



Item: AF: I-1

AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE
Thursday, April 10, 2014

**SUBJECT: REVIEW OF AUDITS: FAU 13/14-3, AUDIT OF FACULTY ACTIVITY
REPORTING FOR THE 2012/13 ACADEMIC YEAR.**

PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION

Information Only.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The primary objectives of this audit were to:

- Assess the adequacy of management's policies, procedures, and practices in place to assure accurate and complete compilation and reporting of faculty activities in the university's annual Instruction and Research Data File (IRDF) submitted to the Florida Board of Governors (BOG); and,
- Determine whether faculty instructional and non-instructional activities reported in the university's annual IRDF were verifiable to appropriate supporting manual records and/or electronic documentation from the Faculty Academic Information Reporting (FAIR) and Banner systems.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE

Management has agreed to implement our single audit recommendation during the 2014/15 academic year.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

Supporting Documentation: Audit Report FAU 13/14-3

Presented by: Mr. Morley Barnett, Inspector General

Phone: 561-297-3682

Report No. **FAU 13/14-3**
Report Issue Date: March 26, 2014

FLORIDA ATLANTIC

UNIVERSITY™

Office of Inspector General

Audit Report: *Faculty Activity Reporting*
For the 2012/13 Academic Year

Use of Report

We are employed by Florida Atlantic University. This report is intended solely for the internal use of the State University System and is not intended to be used for any other purpose. This restriction is not intended to limit the distribution of this report, which is a matter of public record.

BOCA RATON • DANIA BEACH • DAVIE • FORT LAUDERDALE • JUPITER • PORT ST. LUCIE

REPORT ON THE AUDIT OF FACUTLY ACTIVITY REPORTING

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What is FAIR?
The Faculty Academic Information Reporting system (FAIR) is a faculty designed and developed application that enables the easiest possible collection of academic information by or about faculty. The FAIR system consist of modules for the collection of information about faculty and instructional staff: Recording the assignment of duties, Entry of Publications, presentations and other scholarly activities, Vita Display and Content management. The FAIR assembles the information from the above modules in order to provide largely completed templates which the faculty member can use when undergoing annual review or during the tenure and promotion process. This FAIR web site is 100% dedicated to the FAIR system. Here you can find the latest news and download the most up-to-date version of the System modules. The complete User Manual is also available online

Modules

Term Based AFD-FAR Report - (Activity Reporting)

- The Faculty Activity Report (FAR) is for Federal Effort Reporting and is OMB-A21 compliant. It can also be used for state effort reporting if you have those requirements.
- The Assigned Faculty Duties (AFD) portion of the AFD-FAR is used for Annual Review and may be used for Collective Bargaining purposes.
- This information is pulled into the downstream applications pertaining to the Annual Report/Annual Review, and is reused in the Tenure and Promotion module.
- Since this information is linked downstream to their Annual Report/Annual Review, there is considerable incentive for their effort reporting to be correct.
- Linked to the scholarly activities (SAVE) module.

Annual Assignment - (Annual Assignment)

Faculty Academic Reporting Module - (Data Reports)

- Data Marts and Quality Reporting
- Survey Reporting (IPEDS, AAUP, Delaware, Petersons)
- Spectacular ease-of-use Financial Reporting
- A wide variety of reporting on Scholarship from the SAVE module
- Extensive reporting on effort as related to Credit Hours and Instructional Costing and other direct costing.
- Many easy to use reports and complex interfacing for the appointments data.

FAIR Administrator - (Admin)


Scholarly Activity & Vita Entry - (CV-S.A.V.E.)

- Entry and update of published and ongoing Scholarly activities.
- Faculty designed interface for scholarship entry and for the management of vita content that includes complete faculty control over all vita display selections and options.
- This system can generate the abbreviated vita needed for proposal submissions (NIH, NSF).
- Internal and (if you choose) external users can search the database for expertise and can potentially make contact with domain experts.
- This scholarship data flows into Annual Report and Tenure and Promotion modules, and can act as supporting documentation for the effort reporting module (AFD-FAR) .



MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. John Kelly
President

FROM: Morley Barnett 
Inspector General

DATE: March 26, 2014

SUBJ: AUDIT OF FACULTY ACTIVITY REPORTING

In accordance with the University's Internal Audit Plan for fiscal year 2013/14, we have conducted an audit of faculty activity reporting at Florida Atlantic University for the 2012/13 academic year. The report contained herein presents our scope and objectives and provides comments and conclusions resulting from procedures performed.

We have made one recommendation to address our current finding. We concur with the response of the auditee which has been incorporated into the report. In accordance with our established procedures, follow-up will be performed subsequent to the issuance of this report to determine effective implementation of our recommendation by management.

Please call me if you have any questions.

cc: Interim Provost
Senior Vice Presidents
Vice Presidents
Auditees
FAU BOT Audit and Finance Committee
Inspector General's Office, Florida Board of Governors
Florida Auditor General

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In accordance with the University's Internal Audit Plan for fiscal year 2013/14, we have conducted an audit of faculty activity reporting at Florida Atlantic University for the 2012/13 academic year. The primary objectives of this audit were to:

- Assess the adequacy of management's policies, procedures, and practices in place to assure accurate and complete compilation and reporting of faculty activities in the university's annual Instruction and Research Data File (IRDF) submitted to the Florida Board of Governors (BOG); and,
- Determine whether faculty instructional and non-instructional activities reported in the university's annual IRDF were verifiable to appropriate supporting manual records and/or electronic documentation from the Faculty Academic Information Reporting (FAIR) and Banner systems.

Audit procedures included, but were not limited to, the evaluation of internal controls as those controls relate to the accomplishment of the foregoing audit objectives, as well as compliance testing of a judgmentally selected sample of faculty members with reported instructional and/or non-instructional activities on the university's IRDF for the 2012/13 annual reporting period - the summer 2012, fall 2012, and spring 2013 semesters - in order to determine whether control procedures were operating effectively.

Based on the reviews and tests performed, we believe management has established appropriate and effective policies, procedures, and practices to help ensure the accuracy and completeness of the university's annual IRDF submitted to the Florida BOG. However, we did identify the need for greater utilization of the FAIR system by faculty, and the resulting benefits of increased efficiency and standardization of the activity data collection process.

The details of the finding, as well as the suggestion for corrective action, can be found in the Comments and Recommendations section of this report.



March 26, 2014

Dr. John Kelly
President
Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, Florida

Dear President Kelly:

SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with the University's Internal Audit Plan for fiscal year 2013/14, we have conducted an audit of faculty activity reporting at Florida Atlantic University for the 2012/13 academic year. The primary objectives of this audit were to:

- Assess the adequacy of management's policies, procedures, and practices in place to assure accurate and complete compilation and reporting of faculty activities in the university's annual Instruction and Research Data File (IRDF) submitted to the Florida Board of Governors (BOG); and,
- Determine whether faculty instructional and non-instructional activities reported in the university's annual IRDF were verifiable to appropriate supporting manual records and/or electronic documentation from the Faculty Academic Information Reporting (FAIR) and Banner systems.

Audit procedures included, but were not limited to, the evaluation of internal controls as those controls relate to the accomplishment of the foregoing audit objectives, as well as compliance testing of a judgmentally selected sample of faculty members with reported instructional and/or non-instructional activities on the university's IRDF for the 2012/13 annual reporting period - the summer 2012, fall 2012, and spring 2013 semesters - in order to determine whether control procedures were operating effectively.

We obtained an understanding of the University's faculty activity reporting function by interviewing key university managers, and reviewing applicable rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Our assessment of compliance with established requirements was based primarily on a review of appropriate manual/electronic supporting documentation for the activities of a sample of faculty members. Populations, sample sizes, and selection methods were determined

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based on our evaluation of internal controls, our assessment of audit risk, the availability of pertinent University records, and other factors including auditor judgment.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the Institute of Internal Auditors' International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

BACKGROUND

The primary purpose of the IRDF is to collect annual information regarding the instructional and non-instructional activities of faculty members at each university within the State University System (SUS) of Florida. The annual IRDF provides data to be used for the review and management of faculty personnel assignments; the development of SUS budget requests related to academic activities; demonstration of compliance with Chapter 1012.945, Florida Statutes (the 12-Hour Law); and, the preparation of each university's annual Expenditure Analysis.

Accurate and timely compilation of FAU faculty activities is a multi-departmental effort requiring cooperation and coordination between the colleges, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analysis (IEA), and the Office of Information Technology (OIT). During the course of each semester, IEA uses automated processes to update faculty activity data on the Assigned Faculty Duties – Faculty Activity Report (AFD-FAR) term-based module of the FAIR system consisting of course activity from the Banner Student system; sponsored research activity from the Banner HR system; and, non-instructional activity from the Annual Assignment module of FAIR. After the end of each semester, IEA notifies appropriate personnel at the colleges to review and edit (if necessary) the term-based AFD-FARs for faculty members on FAIR. Updated information from the term-based AFD-FARs on FAIR provides the primary basis for the data tables comprising the annual IRDF which IEA is responsible for compiling and electronically submitting to the Florida BOG.

For the 2012/13 academic year, the university had approximately 1,023 12-month and 9-month faculty members on staff.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Current Findings and Recommendations

Need for Consistent Use of FAIR System

In accordance with established policy, annual assignments for all 12-month and 9-month faculty are required to be recorded on the Annual Assignment module of the FAIR system. The FAIR annual assignments are required to be either manually (after printing) or electronically signed by the faculty member, his/her supervisor, and the college dean (or designee). For documentation purposes, best practice requires that any assignment changes to the term-based AFD-FARs be signed-off by the faculty member, his/her supervisor, and the college dean (or designee). Timely, accurate, and approved manual and automated updates of the term-based AFD-FARs are

important to the extent that the FAIR system is the primary source of faculty activity data for the university's annual IRDF.

Compliance testing to determine whether faculty instructional and non-instructional activities reported in the university's annual IRDF for the 2012/13 reporting period agreed to appropriate manual records and/or electronic supporting documentation from the FAIR and Banner systems for a judgmentally selected sample of 50 faculty employees from all colleges, indicated the following exceptions:

- **Twenty-one** annual faculty assignments were not recorded on the FAIR system;
- **Thirty-six** annual faculty assignments on FAIR lacked documented sign-offs by either the faculty members, their supervisors, and/or the college deans (or designees);
- Assignments for **seven** faculty members for one or more semesters during the 2012/13 reporting year were not recorded in the Annual Assignment module of FAIR, and alternate manually-prepared assignment records were not on file. As such, we were unable to determine if there were any changes to the term-based AFD-FARs for the corresponding semesters that would require them to be manually or electronically signed by the faculty member, his/her supervisor, and the college dean (or designee);
- **Nineteen** term-based AFD-FARs with assignment changes were not signed-off by either the faculty members, their supervisors, and/or the college deans (or designees);
- **Thirty-two** term-based AFD-FAR reports lacked required supporting narrative explanations and/or contact hours for both instructional and non-instructional-related activities; and,
- **Seven** annual faculty performance evaluations were not signed by either the faculty member and/or the evaluator, as required by university policy.

Recommendation No. 1

We recommend management ensure that:

- All annual faculty assignments are recorded on the FAIR system, and manually or electronically signed by the faculty member, his/her supervisor, and the college dean (or designee);
- All annual faculty assignments for 12-month faculty include their summer semester assignment(s);
- All term-based AFD-FARs on the FAIR system with assignment changes are manually or electronically signed by the faculty member, his/her supervisor, and the college dean (or designee);

- The “supporting docs” (narrative explanations) and contact hours for all reported instruction-related and non-instruction-related activities for each semester during the academic year are indicated on the FAIR term-based AFD-FAR reports; and,
- Annual performance evaluations are signed by the faculty member and the supervisor performing the evaluation.

Management’s Response

Action Plan:

We concur with audit Recommendation #1 and will take several action steps to ensure compliance. The Office of the Provost conducted a workshop for academic administrators (Chairs, Directors, Associate Deans, and Deans) on March 24, 2014 regarding annual assignments and annual evaluations, and shared the results of the audit. The goal is for all academic assignments (9 and 12 month), with appropriate support documentation, to be in FAIR and signed by the chair/director, faculty member, and dean. An email prompt will be added to the system and signatures at each level will be required. We are exploring the possibility of auto-populating assignment changes in FAIR, as well as the possibility of annual evaluation reports being part of the FAIR assignment and activity report.

Implementation Date(s):

For FAIR assignments: July 1, 2014 for 12 month appointments; August 2014, for 9 month appointments. For annual evaluations: March 2015 for calendar year evaluations; August 2015 for academic year evaluations.

Responsible Auditee:

Dr. Diane Alperin, Vice Provost.

Prior Audit Recommendations

Our examination generally includes a follow-up on findings and recommendations of prior internal audits, where the subjects of such findings are applicable to the scope of the current audit.

Within the past three fiscal years, there have not been any internal audits pertaining to faculty activity reporting. Accordingly, a follow-up on prior audit recommendations is not applicable.

CONCLUSION

Based on the reviews and tests performed, it is our opinion that management has established appropriate and effective policies, procedures, and practices to facilitate the accuracy and completeness of the university's annual IRDF submitted to the Florida BOG. Notwithstanding this assessment, we believe the efficiency of the IRDF compilation process could be enhanced through greater use of the FAIR system by faculty.

We wish to thank the staffs of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analysis, and the Provost's Office, for their cooperation and assistance which contributed to the successful completion of this audit.



Morley Barnett, CPA, CFE
Inspector General

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