

Performance Evaluation of Faculty

Original Implementation: August 26, 1997

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To ensure continued excellence in faculty performance and pursuant to Section 51.942 of the Texas Education Code, Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA) regularly evaluates the performance of faculty. The evaluation process will focus on improving faculty performance and incorporate commonly recognized academic due process rights, including notice of the manner of scope of the evaluation and the opportunity to provide documentation during the evaluation process.

The process of evaluating faculty at SFA includes several basic components:

- a. an annual administration evaluation of faculty performance;
- b. a comprehensive performance evaluation of all tenured faculty at least once every six years; and
- c. a plan for assisted faculty development prompted by deficiencies identified in the annual administrative evaluation or comprehensive performance evaluation.

STANDARDS FOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF FACULTY

Rigorous standards to determine what constitutes appropriate minimum performance must be developed by members of the academic unit holding faculty rank. These standards will be in keeping with the mission of the university, the mission and goals of the college, and the mission and goals of the academic unit. They are to be based on, but need not be limited to, the professional responsibilities of the faculty member in teaching, scholarship, research and creative activity, and service. "Rigorous standards" are a set of verifiable standards that are developed by tenured faculty in the academic unit. The standards should recognize the need to allow for legitimate variation in the development of faculty careers. A copy of these standards will be forwarded to the college dean and the provost and vice president for academic affairs for review and approval.

The standards will be subject to periodic review by the academic unit at least every five years, unless requested earlier by the academic unit head or dean. Any modifications are subject to review and approval by the appropriate academic dean and by the provost and vice president for academic affairs.

THE ANNUAL ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION

Each faculty member will prepare and submit to the academic unit head an annual report of the professional activities and performance during the previous calendar year. As part of this report, academic units may require a self-evaluation that includes statements identifying an individual's strengths and weaknesses and specifying plans for the upcoming academic year aimed at strengthening the faculty member's performance. The college dean may meet with the academic unit head to review faculty evaluations prior to or following a face-to-face evaluation meeting. During a face-to-face evaluation meeting with the faculty member, the academic unit head will provide the written administrative evaluation of faculty performance. Upon receipt from the

academic unit head, the dean will forward the administrative evaluation and any supporting documentation to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. Faculty who receive two unsatisfactory annual evaluations in any three-year period will be subject to the procedures outlined in the plan for assisted development (PAD).

THE PERIODIC COMPREHENSIVE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF TENURED FACULTY

Every tenured faculty member with less than a 0.5 FTE administrative appointment will undergo a comprehensive performance evaluation every sixth year after receiving tenure, returning to a faculty position following an administrative assignment, or after a previous comprehensive performance evaluation (including promotion or successful completion of a plan for assisted faculty development). Failure to submit a post-tenure review portfolio automatically leads to a plan for assisted development.

With approval from the dean and the provost and vice president for academic affairs, the post-tenure review clock will be suspended for all faculty holding administrative positions within the academic unit (e.g., academic unit heads) or holding at least a 0.5 FTE administrative position.

Each college and its academic units will establish a post-tenure review process that is approved by the dean and the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The approved process will include the following:

- a. Each tenured faculty member will be reviewed by the tenured faculty in his/her academic unit, the academic unit head, and the dean.
- b. Academic unit review committees must be comprised of a minimum of three tenured faculty members. In academic units with three or fewer tenured faculty, the dean of the college, in consultation with the academic unit head, will appoint tenured faculty members from other academic units.
- c. Academic unit heads and deans with supervisory authority for faculty under review cannot be included in the academic unit review committee.
- d. Recommendations and decisions on the comprehensive performance evaluation will not discriminate on any basis prohibited by law or policy.
- e. The review committee must consistently follow the comprehensive performance evaluation procedures when evaluating all tenured faculty within an academic unit.
- f. This review will make use of annual administrative evaluations of the faculty activities and performance for the five most recent years.
- g. Each critical area—teaching, research/scholarly/creative accomplishment, and service—must be evaluated and rated separately and will include criteria addressing collegiality. An overall comprehensive performance evaluation rating must also be provided.
- h. At a minimum, the rating system must include two levels—satisfactory/meets expectations and unsatisfactory/does not meet expectations.
- i. Within the academic unit review, a simple majority of the voting faculty will determine the tenured faculty committee recommendation that the faculty member meets or does not meet the adopted standards of the unit.

- j. Academic unit heads and deans may consider other pertinent information during the review process.
- k. Each faculty member will be notified in writing within five (5) class days after the academic unit head completes all recommendations regarding the comprehensive performance evaluation. Within five (5) class days of reviewing the written recommendations and supporting comments, the tenured faculty members may attach a letter of response addressing errors of fact in the decision. Such a notification and any subsequent response by the tenured faculty will become part of the faculty's periodic comprehensive evaluation materials.
- l. Each faculty member will be notified in writing within five (5) class days after the dean completes all recommendations regarding the comprehensive performance evaluation.
- m. Each faculty member determined as meeting standards at the academic unit and at the dean's level will require no further action.
- n. Each faculty member determined as not meeting standards at the academic unit or dean's level will be subject to the procedures outlined in the plan for assisted development.

PLAN FOR ASSISTED DEVELOPMENT

The plan for assisted development (PAD) will incorporate a significant peer component and will have as its main intentions professional growth, personal reflection, and performance improvement.

- a. A committee will be appointed by the academic unit head in consultation with the faculty member and subject to approval by the dean. It is the task of this committee, in consultation with the academic unit head and the faculty member, to formulate a PAD to remediate any performance deficiencies identified in the comprehensive performance evaluation. A timeline for remediation not to exceed 24 calendar months with tangible benchmarks of progress will be established at this time.
- b. The annual evaluation process is suspended while a faculty member is under a PAD.
- c. The PAD will be signed by the faculty member, the academic unit head, and the dean to indicate their agreement with the terms of the plan. If the academic unit head, faculty member, and peer evaluation committee members are unable to come to agreement on a suitable PAD, then the faculty member will be required to adhere to the PAD as formulated by the dean, academic head, and committee. A copy of the plan will be sent to the provost and vice president for academic affairs.
- d. After the PAD has been created, the peer committee will remain in place and will meet at appropriate intervals with the academic unit head to review progress in meeting benchmark goals. The academic unit head will then hold meetings with the faculty member to assess progress. Failure to meet benchmark goals may result in an immediate determination that the faculty member has failed to satisfy the PAD, regardless of how much time remains in the PAD timeline.
- e. Upon completion of the PAD term, there are three possible outcomes:
 - (1) When, with the recommendation of the peer committee and in the determination of the academic unit head, the faculty member has succeeded in restoring his/her performance to an acceptable level by meeting the goals of the PAD in a timely manner, the academic

- unit head will notify in writing the faculty member, peer committee, and the dean.
- (2) The academic unit head may recommend extending the time for completion of the PAD for a maximum of one academic year. The dean of the college will choose to allow or deny the extension and will communicate this decision in writing to the academic unit head and faculty member within seven (7) calendar days of receiving the recommendation.
 - (3) If, after seeking the opinions of the faculty peer committee, it is the judgment of the academic unit head that the faculty member has failed to satisfy the PAD, then the academic unit head will so inform the dean, the peer committee, and the affected faculty member in writing.

Upon receipt of the determination from the academic unit head, the dean will review the report of the academic unit head. The dean will personally confer with the faculty member regarding his/her performance under the PAD, with the appropriate academic unit head, and, if necessary, with the peer evaluation committee members. Following the review, the dean will forward a recommendation to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The dean may recommend to the provost and vice president of academic affairs any of several actions, including, but not limited to:

- a. restoring the faculty member to a regular status (the faculty member then becomes subject to the standard periodic comprehensive performance evaluation process);
- b. requiring another PAD be formulated, with a different peer committee; or
- c. instituting dismissal proceedings or other appropriate action in accordance with SFA policy. A faculty member subject to dismissal on the basis of evaluations conducted under this policy will receive specific written reasons for the dismissal and have the opportunity for referral of the matter to a non-binding alternative dispute resolution process as described in Chapter 154, Civil Practices and Remedies Code. The opportunity for non-binding alternative dispute resolution will be available only after all internal procedures are exhausted.

Cross Reference: Tex. Educ. Code § 51.942; Tex. Civ. Prac. & Rem. Code Ch. 154; Faculty Handbook; Academic Freedom and Responsibility (7.3); Academic Appointments and Titles (7.2); and Tenure and Continued Employment (7.29).

Responsible for Implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Contact for Revision: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs