used for the ratings: 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Satisfactory, 4=Good, 5=Excellent. A majority of faculty respondents rated President Allen as fair or poor on 30 of the 43 items in the questionnaire. A majority of the faculty respondents rated President Allen as satisfactory, good or excellent on 9 of 43 items. Leadership representing the University to external constituents and fostering campus diversity were areas where respondents scored President Allen highest. President Allen's Overall Performance was rated as poor or fair by 63%, satisfactory by 10% and good or excellent by 17% of faculty respondents.

Table 2 shows section means for each of the seven categories; category means are based on responses from faculty who rated every item within that category. Table 2 also shows the percentage ratings for the highest and lowest scored items in each section.

Senior Administrator Interview Results

Pairs of Review Committee members interviewed each of the eight senior administrators reporting directly to President Allen during March-April of 2012 (Executive VP & Provost, VP for Administration & Financial Services [current and former interim], VP for Student Affairs,

Special Assistant to the President for Development & Alumni Relations, Special Assistant to the President for Board & Government Relations, Executive Director for University Relations, and the Chief Information Officer). These interviews were guided by a set of five general questions (Appendix C) addressing such topics as sense of direction and vision, communication, management style, decision-making, and external relations. The responses were consistently favorable across the interviews. Strengths mentioned included the President's deliberate, analytical decision-making style, his consultative leadership style, and his consistent articulation of three strategic priorities for the University (e.g., leader in pre-K through 12 education, premier undergraduate education, and contributions to the state of Iowa). Interviewees also consistently cited President Allen's accessibility and positive relationships with many constituent groups, specifically including students, donors, community leaders, members of the state legislature, and the Board of Regents. President Allen's noteworthy achievements include the Jacobson Literacy Center (the largest single donation to UNI in history), establishment of the University Council, and the message that UNI educates Iowans and is in a unique budget situation compared to the other Regent's institutions. Communication on campus was cited as the most challenging area, although President Allen has made efforts through regular email "Special Messages from the President", establishment of the University Council, and Town Hall meetings. Several interviewees mentioned that President Allen respects the organizational hierarchy and delegates as appropriate.

Conclusions

Overall, the faculty questionnaire results indicate that the UNI Faculty has serious reservations about the leadership of President Allen. Interviews with senior administrators indicate a significant divergence from the perceptions of the faculty and indicate that he is highly respected within the cabinet.

The questionnaire and interview results indicated President Allen is considered a personable individual who treats people with respect and has effectively represented the university to external constituents. The administrators interviewed obviously held him in high regard. However, the faculty survey revealed concerns in several areas including communication, lack of a clear vision for the future of the university, and how he has worked with the faculty during challenging budget situations.

Suggestions included recognizing the challenges of communication, and particularly that messages delivered through the hierarchy may not reach all of the intended audience in a timely way or at all. Communication of messages should go beyond the conclusions and decisions and provide some of the rationale that informed the decisions. If there is misinformation regarding critical issues, it is important for the President to provide complete and accurate information to address misperceptions and misunderstandings. Faculty in particular would like to see a broader vision that extends beyond the three strategic priorities (for example, given the challenges facing comprehensive universities, what UNI needs to do to position itself for the future).

Table 1
Demographic Distributions of Respondents

	N	Total (%)	Subgroup (%)		N	Total (%)	Subgroup (%)
Faculty Rank				How Many Presidents W	orked wi	th Profes	sionally
Instructor	14	6.6	7.0	Only President Allen	10	4.7	4.9
Assistant Professor	29	13.7	14.5	1 or 2 Other Presidents	93	43.9	45.8
Associate Professor	79	37.3	39.5	3 or More Other Presidents	100	47.2	49.3
Professor	76	35.8	38.0	No Response	9	4.2	
Other	2	0.9	1.0		•		
No Response	12	5.7					
Tenure Status				Gender			
Tenured	176	83.0	86.3	Female	82	38.7	43.6
Not Tenured	27	12.7	13.2	Male	106	50.0	56.4
Other	1	0.5	0.5	No Response	24	11.3	
No Response	8	3.8		ne neoponeo		11.0	
Primary Employee Class	ification			Protected Class Membe	rship (Ot	her than	Gender)
Faculty	185	87.3	89.8	No	152	71.7	87.9
Administration	19	9.0	9.2	Yes	21	9.9	12.1
Other	2	0.9	1.0	No Response	39	18.4	
No Response	6	2.8					
Primary College Affiliation	n			Extent Direct Profession	nal Conta	ct with P	resident
Business Administration	19	9.0	10.4	None	32	15.1	16.2
Education	41	19.3	22.4	Infrequent/Minimal	143	67.5	72.6
Humanities, Arts & Sciences	84	39.6	45.9	Monthly	21	9.9	10.7
Library	4	1.9	2.2	Weekly	1	0.5	0.5
Social & Behavioral Sciences	33	15.6	18.0	No Response	15	7.1	
Other	2	0.9	1.1				
No Response	29	13.7					
Number of Years at UNI				* Subgroup omits non-res	ponders.		
Less than 5	20	9.4	10.2		-		
5-9 Years	19	9.0	9.7				
10-19 Years	84	39.6	42.9				
20 or More Years	73	34.4	37.2				
No Response	16	7.5					

Table 2. Faculty Questionnaire Item Summary

	1 ab.		acuity	-	nnaire Iter	n Summa	•		
Categories and Items	Mean	N	Poor (%)	Fair (%)	Satis- factory (%)	Good (%)	Excellent (%)	Cannot Assess (%)	No Response (%)
Leadership – Overall					(/ 0)			(,,,	(, 0)
All Items	2.34	153							
Highest Item: Demonstrates	2.90	198	25.9	14.2	12.3	25.0	16.0	5.2	1.4
enthusiasm for the work done at									
the University									
Lowest Item: Effectively handles	2.01	203	44.3	25.0	12.3	9.4	4.7	2.8	1.4
difficult issues									
Leadership – Faculty									
All Items	2.02	178							
Highest Item: Encourages faculty	2.37	203	32.5	24.5	16.5	15.1	7.1	3.3	0.9
excellence									
Lowest Item: Fosters an effective	1.80	200	52.8	18.9	14.6	5.2	2.8	5.2	0.5
faculty governance system									
Leadership – Representing the									
University	2.12	107							
All Items	3.13	107	11.0	7.5	10.4	140	15 1	27.2	2.0
Highest Item: Builds positive	3.22	125	11.8	7.5	10.4	14.2	15.1	37.3	3.8
relationships with potential									
donors Lowest Item: Effectively	2.87	195	23.6	16.0	165	20.3	15.6	4.7	3.3
•	2.87	195	23.0	10.0	16.5	20.3	15.0	4.7	3.3
represents the University to the									
mass media									
Communication									
All Items	2.15	139							
Highest Item: Treats people with	2.89	184	23.6	13.7	16.5	14.6	18.4	9.9	3.3
respect									
Lowest Item: Communicates	1.88	208	57.1	14.6	12.3	9.4	4.7	0.5	1.4
effectively with faculty									
Management									
All Items	1.83	149							
Highest Item: Effectively	1.98	196	40.6	28.3	12.7	6.1	4.7	5.2	2.4
manages University resources									
Lowest Item: Provides	1.74	157	43.9	15.1	9.0	2.8	3.3	23.6	2.4
appropriate oversight to senior									
administrators									
Other Activities									
All Items	2.48	174							
Highest Item: Fosters campus	3.09	191	15.6	14.6	21.2	23.1	15.6	8.5	1.4
diversity with respect to									
personnel									
Lowest Item: Is effectively	1.93	200	49.5	21.2	10.8	6.6	6.1	3.3	2.4
developing a clear sense of									
direction for the University's									
future									
Overall Performance									
Overall rating of the President's	2.14	191	34.9	28.3	10.4	12.3	4.2	1.9	8.0
performance					.1 C 11				

Note. N = Number of faculty responding to the item. Means are based on the following scale: 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = satisfactory, 4 = good, and 5 = excellent. Cannot assess and no response are excluded from item and category mean calculations. Category means are based on faculty who rated every item within that category (i.e., all items).

Faculty Review of President Allen

Dear Colleagues:

We are conducting President Benjamin J. Allen's five-year evaluation. President Allen began his service to the University of Northern Iowa in June 2006. Due to a number of complications, the review, which would normally have been scheduled for last year, is being done this year. As part of the evaluation, we are asking you to complete and submit an electronic questionnaire by February 21, 2012.

On October 18, 1976, the University of Northern Iowa Faculty Senate authorized faculty review of the University president. Evaluations of the president have been conducted since that time as appropriate.

For this review, the Chair of the UNI Faculty Senate has organized a Review Committee to manage the review process. In addition to collecting data using a faculty questionnaire, the committee will interview upper administrators in order to include their impressions and observations.

Please complete the electronic questionnaire by February 21, 2012. Your participation is anonymous, confidential and voluntary. Summary results will be shared with President Allen, the University Faculty Senate, and the Iowa Board of Regents. By May 2012, the summary will be available for interested faculty on the Faculty Senate website.

If you have questions about the Presidential evaluation process, please contact Jeffrey Funderburk by email at Jeffrey.Funderburk@uni.edu.

Thank you for your participation,

Presidential Review Committee:
James Jurgenson, Chair of the Faculty
Jeffrey Funderburk, Chair of the Faculty Senate
Lauren Nelson, Chair of the Graduate Faculty
Maureen Clayton, Chair of the Graduate Council
Gene Lutz, Director of the Center for Social and Behavioral Research

Please consider each item carefully and respond by selecting the most appropriate option shown. If you <u>cannot</u> make an assessment due to limited information, select "X." If you <u>do not want</u> to respond to an item, leave it blank. Space is provided to write comments after each section. Your participation in this assessment is completely voluntary, confidential, and anonymous.

Section A: Leadership

Use the following scale to rate the items below.								
1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Satisfactory 4=Good 5=Excellent	X=C	Cannot A	ssess					
The President	1	2	3	4	5	X		
Overall								
Demonstrates vision for the University								
Initiates ideas for University improvement								
Works continually to improve the quality of the University								
Takes actions that support the University Strategic Plan								
Demonstrates understanding of relevant issues								
Effectively handles difficult issues								
Demonstrates enthusiasm for the work done at the University								
Invites faculty to work with him to improve the University								
Follows through on his word								
Achieves positive results with his leadership style								
Is an effective leader								
Faculty								
Works effectively with faculty								
Fosters an effective faculty governance system								
Encourages faculty excellence								
Respects faculty professional rights, including academic freedom								
Representing the University								
Effectively represents the University to the Board of Regents								
Effectively represents the University to mass media								
Demonstrates community citizenship and local service								
Builds positive relationships with the general public of Iowa								
Builds positive relationships with Iowa's political leaders								
Builds positive relationships with University alumni								
Builds positive relationships with potential donors								

Suggestions for Enhancing Leadership:

Section B: Communication

Use the following scale to rate the items below.										
1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Satisfactory 4=Good 5=Excellent	X=C	Cannot A	Assess							
The President	1	2	3	4	5	X				
Is open to varying viewpoints during decision making processes										
Encourages input on issues during decision making processes										
Listens to input provided during decision making processes										
Provides information that is accurate										
Provides information that is complete										
Provides information that is timely										
Uses appropriate channels to disseminate information										
Provides a rationale for decisions that impact faculty										
Communicates effectively with faculty										
Treats people with respect										

Suggestions for Enhancing Communication:

Section C: Management

Section C. Management										
Use the following scale to rate the items below.										
1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Satisfactory 4=Good 5=Excellent X=Cannot Assess										
Considering the external of		1	2	3	4	5	v			
the President							3	4	3	А
Appropriately distributes financial resources within the University										
Effectively responds to budget problems										
Effectively manages University resources										
Provides appropriate oversight to senior administrators										
Exercises good judgment in selecting administrative leaders										

Suggestions for Enhancing Management:

Section D: Other Activities										
Use the following scale to rate the items below.										
1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Satisfactory 4=Good 5=Excellent X=Cannot Assess										
The President	1	2	3	4	5	X				
Fosters a university-wide environment of mutual respect										
Fosters campus diversity with respect to personnel										
Fosters campus diversity with respect to ideas										
Fosters collegiality across campus										
Is effectively developing a clear sense of direction for the										
University's future										
Suggestions for Enhancing These Activities:										
Section E: Overall Performance										
Use the following scale to rate the item b										
1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Satisfactory 4=Good 5=Excellent	_	annot A.			_					
	1	2	3	4	5	<u>X</u>				
Overall rating of the President's performance										

Section F: Strengths and Weaknesses

What are the major strengths and accomplishments of President Allen's leadership?

What are the major weaknesses and shortcomings of President Allen's leadership?

What suggestions do you have to improve President Allen's effectiveness and performance?

Section G: Issues and Suggestions

What	important issues	do you think President A	llen shou	ld give particu	lar attention to i	n the next 5 years?
What	suggestions do y	ou have for improving th	e Univers	ity that could	be considered by	y President Allen?
		Section H: I	Backgrou	nd Informati	on of Evaluator	•
	To bet	ter understand the repres		ess of the faculate following in		in this assessment,
		<u>, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , </u>		<u> </u>		
1. Yo	ur faculty rank: ☐Instructor	☐ Assistant Professor	□Assoc	ciate Professor	□Professor	□ Other:
2. Ter	nure status:	□Tenured	□Tenu	re track	□Other:	
3. Pri	mary employee c ☐Faculty	lassification: □Administration	□Other	::		
4. Prii	□Library □Social & Be					
5. Nu	mber of years at					
	☐Less than 5	□5-9	□10-19	$\Box 20$	or more	
6. In a		ent Allen, how many uni	versity/co	ollege presiden	ts have you wor	ked with during your professiona
carcer		ent Allen □1-2 other pre	esidents	□3 or more o	ther presidents	
7. Gei	nder:	□Female □Mal	e			
8. Me	mbership in a pro	otected class (other than §	gender):	□No	□Yes	
9. Ext	ent of direct prof □None	essional contact with Pre ☐Infrequent/Minimal		len: □ Monthly	□Weekly	

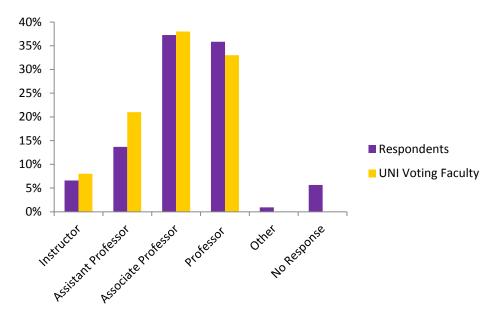


Figure B1. Faculty rank.

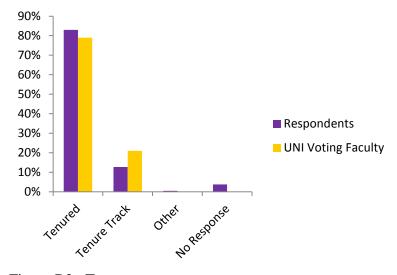


Figure B2. Tenure status.

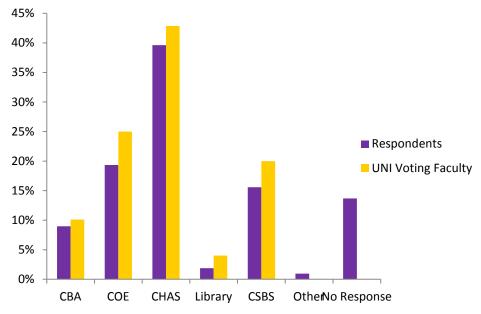


Figure B3. Primary college affiliation.

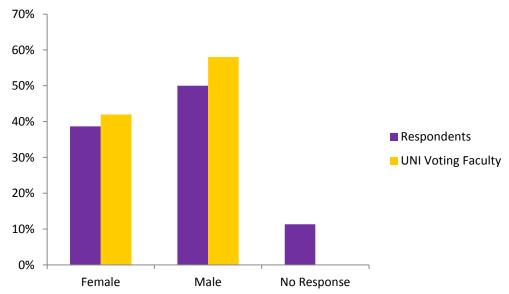


Figure B4. Gender

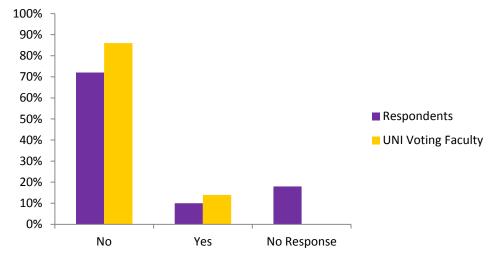


Figure B5. Minority status.

Appendix C: Cabinet Interview Questions.

- 1. Has President Allen helped the university develop a sense of direction and momentum for the future and, if so, how would describe that direction and his approach to realizing it?
- 2. From your perspective, how does President Allen make important decisions?
- 3. From your perspective, how does President Allen communicate important decisions?
- 4. Describe how President Allen represents our interests with constituents.
- 5. How would you characterize President Allen's management style and approach to communications?