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service.

3. Reduction in Administrative Burden: The current requirement for a formal evaluation so early in their tenure places a significant administrative burden on first-year faculty.

Preparing evaluation materials in their first semester pulls time and attention away from their primary responsibilities, particularly research and teaching. An alternative process, such as the proposed face-to-face meeting with the Department Chair, would reduce this burden and allow faculty to focus on establishing themselves academically.

4. Improved Faculty Retention and Satisfaction: Supporting first-year faculty through a more developmental, less formal evaluation process in their first year is likely to lead to higher faculty satisfaction and retention. Providing new faculty with constructive feedback through a meeting with the Chair allows for a more personalized, supportive evaluation process that can better address their unique challenges and needs in their first year at ODU.

5. Comprehensive and Timely Feedback: A spring semester meeting would allow for a more comprehensive evaluation, as the faculty member would have had an entire semester to teach, conduct research, and contribute to service. The Department Chair would have a clearer and more complete picture of the faculty member's strengths and areas for development. This would allow the Chair to provide more meaningful feedback, which could inform the faculty member's growth over the summer and into their second year.

Conclusion

In light of these considerations, faculty and administrators in the DCEPS request the following revision to the Faculty Handbook: Eliminate the requirement for first-year faculty to submit formal evaluation materials in the fall semester and replace it with a face-to-face evaluation meeting between the Department Chair and the faculty member in the spring semester, followed by a letter from the Chair to the Dean summarizing the faculty member's progress throughout the first academic year. This revised policy will provide a more accurate, supportive, and developmentally appropriate evaluation process for first-year faculty while allowing them to focus on their core responsibilities during their first months at ODU.

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