


Nevada System of Higher Education
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MEMORANDUM

TO: NSHE Board of Regents
FROM: John Valery White, Chancellor 
DATE: May 11, 2017
RE: Periodic Evaluation of President Marc Johnson

By this memorandum I submit to the Board my comments and recommendations on the periodic evaluation of President Marc Johnson. I concur in the Committee's evaluation that President Johnson has performed exceedingly well over the review period.

This evaluation is done in accord with the extant Board policy developed along the lines of the pilot process used for the first time in President Marc Johnson's 2014 periodic evaluation. Per that policy, I created a committee of four community leaders, including one senior faculty member (the "Evaluation Committee" or the "Committee"). The Committee first reviewed President Johnson's self-evaluation and related documents then interviewed the president about his performance and that of the college. They then conducted interviews with campus personnel, students, and community members interested in the college. The Committee produced a Draft report which they shared with President Johnson. The whole committee met with President Johnson to discuss their findings and observations and to receive his feedback. They then finalized their report which they submitted to me, concluding their service. That report is attached to this memorandum as Appendix A, along with President Johnson's Self Evaluation (Appendix B). I have not included the many attachments to Appendix B for brevity's sake.

Overview of Performance

The Committee found that President Johnson was performing very well. His leadership is moving the University in the right direction. He is a collaborative colleague among presidents, committed to the Board's initiatives, and an effective advocate for his institution. His vision is well articulated and he has made hires that are effective at helping the University fulfill that vision. While the Committee noted areas for improvement – around communication related to the Carnegie R-1 project, related to communication on initiatives responding to the campus' rapid growth, and concerning diversity in the upper levels of the university administration – they viewed President Johnson's performance as strong. He is regarded as an effective leader for the university.

Summary of Evaluation Metrics: Regents Performance Metrics

Fundamental Productivity: This metric relates to academic performance, enrollment, and resource development (including in this case sponsored research). The Committee found President Johnson to be excelling in these areas with graduation rates improving, enrollment up, funded research improving, and fundraising strong.

Institutional well-being and management effectiveness: The Committee found President Johnson was effective at using senior hires to advance the goals of the institution. They reported that he was a good communicator who embraced shared governance and worked to ensure direct communication with students. He is lauded in the report for creating an open and inviting atmosphere on campus.

Institutional Relations and External Communications: The Committee reported that President Johnson was well regarded by his peers and viewed as collaborative and a spokesman for presidents in front of the Board of Regents. President Johnson is reported as strongly embracing the Board of Regents' strategic initiatives, particularly the Carnegie R-1 and shared services projects. Overall the Committee found that President Johnson to be "very effective" and to have done a solid job according to the Regents' metrics.

Summary of Evaluation Metrics: Other Considerations

Performance as a Leader and Spokesman for the University: The Committee characterized President Johnson as an effective leader for the university, having clearly articulated his vision for the University and ensuring that the University focused on excellence and inclusiveness in achieving that vision. His hires are viewed as strong and as significantly contributing to the university's ability to achieve its goals. President Johnson was viewed as an effective communicator, particularly externally. He is viewed as responsible for the now widely accepted vision of Reno as a university town, a framework that has informed a new level of corporation between the university and local governments.

Some would like him to extend greater responsibility to his senior administrators while others would like him to exercise more oversight with those on his team. Though lauded for his thoroughness, some suggested to the Committee that he did not accept others' views sufficiently. And some believe internal communications around the Carnegie R-1 effort could be better. President Johnson found the Committee's insights on communication very helpful and believes now is a good time to convey the status of the University's progress toward R-1, the progress of initiatives related to R-1, and the success of efforts in response to the University's rapid growth.

Faculty Survey Results: Generally, the results of the faculty survey showed confidence in President's performance as president. The Committee highlighted strong results for whether President Johnson should remain as president (69%), whether he was a good fit for UNR (67%), whether he articulated a clear vision for the future of UNR (71%), and whether he promoted student diversity (81%) and faculty diversity (71%) on campus. The Committee highlighted concerns expressed in the survey, including comments that questioned President Johnson's commitment to gender diversity and worries about his support for addressing faculty morale issues. The former concern are expressed in comments about a paucity of women in decision-making positions and worries that the controversial hire of a recruiter in the basketball

program (who had been dismissed at his prior university after a charge of sexual harassment) evidenced the President's lack of sensitivity to women's issues. More broadly, some respondents questioned the President's sensitivity to the interconnectedness of gender issues with those of race and ethnicity. The latter concern relates to the lack of consistent merit pay for faculty and charges from a small number of respondents that President Johnson did not sufficiently push for pay increases. On the morale issue the Committee felt obliged to note the President's limited control over merit and COLA funding and his "tireless[]" efforts on behalf of faculty compensation at the last legislative session.

Successes

The Committee commended President Johnson's efforts in pursuit of Carnegie R-1 Status, separation of UNR School of Medicine from its former operations in Las Vegas with the establishment of the UNLV School of Medicine, completion of the University's Strategic Plan and Master Plan, and improvements around issues of diversity. Concerns expressed around communications on all of these plans (save the medical school transition) were noted by the Committee, establishing a theme around the need for improved internal communications to better involve faculty in these initiatives. As noted earlier, the need for improved gender and racial diversity at the highest levels of the University was also a concern noted by the Committee.

Recommendations

The Committee made four specific recommendations to improve President Johnson's performance. First, greater attention to communications, especially around the Carnegie R-1 project, campus initiatives more generally, and in service of shared governance. Second, create a more effective feedback loop with faculty, deans, and others affected by the campus' rapid growth and other major initiatives undertaken by the campus. Third, establish closer collaboration with the Athletics Department to assist it in meeting the demands of membership in the Mountain West Conference. Fourth, build on recent diversity success to better address gender and racial diversity at the highest levels of university leadership.

Notwithstanding the concerns recorded by the Committee and its recommendations for improvement, the Committee viewed President Johnson as the "right leader at the right time for the University." They found that the overwhelming sentiment revealed to them is that the university is "moving forward in a positive direction." They unanimously approve his performance as president and unanimously recommend that his contract be extended, adding their desire to see his compensation reviewed and better aligned with that of the UNLV president.

Chancellor's Recommendations:

Based on the Faculty Survey results, the Review Committee Report and my own work reviewing President Johnson's self-evaluation and supporting documents and interviewing him, I recommend that his contract be renewed.

In terms of compensation, President Johnson has been exceptionally successful over the review period. He has helped point the University in a positive direction in the wake of the Great Recession, launched a number of capital projects with institutional funds, and presided over historic growth in enrollment, improved student progression and completion, and faculty

expansion. In light of this success, I expect to recommend a pay increase for President Johnson that will be included in the draft contract and term sheet.

**NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION
PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES MANUAL**

**CHAPTER 2
APPOINTMENTS AND EVALUATIONS**

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Section 2. Executive Evaluations

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2. PERIODIC EVALUATION OF NSHE PRESIDENTS

A comprehensive, periodic assessment of the performance of each President in four key areas will be conducted in the next-to-last year of each contract period. The purpose of the periodic evaluation is to provide constructive feedback on measurable performance metrics assessed over a period of time so that Presidents may know how colleagues, Regents, and key leaders in the community view their efforts, including areas of strength as well as areas that may need improvement.

- 1.) The President being evaluated shall prepare a written self-evaluation based upon the four areas of evaluation described in subsection 3. The self-evaluation shall be submitted to the Chancellor and provided to the Evaluation Committee.
- 2.) The Chancellor shall appoint an Evaluation Committee composed of not more than four individuals knowledgeable with the institution, including one senior faculty member. The Chancellor shall appoint one member to serve as Chair of the Committee. The Committee shall conduct the evaluation using the evaluation metrics described in subsection 3. The Committee shall be provided with the prior evaluation(s) of the President, if any, together with any interim annual evaluations.
- 3.) In advance of the evaluation, the Evaluation Committee and the Chancellor shall meet to review and discuss prior evaluations, the details of the current evaluation and any issues that may be raised during the evaluation process. The Chancellor shall provide the Committee with a list of stakeholders to be interviewed. The list shall consist of a wide variety of individuals, internal and external to the institution, who are knowledgeable about the President's work and shall include student leaders. The President shall be permitted to submit a list of potential interviewees. The Chancellor shall select the names to be forwarded from the President's list. The list shall be divided by the Chair among the four committee members. Appropriate accommodations will be made for the Evaluation Committee members to conduct interviews at institutions with multiple campus sites.
- 4.) The evaluation process will include the opportunity for a representative sample of vice presidents, deans, academic and administrative department heads, faculty, students, and community and alumni leaders to be interviewed, and may also include a faculty survey submitted in compliance with the provisions of this section. With the exception of the results of a faculty survey, the Evaluation Committee shall not accept anonymous materials, as part of the evaluation process.

The faculty senate may conduct a survey of faculty regarding the performance of the President. The survey shall address the Performance Metrics for the Periodic Evaluation of the Performance of NSHE Presidents set forth in Subsection 3. Within the scope of the Performance Metrics, the survey may also seek input regarding the effectiveness of the relevant institutional offices or departments. In preparing the survey and the final survey report, the faculty senate shall consult with the institution's general counsel to ensure the questions in the survey and the final survey report do not seek or contain comments about the performance of individuals other than the President. The final survey report must be provided to the Evaluation Committee.

The Chancellor shall establish guidelines in consultation with the faculty senate regarding the process, timeline, and notification schedule in order to obtain constructive feedback from the faculty.

- 5.) Prior to conducting interviews with institution constituents, the Evaluation Committee will meet with the President for the purpose of reviewing strategic plans, goals, objectives, resource allocation policies, major challenges and successes, and the President's own assessment of the interval being appraised. The Committee shall review the President's self-evaluation with the President and allow the President to discuss any relevant facts with the Committee.
- 6.) At the conclusion of this meeting, the Committee members shall disperse to meet with the assigned interviewees. The Committee shall also conduct an open forum for students. During the course of conducting the interviews, the Committee shall meet at the call of the Chair to review the interviews conducted so far and to discuss common thoughts and themes that have emerged from stakeholder input.
- 7.) At the conclusion of the interviews and student forum, the Committee shall meet with the President to discuss what its members have heard, including strengths and weaknesses of the President in the four areas of evaluation described in Subsection 3 and will recommend areas for future focus and improvement. The President shall be provided an opportunity to clarify points the President believes should be made.
- 8.) The Committee shall prepare a written report within two weeks of the Committee's final meeting with the President, with each member contributing a portion of the report as assigned by the Committee Chair. The Chair shall combine the individual member contributions into a final version of the report.
- 9.) The Committee Chair shall meet with the President to review the final evaluation report in order to correct any factual errors but other than such corrections, no changes may be made to the evaluation. The Committee Chair shall then deliver the final evaluation report to the Chancellor for transmittal to the Board.
- 10.) As soon as practical after the submission of the final evaluation report, the Chancellor will present an evaluation of the President, which shall include the final evaluation report, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Regents where the President will participate in an open personnel session to review the findings of the periodic evaluation. The open personnel session will take place on the first day of the meeting of the Board of Regents.

- 11.) At the conclusion of the periodic evaluation process, in an open personnel session on the second day of the meeting, the Board Chair may recommend contract terms and conditions for approval by the Board of Regents.
- 12.) A copy of the Chancellor's evaluation, the Evaluation Committee's report and a copy of the President's self-evaluation will be retained in the President's personnel file. All these documents are public documents.

3. PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR PERIODIC EVALUATION OF NSHE PRESIDENTS

The periodic presidential evaluation shall be conducted with reference to the following criteria.

Part 1. FUNDAMENTAL PRODUCTIVITY

- A. Academic Completion – Student Success. The NSHE is a performance oriented system. Student success as reflected in academic completion is a key Board policy each President embraces. A President shall be evaluated based on:
 1. Graduation rates;
 2. The total number of degrees and certificates awarded; and
 3. Year to year persistence rates.
- B. Enrollment – Student Access. While the NSHE has moved from an input to an output formula, performance growth cannot occur without attracting more students. In addition, Nevada needs more graduates so serving more Nevadans remains important. A President shall be evaluated based on enrollment, including online enrollment.

NSHE has a fundamental commitment to equity and diversity. The President shall separately state institutional progress with respect to critical underserved populations, including minority groups and low income students, indicating efforts to close attainment gaps where they exist among populations.

NSHE community colleges serve a diverse student body and have more part time students. The Chancellor shall develop and utilize as a component of the evaluation a completion metric which reflects the complex mission of a community college.

- C. Grants/Contracts/Special Events/ Research and Development/Gifts. Funding is a challenge all institutions face. A major focus of every President is leading an institution that secures alternative funding sources. The sources include attracting grants, contracts and gifts. The goal is to diversify sources of college revenue through community partnerships.

A President shall separately state funding attainments in each of the following categories, giving the institution's baseline for the applicable evaluation period for each:

1. Grants and contracts;
2. Special events;
3. Research and development; and
4. Gifts.

The Chancellor shall develop data dashboards for reporting annual performance for the metrics in Part 1 that shall be reported to the Board and posted on the NSHE website.

Part 2: INSTITUTIONAL WELL-BEING AND MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

- D. Entrepreneurship. Closely related to the metrics in Part 1 C is encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship throughout the institution. A President shall separately state steps the President and the institution have taken to encourage entrepreneurial activity.
- E. Campus Environment. As President, effectiveness as a leader echoes throughout the institution. A President shall detail any major initiatives or advancements to improve the campus environment under the President's leadership.

Part 3: INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS TO EXTERNAL COMMUNITIES

- F. Collaboration. NSHE consists of multiple institutions, making relations with other member institutions critical. A President shall work closely with other member institutions to further the goals of student success. A President shall separately state collaborative relationships with member institutions and plans for the extension of these partnerships.
- G. Regent Strategic Directions. The Board has adopted Strategic Directions and expects full participation by all institutions in critical initiatives such as 15 to Finish, eLearning, Effectiveness and Efficiency, iNtegrate 2 and similar programs. The Chancellor shall review and evaluate the activity and commitment of a President in achieving implementation of critical Board priorities.
- H. Community Partnerships and Connections. Connecting with communities is crucial. This extends beyond fundraising to ensuring the health of critical relationships for the institution. A President shall describe how critical partnerships and community and business relationships have been maintained and extended.

Part 4: OTHER

If a President believes other factors than those covered herein fundamentally reflect on the President's performance, the President may briefly describe such efforts separately. In preparing a self-evaluation, the President may also bring to the attention of the Evaluation Committee such distinct aspects and missions of the President's respective university, college or institute as the President deems appropriate to fully convey the essential nature of presidential performance and institutional advancement.

In addition to the factors above, the Evaluation Committee may consider such additional indicators of presidential performance as it deems appropriate to present a complete picture of the President's performance including, but not limited to, relationship with the Board of Regents, promoting and sustaining diversity, budgetary matters, academic and general administration, management and planning including planning for deferred maintenance, and if applicable, oversight and management of intercollegiate athletics.