



Pilot of Interfolio for Faculty Performance Review

RES 232407

EC and FAC

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate conduct a one-year pilot of Interfolio for faculty performance review (RTP, PTR, and PEF¹).

RESOLVED: That faculty have the option of using Box without penalty during the pilot period.

RATIONALE: The selection of an electronic repository and review system for faculty performance review is a critical issue for faculty and requires a careful and fully executed process of consultation and shared governance. Per RES 202219 (Submission of Electronic Faculty Performance Review Files), the Academic Senate established an exploratory committee to evaluate software options for a new electronic repository and review system for faculty performance review (RTP, PTR, and PEF*) files, and recommend the best available option that meets our campus requirements. After evaluating several options, the committee concluded that a pilot period of the top-rated option, Interfolio, is best to give interested faculty the opportunity to fully experience the system and provide feedback before committing to a three-year contract.

Attachments:

Faculty Performance Review Software Exploratory Committee Report
Faculty Performance Review Software Exploratory Committee Recommended Questions
Interfolio Quote
OnBase/Hyland Quote
Watermark/Faculty Success Quote

¹ RTP: Retention, Tenure and Promotion; PTR: Post-Tenure Review; PEF: Periodic Evaluation File

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Faculty Performance Review Software Exploratory Committee Report

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Description

The Academic Senate convened the Faculty Performance Review Software Exploratory Committee to evaluate software options for a new electronic repository and review system for faculty performance review (RTP, PTR, and PEF¹) files, and recommend the best available option that meets our campus requirements, per RES 212219 (Submission of Electronic Performance Review Files).

Membership

Per RES 212219 (Submission of Electronic Performance Review Files), the exploratory committee is to be composed of faculty members from all schools, and with additional representation from other faculty units including the library. Faculty on this committee should represent differing ranks, and it is recommended that tenured, tenure-track, and lecturers all be represented. The AVP Faculty Affairs should be included on this committee as well as representatives of the CFA. ITS staff should be consulted as required. The following is the list of the initial committee membership:

Membership Position	Name	Rank
FT Tenured Faculty A&H	Leo Sakomoto	Associate Professor
FT Probationary Faculty A&H	Gladys Gillam	Lecturer
FT Tenured Faculty BPA	Chandra Commuri	Professor
FT Probationary Faculty BPA	Atieh Poushneh	Assistant Professor
FT Tenured Faculty NSME	Danielle Solano	Professor
FT Probationary Faculty NSME	Jonathan Troup	Assistant Professor
FT Tenured Faculty SSE	Gitika Commuri	Associate Professor

¹ RTP: Retention, Tenure and Promotion; PTR: Post-Tenure Review; PEF: Periodic Evaluation File

FT Probationary Faculty SSE	Tzu-Fen Chang	Assistant Professor
FT Librarian	Andrea Anderson	Associate Librarian
CFA Representative	Zachary Zenko	Assistant Professor
AVP of Faculty Affairs	Deborah Boschini	Administrator

The first meeting was convened by the AVP of Faculty Affairs, Dr. Deborah Boschini. During the first meeting, Dr. Danielle Solano was elected chair of the committee. After discussions at the initial meetings, the committee decided it needed feedback from the URC, ITS, and FTLC. The following members were added to the committee:

Membership Position	Name
University Review Committee (URC)	Emerson Case
Information Technology Services (ITS)	Jaimi Paschal
Faculty Teaching and Learning Center (FTLC)	Alex Slabey

The committee also consulted other ITS staff during the process including Brian Chen and Jason Ferguson. Additionally, Andrea Anderson left CSUB at the end of spring 2023 and was replaced by Chris Livingston in fall 2023.

Current Platform Issues

Per RES 212219 and committee discussions, the following issues of concern were identified:

1. The quick change to Box from physical files during pandemic-related shifts to virtual campus activities was not a careful and fully executed process.
2. A survey conducted in Spring 2021 by the Faculty Affairs Committee and additional consultation revealed potential concerns about the accessibility, security, ease of use, tracking of access and records, and the ownership of files within Box.
3. Some faculty are exceeding the physical “3-inch” requirement and including an extensive number of files in Box.
4. PAFs will eventually be digitized and thus a platform compatible with electronic PAFs would be ideal.
5. Committee members who had experience submitting RTP files in Box found the process to very time consuming and had issues organizing files in Box.
6. Committee members who had experience reviewing RTP files in Box stressed that organization (i.e., finding things) was a very large issues as different departments often organize files differently; there were also concerns with the lack of completion of access sheets and log sheets.

Platform Requirements

Per RES 212219, the committee developed a list of required and preferred capabilities of the selected electronic faculty review platform.

Required Capabilities

1. Secure
2. Tracks access & file changes
3. Aids in the ease of faculty organization

4. Be easily reviewed by all levels of the review process

Preferred Capabilities

1. Compatible with PAF
2. Limits the number of documents
3. Not clunky/ugly
4. Easy to post/upload CV
5. Easy to re-organize folders & files
6. Easy to export items (i.e., in the event we convert to a new system)
7. Workflow is easy to use
8. Minimal cost

Platform Exploration

The committee started by consulting other CSUs to see what platforms are utilized across the system and their experiences with those platforms (Appendix A). Committee members also consulted with their constituents to develop an initial list of software solutions for consideration. The following is a list of all platforms evaluated to some degree. In evaluating these platforms, the committee considered both the process of preparing an RTP file and the process of reviewing it. Three of these systems will be discussed in extensive detail in the following section.

Platform	Comments
Adobe Binder/Portfolio	While this platform is free with Adobe CS license, it is primarily meant for creating a personal website portfolio and there would likely be a significant learning curve to use it. After discussion, we decided not to request a demo.
Faculty Success (Digital Measures)	One of our top three choices. See detailed discussion later in this section.
OnBase/Hyland	One of our top three choices. See detailed discussion later in this section.
Interfolio	One of our top three choices. See detailed discussion later in this section.
Live Binders	This platform is used by some universities for RTP; we requested a demo, but learned this system is incompatible with SSO and it also did not seem to be able to track views; additionally, it seems more like a way to organize Box documents rather than a full RTP review. We do not recommend further consideration.
Mahara	This platform is an eportfolio design; after discussion, there was not a lot of excitement about this option, so we decided not to request a demo.
Scholarly Software	Scholarly is a higher ed startup building software for faculty affairs to compete with Interfolio and Watermark (Digital Measures). Their Tenure & Promotion module does not appear to be available yet.

Faculty Success (Digital Measures) by Watermark

A summary of committee evaluations ranked this platform 3rd, and similar in comparison to Box. Monetary costs include a one-time implementation fee of \$6,300 and an annual fee of \$31,132 (includes optional \$5,400 Silver Service Package). The annual fee is based on FTE and thus subject to change. Additionally, in the quote we received, the annual fee increases by approximately \$800 each year. (While the university is already planning to adopt some aspects of this system for use in annual reports, these costs would be additional.)

Pros

1. The university is already planning to adopt some aspects of this system for use in annual reports, so faculty will need to learn to use the platform anyway (BPA uses it already for accreditation reporting, so those faculty would already be familiar with it).
2. Uses information already existing in the system (CVs, publications) for RTP.
3. Pulls data from LMS and other systems.

Cons

1. Most faculty will need to be trained how to use the system; also, faculty members who are already familiar with it may need to learn how to use the additional modules.
2. Some committee members did not find the system visually appealing and referred to it as “ugly”.
3. Some committee members did not find the system easy to use and referred to it as “clunky”.

Technical support

Watermark has email, phone, and chat support. The Silver Service Package is optional but allows for group training or post-implementation meetings with WM's implementation experts.

OnBase/Hyland

A summary of committee evaluations ranked this system 2nd, and higher in comparison to Box. Since we already use OnBase and own the required modules, the only cost would be a one-time setup fee of \$140,500 to assist with configuration. Additionally, we currently pay for a certain number of concurrent user licenses; it is likely that we will need to add more concurrent user licenses if more people will be using the system (Hyland recommends 10 additional concurrent licenses which would cost \$5,416.61 annually). The committee inquired about the option to explore the system or do a trial run but was informed that this is not an option; OnBase/Hyland does not provide a “sandbox” option and the cost of \$140,500 is required to configure out system even for a small trial.

Pros

1. This system is already used on campus, so ITS is familiar with it and already supports it.
2. Currently, few faculty use OnBase for advising. Using the platform for RTP may increase faculty familiarity with it and increase its utilization for advising.
3. The platform is compatible with storing PAF files electronically.

Cons

1. Most faculty will need to be trained how to use it.
2. For off campus users, this system is accessible by VPN only.
3. Some committee members did not find the system easy to use and referred to it as “clunky”.

4. Many committee members felt the platform was not intuitive (i.e., would be harder for those unfamiliar with it to start using it).
5. Some committee members noted that the process for uploading files seemed complicated.
6. It was noted that OnBase sometimes freezes during advising.

Technical support

Hyland provides 24/7, 365 Technical Support for all emergency process down scenarios through a toll-free hotline; for all other non-emergency issues or even functionality questions, Technical Support Analysts are available to assist through the Hyland Community Customer Portal with typical response time to each ticket submitted within 24 hours. There is also a team of Customer Care Advocates that are engaged in the Customer Portal for any other request or support needed. Beyond these formal Technical Support resources – CSU Bakersfield’s current OnBase System Administrators are also trained by Hyland to be a good on-campus resource.

Interfolio

A summary of committee evaluations ranked this system 1st, and higher in comparison to Box. Annual cost is \$27,907 for year one (includes mandatory \$4,651 Client Advisory Service fee). The annual fee is based on FTE and thus subject to change. Additionally, in the quote we received, the annual fee increases by approximately \$1700 each year (6% inflationary rate increase).² The committee inquired about the option to explore the system or do a trial run, but was informed that this is not an option; Interfolio does not provide a “sandbox” option and the cost of \$27,907 for one year is the same regardless of the number of faculty who use it.

Pros

1. There was general agreement that this system was the most user friendly and intuitive.
2. Many committee members thought the system was the most aesthetically pleasing.
3. The platform seems be designed specifically for RTP.

Cons

1. Some campuses have reported issues with the slowness of the system and documents taking a while to load.
2. All faculty would have to be trained how to use this system.
3. Some campuses have expressed frustrations with the External Review functionality.³

Technical support

The "Client Advisory Service" is a mandatory fee that includes: Dedicated Client Success Manager to help provide best practices for usage across the campus; Technical and Product Roadmap consultation services around usage with API's, SSO and other configuration questions; access to Interfolio University LMS system to provide on-demand training; bi-annual executive briefing reports delivered to Provost; end user training either live or virtually; and access to best practices webinars to help inform decisions and support. They also provide a support desk called, Scholar Services, that not only supports the administrators who will manage the software from but also support faculty if they experience any technical issues.

² Other CSUs have reported higher annual escalations for their three-year renewal (as high as a 15% escalation each year).

³ Communicated via personal email to Jaimi Paschal.

Recommendations

1. Faculty Success (Digital Measures) by Watermark is **not recommended** as it was ranked similarly to Box and thus the committee feels that the additional cost is not justified.
2. The committee had mixed feelings about OnBase/Hyland as there were several cons to this platform, but overall, it was ranked higher than Box. The committee considered a pilot of OnBase/Hyland, but ultimately decided against it due to the high cost associated with the setup (\$140,500).
3. Interfolio was easily the highest ranked platform, but the committee had reservations due to the high annual cost. **Ultimately, the committee decided to recommend a one-year pilot of Interfolio to determine if the benefits of Interfolio outweigh the cost.**
4. The committee further recommends a Qualtrics survey for faculty to evaluate Interfolio during the pilot period (one for reviewers and one for faculty undergoing review) and reviewing the results of this survey during/after the pilot period to determine if Interfolio is worth the additional cost to using Box. The committee developed a list of recommended questions to use in the Qualtrics survey which are included in an attached file.

Appendix A: Survey of Other CSUs⁴

Platform	Response
Box	It's better than the paper system we used before, so I think most faculty are happy about that, but there are areas for improvement.
Interfolio	[Our campus] was one of the earlier adopters of Interfolio for our tenure-track RTP process and we have been very pleased; we are now using it for faculty awards and sabbaticals/DIPs as well. Unlike some campuses, though, we have not moved lecturer evaluations to Interfolio because of workload and staffing issues in our office and in the colleges.
Interfolio	...we use Interfolio RPT for all tenure-track evaluations, post-tenure review, promotions of tenured faculty, all lecturer evaluations, and range elevation evaluations. We are satisfied and able to run everything fairly smoothly—no plans to change. But, users do complain about the slowness of the system sometimes. And I wish the reporting features were better. Also, we manually archive the cases into our PAF storage, although our office does this for only the full-time employees. It's up to the colleges to deal with the part-time lecturers' PAFs.
Interfolio	...we are using Interfolio for our faculty evaluations – tenured/tenure-track and faculty lecturers. We also have complaints from reviewers about slowness and the character limit on evaluation forms...the campus views it as a great improvement over paper. We will be re-signing for our next contract soon. We have heard from faculty that the functionality is better at [another campus], so I will explore that some more and try to determine if it is something with our configuration or what the difference is.
Interfolio	...we are also using Interfolio for faculty evaluations and don't have any plans to change. Overall, it is a significant improvement from the hard copy files that were used pre-pandemic and the workflow system is really good. There are some complaints from reviewers (e.g., slowness) and we don't yet have integration with our PAF storage system (OnBase). But we have invested in the system and view it as our long-term solution.
Interfolio	We use Interfolio for our evaluation processes for both RTP and lecturers and like it very much. But we are having serious technical challenges getting the material from Interfolio to OnBase which we are just starting to use to digitize our PAFs.
OneDrive	...we implemented on the fly a homebuilt system in OneDrive (we were still using physical binders when COVID hit, fortunately in S20 all files were already to the deans/provost so it was manageable to move binders). The OneDrive system wasn't elegant, and I suspect it may be similar to what you've got in Box. The biggest concern that [we] had with that interim solution is the manual processing required for granting and removing access. But when we looked at other solutions, it was determined in discussion with other campuses that Interfolio was just as time consuming in that aspect. Ultimately, [we] decided to keep the "interim" homebuilt system for the time being because a) it didn't cost \$75k a year, b) wouldn't trigger folks to need to learn something new, c) was leveraging a tool that was otherwise commonly already in use, and d) the few extra features of Interfolio seems insignificant when taking a-c into consideration. "The grass is always

⁴ Responses are from the AVP of Faculty Affairs or equivalent position at the campus as sent via email to our AVP of Faculty Affairs, Dr. Deborah Boschini (not all campuses responded); they have been edited for clarity and to remove identifying information.

	<p>greener...." When I taught electronics I reminded folks that for every benefit found there is a cost: that could be a cost in more money, longer to develop, or at the expense of other performance characteristics. Finding the right balance is the key. As I was the one that spend a long weekend developing and doing the primary testing of the OneDrive system, I'll say that I'm personally extremely proud of finding this solution in the middle of a crisis and it has stood the test of time. The biggest issue we've had with it, to be honest, is the challenges with building an access log that everyone was satisfied with.</p>
Interfolio	<p><u>Systems and Issues.</u> [Here] we use Interfolio for all collectively bargained for faculty evaluations. Faculty put career information into their F180, reviewers use their RPT interface. Most faculty are settled in with and appreciate the Interfolio products.</p> <p>The F180 interface isn't intuitive, which leaves us having to provide lots of training on using it. RPT is integrated with F180 in that it can retrieve all information within specified semesters/terms. RPT is often slow for reviewers--it takes quite some time for pdfs to load. Also, there are restrictions on the size and types of files that can be warehoused within the Interfolio product.</p> <p><u>We use OnBase to host the faculty PAFs.</u> OnBase is okay, but there is a certain level of clunkiness in how items are stored and viewed. I highly recommend the packet reader for OnBase to deliver PAFs to any party, relieving them of having to enter OnBase itself to review the PAF other than to log the view (as we configured that [here]). The packet reader creates a single pdf with a table of contents that can be exported.</p> <p><u>Getting items into OnBase presents problems for us.</u> There are a lot of steps/obstacles to getting stray documents into PAFs. We have begun using OnBase for more processes (appointments, additional employment) from start to finish because the documents must end up in OnBase eventually. OnBase wasn't really built for workflow, but there are some simple routing configurations that allow approval within OnBase.</p> <p>Our biggest issues with OnBase have to do with our campus's IT having extreme restrictions on users making modifications. My team must meet with IT staff to redraft forms or add features. We can use an IT ticket to change simple things like toggles (required or not) or change a few words or correct grammar. There are systems integrations marketed by OnBase (e.g., DocuSign from/to OnBase) that our IT group has been very slow to help us implement. So my frustrations are more with our local systems administration than with OnBase itself.</p> <p><u>Getting information from Interfolio to PAFs.</u> Faculty Services partnered with IT about 2 years ago to develop a system to retrieve review materials from Interfolio to deposit them into OnBase PAFs. The IT team worked with us and Interfolio to leverage Interfolio's APIs (which had some errors) to create a solution. Unfortunately, the OnBase side still requires "manual" steps which should be automated.</p> <p>The solution includes:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A web-based dashboard to order the retrieval of evaluation materials from RPT. (We also have a "legal" option to retrieve all submitted materials rather than the PAF version). • The files are downloaded to a drive with proper naming convention for OnBase. • The team member requesting the download notifies the OnBase team at IT and requests a sweep the files into OnBase. After they developed the solutions for Faculty Services, I told the IT team leader that other campuses will wish to get his team's assistance with Interfolio and its APIs. He volunteered to help out, so if you could use IT help with moving files from Interfolio to OnBase, just send me a message and I will connect you with that IT group.
Interfolio	Overall we are pleased with the platform, but there are things we would like to change. For instance, our current configuration does not integrate with our Canvas, our LMS. Additionally, the platform is often slow to load/view pdfs, which slows down the review process.
Interfolio	The items [noted directly above] are similar to what we've seen, but I don't see any traction for us to move to something else due to the "cost of change."
Canvas	We never had funding for Interfolio, or other programs, so we developed an in-house approach to create e-Working Personnel Action File/review folders. Originally it was in Moodle and recently migrated to Canvas. Downside is it is a little clunky and somewhat time intensive. Upside is we owned the programs so we incurred no additional cost...We are mostly satisfied - occasional person who is not well versed in using it and have issues with creating their file.
OnBase/ Google Drive	I think campus satisfaction ranges from neutral to dissatisfied. It is hard to navigate and find what you are looking for. It is also difficult to manage and change or add workflows to it. We are not in a position to change this year, but I suspect we will in the near future. We also use OnBase to store our PAFs. I am still learning about that.
Interfolio	I can't say that we are satisfied, but we are not dissatisfied.

Appendix B: Average Committee Rankings

Summary of Rankings⁵

Platform	TOTAL Required	TOTAL Preferred	GRAND TOTAL
Box.com	14.9	17.6	32.4
Faculty Success (Digital Measures)	15.5	16.5	32.0
OnBase/Hyland	15.8	21.6	37.5
Interfolio	19.1	25.4	44.5
Live Binders	13.8	19.3	33.1

Required Capabilities⁶

Platform	Secure	Tracks Access & File Changes	Ease of Faculty Organization	Easily Reviewed	TOTAL Required
Box.com	4.9	3.6	2.9	3.5	14.9
Faculty Success (Digital Measures)	4.7	4.2	3.6	3.0	15.5
OnBase/Hyland	4.4	4.4	3.3	3.8	15.8
Interfolio	4.9	4.8	4.7	4.8	19.1
Live Binders	4.1	3.0	3.3	3.4	13.8

⁵ Ranked 1-5 with 5 being the best

⁶ Ranked 1-5 with 5 being the best

Preferred Capabilities⁷

Platform	Compatible with PAF	Limits # of documents	Not Clunky/Ugly	Easy to post CV	Easy to re-organize files/folders	Workflow Easy to Use	TOTAL Preferred
Box.com	1.0	3.4	2.8	4.7	3.2	2.5	17.6
Faculty Success (Digital Measures)	1.0	2.5	3.0	3.6	3.2	3.2	16.5
OnBase/Hyland	4.5	4.0	2.4	4.0	3.1	3.6	21.6
Interfolio	2.3	4.3	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.8	25.4
Live Binders	2.5	3.2	3.4	3.8	3.5	2.9	19.3

⁷ Ranked 1-5 with 5 being the best

Faculty Performance Review Software Exploratory Committee Recommended Questions

For those undergoing RTP review:

1. What platforms have you used for submitting your RTP files? (Box only/Interfolio only/Both)
2. **Display Logic: Q1 answer (Both)** → Which tool would you prefer for RTP files? (Prefer Box/Prefer Interfolio /no preference) Why? (comment box)
3. How did you learn how to prepare your RTP file in Interfolio? (check all that apply: guide/videos/CSUB ITS or FTLC/other)
4. Which training method helped you prepare to use Interfolio the most? (guides/videos/CSUB ITS or FTLC/other)
5. How easy was it to upload your documents? (1-5 scale - easy to hard)
6. How easy was it to organize your documents into your RTP portfolio? (1-5 scale - easy to hard)
7. Did you feel that Interfolio kept your files secure? (yes/no)
8. Did you feel that CSUB configured your Interfolio access privileges to your RTP file correctly? (yes/no)
9. What aspect(s) of Interfolio did you like? (comment box)
10. What aspect(s) need improvement? (comment box)
11. Would you recommend Interfolio as CSUB's official RTP review software? (yes/no)

For those reviewing RTP files:

1. What platforms have you used for reviewing RTP files? (Box only/Interfolio only/both)
2. **Display Logic: Q1 answer (Both)** → Which tool would you prefer for reviewing RTP files? (Prefer Box/Prefer Interfolio /no preference) Why? (comment box)
3. How did you learn how to review RTP files in Interfolio? (guides/videos/CSUB ITS or FTLC/other)
4. Which training method helped you prepare to review RTPs in Interfolio the most? (guides/videos/CSUB ITS or FTLC/other)
5. Was it easy to navigate through RTP files? (1-5 scale - easy to hard)
6. Was it easy to update access logs and upload committee letters? (1-5 scale - easy to hard)
7. Did you feel that Interfolio kept your files secure? (yes/no)
8. Did you feel that CSUB configure your Interfolio access privileges to the RTP files you reviewed correctly? (yes/no)
9. What aspect(s) of Interfolio did you like? (comment box)
10. What aspect(s) need improvement? (comment box)
11. Would you recommend Interfolio as CSUB's official RTP review software? (yes/no)