

2007-2008 Group on Faculty Affairs
AAMC Listserve Queries & Responses

Query: Exit Interviews

Question from Robert Klein, University of Kansas (rklein@kumc.edu):

At the University of Kansas, School of Medicine, we have not done exit interviews on a regular basis and our office of Professional Development and Faculty Affairs has never done them. Recently, I received a request from a department that would like to do regular exit interviews. My question is whether or not you do exit interviews? If you do exit interviews, are they done at the departmental, dean's office, or dean's level? Do you have a specific format? Is the format different for different tracks? for basic scientists and clinical faculty?

Are the hospital or practice plan folks involved in the process for clinical faculty?

Responses:

From Lois Geist, UIowa (lois-geist@uiowa.edu):

We (the dean's office) do exit interviews but they are optional for the faculty. We offer departing faculty the option of meeting with me or returning a survey (attached) I use the same questions to guide the discussion. I also make it clear to the person coming in that their responses are kept confidential. I usually provide a summary at the end of the year regarding reasons for faculty departure without identifying departments. I have attached our exit interview form.

From Paula Trief, SUNY Upstate (triefp@upstate.edu):

We follow the same protocol as Lois. I do the interviews. ask pretty much the same questions (though I didn't have a form, thanks, Lois), keep replies confidential and then plan to share a summary with leadership. Of the few I've done so far, I find some faculty very forthcoming, others more guarded and, of course, some do not choose to participate at all. The last group would probably be the most interesting group to talk to.

From Kevin Grigsby, Penn State (rgrigsby@hmc.psu.edu):

At Penn State COM, exit interviews are conducted by a senior faculty member. Only tenured or tenure track faculty who are employees of the university are interviewed. The data are sent directly to the university for aggregation with other data from other colleges in the university. An annual report is produced each year.

Faculty physicians, whether tenure track or term appointees, employed by the Hershey Medical Center are interviewed by a representative from the medical center department of Human Resources.

From Glenda Cooper, UAMS (cooperglendaj@uams.edu):

The College of Medicine's Office of Faculty Affairs began conducting exit interviews with departing faculty members in 2004 to help improve recruitment and retention of faculty in the College of Medicine. A set of questions for the interviews was developed based on the theory of "Appreciative Inquiry." We chose this approach because it focuses us on the positive aspects of faculty life and provides positive solutions to challenges we face. The exit survey is the same for all exiting faculty. We try to

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interview all departing faculty, but miss about half. We will be adding on on-line quantitative exit interview soon.

We assure exiting faculty members that the responses are confidential. Information is put in an access database which generates reports that are prepared twice a year for the Dean and Department chairs. All identifying information is masked – the reports are carefully written so that one cannot be identified by department or specialty. We conduct these interviews to find out what is working well on this campus, what and who are appreciated and how we can change to better recruit. When we hear about good works, good offices, good people and/or good practices that work, we send a “kudo” letter letting them know that they were mentioned in an exit interview for that reason.

From Mary Moran, Drexel University (mary.moran@drexelmed.edu):

Like Paula and Lois, I conduct the interviews (unless there's a perceived conflict of interest, in which case a member of the faculty Steering Committee will do so) using the attached form. The interview is optional and is confidential. Data is presented annually to the Executive Committee of the Faculty. If there is a trend in a particular department (e.g. we recently had a mini-mass exodus in 1 division...which gave new meaning to the word “division”!) that is addressed immediately by me/ the Dean as appropriate, assuming that the faculty who are leaving agree to waive the confidentiality of the interview.

From Ellen Seely, Partners Healthcare(eseely@partners.org):

One of the questions I have received is "What is the value of exit interviews?"
Does anyone know literature on this?

From Lars Larsen, Brody SOM (larsenl@ecu.edu):

We recently updated the Exit Interview process at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University. It is conducted centrally. Significant components include an on-line questionnaire completed by departing faculties, followed by a face-to-face interview prior to departure by a staff person to clarify issues identified in the questionnaire. Data from the questionnaire and interview are entered into a database for analysis. The questionnaire and process are the same for all faculties. Our affiliate teaching hospital, a separate entity, is not involved in the process.