

Faculty Evaluation

Evaluation of faculty performance is one of the chair's most difficult and important responsibilities. Probably no other activity has more potential for strengthening or weakening the department over a period of years. One of the most important components of faculty evaluation is communication with each faculty member regarding what is expected and what will be evaluated. This communication can be in the form of a contract, a written memorandum of understanding, or an official assignment statement. A verbal understanding not in writing may not be enough. Handled properly, evaluation can improve faculty morale and result in a strong, effective department. Handled improperly, evaluation can destroy morale, decrease the chances for the department's success in meeting objectives, and place the chair on the receiving end of a long succession of grievances. Most colleges and universities have, or should have, official documents that provide specific information about the evaluation process, such as how often evaluations will be conducted, who will do the evaluating, in what form the evaluations will be submitted, who may use them, how they will be used, and what may be placed in the faculty member's personnel file.

A necessary condition for effective evaluation is clear, specific criteria. In addition, there must be a reasonable, definitive assignment of activities and an ongoing system of performance counseling. If faculty members' assignments are sufficiently clear and if discussion between chair and faculty members regarding performance becomes a regular activity, evaluation will no longer be seen as a dreaded annual exercise. In effect, the process could become no more than a report of a faculty member's performance—a report that would hold no surprises for either the faculty member or the chair.

This chapter will focus on four questions: Why is evaluation necessary? What should be evaluated? Who should do the evaluating and what should be the process? How should performance be evaluated?

Why Is Evaluation Necessary?

Every department chair who has held the position for at least a year has been faced with the need to evaluate staff and faculty members. Evaluation is required by the dean, the collective bargaining contract, the vice president or provost, the president, the board of trustees, and even the faculty. State legislators, parents, and citizens are requiring more accountability with regard to the quality of teaching, benefits from research, and time away from campus service.

Faculty members themselves are no longer satisfied with arbitrary and paternalistic evaluation by a department chair. They insist on a more formal evaluation based on specific criteria, and this desire seems to increase as the discretionary funds available for merit raises decrease. Faculty members also want the option to appeal in the event they disagree with the evaluation. Leaders in education, therefore, need to find ways to perform evaluations that are reliable and acceptable to students, to the faculty, to faculty unions, to university administrators, and to state legislators and other groups responsible for providing financial support.

The central academic functions of most colleges and universities are teaching, research, and service. The activities performed by faculty members will fall under one or more of these categories with the attendant professional responsibilities included in each; thus, a department committee or the department as a whole will have little trouble developing a list of activities that should be evaluated. Questions about the minimal level of

performance quality and the kinds of evidence that will be accepted for evaluation, however, are considerably more difficult.

One point that has emerged in the last several years, especially at those institutions that have faculty unions, is the importance of evaluating only what has been formally assigned. Penalizing faculty members for failing to complete unassigned duties or for failing to accomplish more than what has been assigned has created legal problems in some instances when faculty members were not subsequently promoted or awarded tenure. It behooves chairs, therefore, to anticipate what activities within each major category will be evaluated and to include them in the formal assignment.

What Should be Evaluated?

Performance areas to be evaluated are generally listed in various official documents, such as the university constitution, the state system personnel policy manual, or a union contract. The list may vary in detail from one university to another or from one department to another within the same university, or from one faculty member to another. Most lists, however, will include the following performance areas, compiled from a variety of official documents. Note the mixture of activities, outcomes, and the quantitative and qualitative characteristics included.

Teaching. Teaching involves the presentation of knowledge, information, and ideas by methods that include lecturing, discussion, assignment and recitation, demonstration, laboratory exercise, practical experience, direct consultation with students, and so forth. In an evaluation, the use and effectiveness of each method should be considered. The evaluation of teaching effectiveness should be related to the written objectives of each course, which should have been given to each class at the beginning of the term. Evaluation of teaching should include consideration of:

- correlation of imparted knowledge and skills of course objectives,
- stimulation of students' critical thinking and creative ability in light of the course objectives, and
- the faculty member's adherence to accepted standards of professional behavior in meeting his or her responsibilities to students.

Generally speaking, the preferred sources of evidence for evaluating teaching are: (1) systematic rating by students; (2) chair's evaluation; (3) colleagues' opinions; (4) committee evaluation; (5) content of course syllabi and examinations; (6) informal rating by students; (7) colleagues' ratings based on classroom visits; (8) long-term follow-up of students' performance; (9) faculty member's interest in teaching improvement activities (workshops and so forth); (10) faculty member's self-evaluation or report; (11) students' examination performance; (12) popularity of elective courses (e.g., enrollment); and (13) opinions of alumni.

Research and Other Creative Activities. Contribution to and discovery of new knowledge, new educational techniques, and other forms of creative activity should be considered for evaluation. Evidence of research and other creative activity should include, but not be limited to, published books; articles and papers in professional journals; painting and sculpture; works for performance (musical compositions, dances, plays, and so forth); papers presented at meetings of professional societies; and current research and creative activity that has not yet resulted in publication, display, or performance. Evaluation of research and other creative activities should include consideration of:

- quality and quantity of productivity of both short-term and long-term research and other creative programs and contributions,

- recognition by the academic or professional community of work accomplished (for judgments pertaining to the decision to award tenure, evaluation should be sought from qualified scholars in pertinent disciplines both within and outside the university).

Service. Service should include, but not be limited to, involvement in department, college, and university committees, councils, and senates; service in appropriate professional organizations; involvement in organizing and expediting meetings, symposia, conferences, and workshops; participating in radio and television; and service on local, state, and national governmental boards, commissions, and other agencies. Only those activities that are related to a person’s field of expertise or to the university’s mission should be evaluated. Evaluation of service should include consideration of:

- contribution to the orderly and effective functioning of the academic administrative unit (program, department, school, college) and the whole institution,
- contribution to the university community,
- contribution to local, state, regional, and national communities, including scholarly and professional associations.

Other University Duties. Reasonable duties other than those usually classified as teaching, research or other creative activity, or service are occasionally assigned to faculty members. The performance of these duties—which might include academic administration, academic advising, career counseling, or the supervision of interns—should also be evaluated. Duties and responsibilities not assigned but expected of a faculty member may also be evaluated. These include such duties as adherence to rules, regulations and policies, collegiality, and other activities designated by the department.

Evaluation Based on Assignments

If evaluations are to be based on assignments, then the assignments must specify what constitutes successful and acceptable completion. Such specification requires an understanding of the difference between activities and outcomes, for both may be evaluated. Typically, faculty members are paid for participating in an acceptable set of professional activities, such as conducting classes, preparing syllabi and other materials for classes, advising and counseling students, serving on department and institutional governing committees, reviewing manuscripts, collecting and analyzing data, conducting research, and so on. Simply assigning activities without some idea of what is expected or what constitutes satisfactory completion of the assignment, however, makes it difficult to differentiate the performance of faculty members, especially when they are given similar activity assignments—the same numbers of courses to teach, the same percentage of time to conduct research, and so forth.

Outcomes are the results of activities. Whereas activities emphasize process, outcomes focus on achievements and end products. Examples of simple outcome assignments made by department chairs include preparing and duplicating for students a research bibliography on subject X for course Y; completing the first draft of the third chapter of a book manuscript on topic Z; and reviewing the professional literature on subject R for inclusion in a consulting paper for government agency A. All these outcomes are clearly observable.

Examples of complex outcome assignments would be completing manuscript M and finding a publisher for it; submitting a complete proposal for funding and having it accepted in principle; and completing a counseling project by a specific deadline date and arranging for publication of the final report. These outcome assignments are “complex” because they

include more than one condition that must be met. Two other complex outcome assignments, drawn from the literature of educational performance objectives, are teaching introductory course S so well that at least 75 percent of the students believed it was worthwhile and teaching course R so well that 85 percent attain a grade of C or higher on the final exam. Some controversy surrounds the idea that outcomes can be clearly specified, particularly when an arbitrary figure—such as 85 percent—appears in the statement. Such figures should be specified only after careful thought about what constitutes a satisfactory outcome; they should not be included merely to give an appearance of precision. Note that faculty members can meet these kinds of performance objectives by lowering standards.

Outcome assignments, if properly made, lend themselves more easily to an objective evaluation of performance quality than to activity assignments, which usually focus on quantity rather than quality of performance. Chairs who try to evaluate faculty performance on the basis of outcomes usually consult in advance with their faculty members to determine what each person plans to accomplish during the year and to stipulate the intended outcomes. The chair and the faculty member together develop the annual assignment, incorporating as far as possible the faculty member's plan. Some chairs and faculty members claim that faculty members generally resist a request to provide an advance list of the individual activities, projects, and outcomes that they plan for the coming year. They do not object, however, to submitting a detailed list of their accomplishments and their performance outcomes during the past year in order to prepare for an annual performance evaluation.

An interesting exercise for chairs would be to review some lists prepared by faculty members of their accomplishments of the past year, changing the tense of the verbs from past to future. By doing so, chairs can see what the anticipated outcome of assignments made at the beginning of the year might have been. Would these faculty members have been able to anticipate their accomplishments one year in advance? Would it have been helpful to them and to the department if they had been required to think in terms of intended accomplishments? Each person has his or her own opinion on these issues, and the arguments on both sides would provoke an interesting discussion.

Chairs who wish to specify desired outcomes in faculty members' annual assignments should obtain the following information about each person's activities. As far as teaching is concerned, the chair should know what level of effectiveness the faculty member plans to attain in helping students reach stated course objectives; what innovations are anticipated; how much effort will be expended in preparing for class; and what level of satisfaction will be expected from the students. If research or creative activity is part of the faculty member's assignment, the chair should know what progress can be expected by the end of the year and what kind of evidence (short of a published article or book) is acceptable to demonstrate that progress has been made; whether a rough draft of an article for publication will be completed; whether a special seminar or recital will be given; whether a specified amount of progress can be expected on a research project; and whether a library literature search will be completed by the end of the year. If a service assignment is made, the chair should know what outcome is expected; whether attendance at committee meetings is all that is expected; whether, if the assignment is on an ad hoc department committee, a report is due and who has responsibility for writing the report, whether contacts with potential students are part of a service assignment; and, if so, how many contacts are expected. These are the kinds of questions that department chairs should consider in making faculty assignments on which evaluations are based.

Obvious and specific procedures are necessary for interpreting whatever evidence is deemed appropriate for a faculty evaluation. For example, there must be procedures for reading and interpreting student ratings of teachers and some basis for assigning an overall quality of rating, i.e., for stating whether the faculty member's teaching is "outstanding,"

“very good,” “satisfactory,” “weak,” or “unsatisfactory.” Similarly, standard procedures for interpreting all other evidence are also needed, so that a chair can demonstrate the extent to which the final evaluation is based on objectively assessed evidence.

Who Should Do the Evaluating and What Should Be the Process?

Evaluation of a faculty member’s performance is usually derived from some or all of the following sources: the faculty member’s chair or other administrator; the faculty member’s self-evaluation; the faculty member’s peers; professional colleagues (at other universities in matters of promotion and tenure); students; and other university officials.

The department chair is usually the person responsible for collecting evaluations about each faculty member from these sources. Even though a faculty committee may have assisted the chair in the evaluation, most universities hold the department chair responsible for the official evaluation. Each faculty member should be told who will perform the official evaluation, the nature of the process, the performance criteria to be used, and so on. Similarly, all persons involved in submitting evidence or making judgments should be informed of their particular roles. One point cannot be overemphasized: the chair’s official evaluation rests on his or her informed judgment of all the appropriate evidence. The evaluation process gains substantial legitimacy in the eyes of the faculty members if they have been able to participate in the development of department goals and objectives.

Another way to involve faculty members in their own evaluation is to have each of them prepare an annual report describing his or her activities and accomplishments. Faculty members should be afforded the opportunity to describe in detail what they consider their important contributions to the department, the institution, the profession or discipline, and the community. Sometimes they cannot easily enumerate their outstanding accomplishments on a standardized form. Therefore, the self-evaluation could be written in narrative form, which would allow them the freedom to describe their achievements in their own words. Faculty members feel more confident that their actions are appreciated and valued if they have the opportunity to describe them adequately. On the other hand, the chair, when reading the annual report, should be able to distinguish between rhetoric and reality.

Students are often invited to participate in the institutional evaluation of faculty members. At some institutions they also conduct their own evaluation of teaching faculty members and publish the results for the benefit of fellow students. The results of these evaluations are quite interesting, to say the least.

How Should Performance Be Evaluated?

The questions of what should be evaluated and who should do the evaluating are relatively simple to answer compared with the question of how performance should be evaluated. The art of evaluating the performance of faculty members is not that well developed. Experts who are invited to make presentations on how to evaluate such performance will adequately explain why evaluation is important, what should be evaluated, who should do the evaluating, and what procedures should be followed to obtain maximum involvement of appropriate faculty members, students, and administrators in the evaluation process. Usually, however, these experts are unable to provide a magic formula that will make the evaluation process infallible.

The evaluation system that a department uses will depend on a variety of factors—the institution’s requirements, the school or college’s procedures, and so forth. The chair must remember, however, that basically five kinds of personnel decisions based on performance evaluation data must be made each academic year; (1) reappointment; (2) promotion

decisions; (3) tenure decisions; (4) annual assessments; (5) recommendations for merit pay. Two or more of these decisions may use the same evaluation data and thus may be scheduled simultaneously, but at most institutions these decisions are distinct in terms of legal requirements. Moreover, each personnel decision should be based on evaluation data that represent more than the subjective and arbitrary response of a chair or a committee of peers. Therefore, as these decisions become more complex, the chair should seek to implement or improve quantitative evaluations rather than avoid them.

Not every faculty member in a department is outstanding, but the difficult task for the chair is to differentiate among the members, most of whom perform their assigned duties at least satisfactorily. The department faculty members should help determine the specific criteria to be used for personnel decisions, whether these decisions are related to promotion, tenure, annual assessment, or merit recommendations. The chair must work with the faculty to delineate the particular evaluation criteria used in each part of the evaluation. The chair should also state how the criteria will be applied to the evidence in each person's evaluation folder.

In thinking about devising a system for evaluation, the chair and the faculty members together must confront several questions: First, what constitutes 100 percent of a full-time workload for a given term or year? Does 100 percent assignment demand all a faculty member's professional time and effort, regardless of the number of hours worked? Or does it consist of a specified number of hours, say forty hours per week? Is a formal definition of what constitutes 100 percent of a full-time workload even necessary? Will a faculty member's teaching duties alone make up 100 percent of his or her assigned full-time workload, with research and service activities considered as "add-ons"? If so, will such additional activities be required or voluntary? Will the performance of these additional activities, even though they are not part of a formal assignment, be evaluated for promotion and tenure purposes? Will a subjective evaluation be made of each faculty member's overall worth to the department without separate evaluation of the performance in each activity and regardless of whether the activity was formally assigned?

After the chair and the faculty members have thought through these questions and arrived at answers that are acceptable to them as a department, they must consider further questions. If each faculty member is expected to engage in some teaching, research, and service activities, will this expectation be stated formally in an assignment contract? If activities in these three areas are formally or informally assigned, will each faculty member receive a separate performance rating for each area? Will a faculty member's overall performance evaluation be determined by simply averaging the three ratings? Or will the ratings also take into consideration the amount of time and effort expended in each area? Is good teaching just as important to the department as good research? If a faculty member receives an "outstanding" rating for research and a "poor" rating for teaching, will the "poor" rating for teaching pull down his or her overall evaluation?

Evaluation processes can vary greatly. They can range from simple to complex, from subjective to objective. Whatever type of evaluation process is chosen, department chairs and faculty members alike must realize that human judgment is involved. All these types of evaluation, no matter how complex, do not eliminate the need for judgment and common sense. A very complicated, highly quantified type of evaluation may seem to be the most objective, but in the final analysis, it might be very unfair.

Taking this warning into consideration, we can outline a series of evaluation processes, beginning with a simple, subjective type. In this type of evaluation the chair bases his or her evaluation on the faculty member's performance of department activities without necessarily listing the activities and without prescribing what percentage of time or effort of full-time workload is to be spent on each activity. The chair reviews each faculty member's

performance over the past year, including the self-evaluation report, and then asks the question, How valuable, in my opinion, is this faculty member to the department? This process is repeated for all the faculty members, and then they are ranked according to how much the chair values their contributions to the department. In the process of ranking, the chair assigns a number to each subjective evaluation and by doing so gives a quantitative measure to each faculty member's performance. This simple type of evaluation, as well as the types described later, may be done by the chair alone, with or without the help of consultants; by a department committee headed by the chair; by a department committee without the chair's participation; or by the entire department.

At this point, the matter of rating faculty members as "above average" should be mentioned. Every department chair must face the fact, difficult as it may be to acknowledge, that all the members of his or her department are not necessarily "above average." If the evaluations of all faculty members in a single department are average, the evaluation of some faculty members will be below that average. To evaluate faculty members as "above average" or "below average" does not make sense unless the group with which they are being compared can be clearly specified. Is the reference group another department in the same school or college, another department in the institution, or a similar department in another university? To give ratings higher than faculty members deserve simply because everyone else is doing so is not good policy.

Performance Ratings

Performance ratings can range from simple to complex. A chair might simply rate the faculty members as "O.K." or "not O.K.," "merit" or "no merit," or "acceptable" or "not acceptable." Faculty members can also be rated on a three-point scale, such as "high merit," "low merit," and "no merit." The difference between a rating of 73 percent and 75 percent, however, may be insignificant in determining whether the performance of one faculty member should be rated higher than another's.

An evaluation procedure based on a four-point scale is also suggested for use. This approach is helpful because the scale is familiar to anyone who has graded academic performance. Simply translate the value terms *outstanding*, *very good*, *satisfactory*, *weak*, and *unsatisfactory* to the numbers 4.0, 3.0, 2.0, 1.0, and 0 (see figure 1 for performance rating key). For example, if the performance of a teaching activity is evaluated as "very good," the faculty member would receive a performance rating of 3.0. This scale will be used in subsequent discussions of more complex systems of evaluation, but it should be remembered that other schema can be used with equal effectiveness.

FIGURE 1. Performance rating key.¹

<u>Level of Performance</u>	<u>Performance Rating</u>
Outstanding	4
Very good	3
Satisfactory	2
Weak	1
<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>0</u>

Before a number system is adopted to designate levels of performance as "outstanding," "very good," "satisfactory," and so forth, the chair and the department should

¹ Developed by Allan Tucker

have some idea of what those ratings imply. In terms of performance, what is the difference between being “outstanding” and just “satisfactory”?

The simplest system sets the question of value in terms of the faculty member’s overall contribution to the department without requiring a separate detailed scrutiny of each activity performed by the faculty member. The question of value at the next level of complexity takes into account the faculty member’s contribution in each of the three major performance areas—teaching, research, and service. In this system, the faculty member’s performance in each area is rated separately on a four-point scale, and his or her ratings are averaged. Figure 2 shows the performance ratings, by area and based on the four-point scale, of three faculty members.

FIGURE 2. Rating of faculty members, by area of performance, using four-point scale.²

Area of Performance	Faculty Members		
	Jones	Smith	Brown
Teaching	4.0	2.0	2.0
Research	3.0	4.0	1.0
Service	3.0	3.0	
Total of Ratings	10.0	9.0	6.0
Average Rating	3.33	3.0	2.0

In our example, Jones comes out with an average rating of 3.33, which can be interpreted as somewhere between “very good” and “outstanding.” Smith’s average rating is “very good,” and Brown’s is “satisfactory.” If this type of evaluation were being done by a committee rather than the chair, each committee member could give each department member a separate rating for each area of performance. These ratings could then be averaged to produce a committee rating for each performance area. The system described above is used in departments that are not particularly concerned with the percentage of full-time workload that is assigned to any given activity. These same departments probably consider teaching, research, and service equally important to achieving department goals and do not rate outstanding researchers higher than outstanding teachers.

Faculty members in some departments, however, are not satisfied with a generalized system of assignment. They want evaluations to take into account the percentage of full-time workloads that is assigned to each of the three major performance areas; in addition, they want the evaluations to count activities that fall under a fourth category called “other.” The fourth category generally includes assignments such as administrative duties, career counseling, supervision of interns, and so forth. Such calculations are not difficult. It is possible, then, to make this kind of evaluation system as simple or as complex as the department members and chair desire.

Some departments have developed a point system to help in the evaluations. They have a comprehensive list of all activities in each area, and a specific number of points is awarded for the completion of each activity. For example, some departments award a certain number of points for publications in refereed journals and fewer points for those in non-refereed journals. In some fields there exists a well-known and generally accepted hierarchy of journals, and publications in the most prestigious journals are awarded more points than publications in less prestigious journals. A small number of points might be given for accepted publications. A certain number of points may be given for papers presented at national meetings and a smaller number for papers presented at regional or local meetings of

² Developed by Allan Tucker

professional societies. The number of points given for the publication of a book might differ according to the publisher's prestige.

In the area of service, questions about allocation of points may be complex and difficult. Consideration might be given to the number and importance of committees on which the faculty member serves. A department might award more points for chairing a committee than for serving on it and might vary the number of points for service on national, regional, and state committees. The number of points earned by each faculty member for each activity is then totaled. The department must then determine how to translate these totals into performance ratings. This system is mentioned as a matter of information but is not necessarily advocated for use.

Following is an example of a point system for evaluation developed by a small, primarily research-oriented department. The system specifies the number of points to be awarded for each activity included in the areas of teaching, research, and service.

SAMPLE OF POINT SYSTEM FOR FACULTY EVALUATION

A. Teaching

1. Teaching load

- a) Graduate courses—each 0.50 points X number of credit hours
- b) Undergraduate courses—each 0.30 points X number of credit hours
- c) Directed individual study, supervised research, or supervised teaching—each 0.10 points

2. Students' evaluation of faculty member; evaluation of peer or supervisor may also be conducted according to this form

- a) 90th percentile ranking—20 points
- b) 75th–89th percentile ranking—16 points
- c) 60th–74th percentile ranking—12 points
- d) 50th–59th percentile ranking—8 points

3. Supervisory committees or positions

- a) Director of doctoral committee—5 points for each Ph.D. granted during faculty member's evaluation period; 3 points for each ongoing doctoral committee
- b) Member of doctoral committee—2 points
- c) Director of master's committee—3 points for each master's degree granted during faculty member's evaluation period; 2 points for each continuing student
- d) Member of master's committee—1 point
- e) Graduate student advisor—1 point for every three students
- f) Laboratory director—10 points

B. Research and scholarly activity

1. Publications

a) Writing

- 1) Article for refereed national journal—5 points
- 2) Article for nonrefereed national journal—3 points
- 3) Article for state journal—2 points
- 4) Book with major publishing company—15 points
- 5) Revised book—7 Points
- 6) Section of book with major publisher—5 points
- 7) Book with local publisher—5 points

- 8) Section of book with local publisher—2 points
 - b) Editorial activities
 - 1) Editor of book—7 points
 - 2) Editor of national professional journal—15 points
 - 3) Editor of state professional journal—10 points
 - 4) Associate editor or reviewer for national journal—10 points
 - 5) Associate editor or reviewer for state journal—5 points
 - 6) Manuscript reviewer for major publisher—2 points each manuscript
 - 7) Reviewer for federal agency—5 points
 - 2. Research Projects
 - a) Author of R&D project funded by outside agency—15 points
 - b) Author of R&D project funded by university—10 points
 - c) Author of R&D project submitted to outside agency by not funded—5 points
 - d) Author of R&D project submitted to university but not funded—3 points
 - 3. Papers and speeches
 - a) Presented at national or international meeting by invitation—10 points
 - b) Submitted to national or international meeting—5 points
 - c) Presented to regional or state meeting, by invitation—5 points
 - d) Submitted to regional or state meeting—3 points
 - e) Presented at another institution, by invitation—5 points
 - f) Presented at local meeting—1 point
- C. Service
- 1. Committee activities
 - a) Chair of university committee—10 points
 - b) Member of university committee—5 points
 - c) Chair of school or college committee—5 points
 - d) Member of school or college committee—3 points
 - e) Chair of area or program committee—3 points
 - f) Member of area or program committee—1 point
 - g) Member of faculty senate—7 points
 - h) Chair of search committee—5 points
 - i) Member of search committee—3 points
 - 2. Professional activities
 - a) Chair of national committee—5 points
 - b) Member of national committee—3 points
 - c) Chair of regional or state committee—3 points
 - d) Member of regional or state committee—1 point
 - e) Officer at regional or national level—10 points
 - f) Officer at state level—7 points
 - g) Leader for in-service training—3 points
 - h) Organizer for workshop—5 points
 - i) Attendance at professional meeting—1 point each
 - 3. Consulting (each visit—2 points)

This system is highly quantitative in that it assigns a number of points for each activity. It is also qualitative, however, in that it allocates more points to good teaching

performance than to average teaching performance, more points for papers published in prestigious journals than for papers published in lesser journals, and more points for membership on important committees than for membership on less important committees.

Another system of point allocation used by some departments rates faculty members' teaching performance on a ten-point scale, with "outstanding" performance receiving a full ten points and "poor" performance receiving no points at all. The average score for faculty members in the department is fixed beforehand at five points. Thus a department with ten members will have a total of fifty points to be divided among all the faculty members for teaching performance. This system is sometimes called the "constant sum" method. If a rater gives three faculty members ten points each for teaching performance, there would be only twenty points left to be divided among the other seven members. The same method is used for evaluating research and service.

This rating system, by limiting the total number of points that can be allocated, keeps a department from giving high ratings to all its members. In practice, if a small committee does the rating, the result will be sharp differentiations between faculty members, with some receiving high scores and others receiving low scores. When a large number of persons does the rating, the result will be a regression towards the mean, and the system loses much of its discriminating force.

The Evaluation Folder

The rules and regulations governing faculty members usually require that an official evaluation folder be established for each member. The folder is to be accessible only to the faculty member and to administrators who must make evaluative decisions. It may contain any information that will be used in the evaluation process, including summaries of performance counseling actions as well as annual formal evaluations prepared by the department chair.

In this age of due process, a faculty member may challenge any item placed in the evaluation folder and, by mutual agreement, the item may be removed from the folder. Also note that anonymous material, except systematic student evaluations and committee summaries, may not be placed in the folder. Some state laws may give even greater protection to personnel files.

The art of evaluating the quality of faculty members' performance always has been a perplexing problem. Quantity of performance can be measured in many ways, but quality of performance is, in most instances, measured in terms of the opinions, values, and perceptions held by students, peers, alumni, and other persons who have actually observed or been the beneficiaries of the performance. Scientifically derived numbers to describe quality are difficult to formulate. Quality of performance is best described with words and phrases, but words and phrases cannot be added, multiplied, or averaged. To overcome this difficulty, numbers are often assigned to various words and phrases that describe quality of performance. Numbers can be processed mathematically for the purpose of yielding a final number that supposedly represents a faculty member's overall evaluation. This final number can then be transposed into words or phrases that describe the quality of the overall performance. The number, regardless of how sophisticated the mathematical process that yields it, still represents a collection of human judgments. Attempting to quantify the quality of faculty performance, nevertheless, does force the evaluator to examine more carefully all facets of the faculty member's professional life.

If a chair subjectively feels that Faculty Member X is the most valuable member in the department and if an evaluation procedure based on statistical analysis shows that Faculty Member Y far surpasses Faculty Member X in performance, the chair is faced with the

problem of reconciling these opposing evaluations. He or she can do so by modifying the statistical evaluation procedure or by reconsidering his or her personal evaluation of both faculty members. Perhaps the statistical procedure needs to be refined, or perhaps the chair's personal evaluations of these two faculty members are no longer relevant. The exercise of quantifying performance should not be avoided just because it has not been perfected. Used properly, this tool can help the chair evaluate faculty members and the department as a whole.

Summary Note – Larry Abele

The first three years are critical to a new colleague. Be honest in assessment. Failure to conduct meaningful annual evaluations can have the unfortunate result that the candidate is unsuccessful in securing promotion and/or tenure and will have to enter the job market at the six-year mark. When this happens, opportunities for academic positions are severely reduced. It would be far better for all concerned to counsel the candidate to leave the university at the end of the second or third year in better time to find a more suitable position. One university or department may not be the perfect fit while another university may be the ideal fit.

The annual evaluation of faculty, therefore, should be helpful to everyone involved, particularly to our new colleagues. It should serve to assist those who need help and to thank those who have performed well. In most cases, problems can be corrected if given guidance and time, but the situation almost never improves if we ignore it. A serious effort when addressing annual evaluations and third year reviews will result in the high standards we all want, the success of our colleagues, and the type of colleague with whom we wish to spend our academic lifetime.

Importance and Purpose of Performance Counseling

Performance counseling offers the chair a valuable communications tool that, properly used, can significantly enhance relations with faculty members and improve the department's chances for attaining its goals. Performance counseling is here defined as a regular although not necessarily formal contact between the chair and the individual faculty members for the purpose of discussing successes and failures in completing assignments and duties. It is a two-way communications device that affords chairs and faculty members an opportunity to express their concerns and needs. Failure to provide this opportunity can become a grievance issue in the case of faculty members whose performance has been labeled as deficient at evaluation time. At many institutions, performance counseling is required by state law, institutional policy, or collective bargaining agreement.

Some department chairs shirk the responsibility of providing performance counseling because they view this activity as nonprofessional or even degrading. They regard faculty members as professional peers and feel that infringing on or criticizing a fellow faculty member's professional activities is unjustifiable. This attitude is particularly prevalent in institutions in which department chairs serve on a rotating basis; it also exists in departments in which the chair's academic rank happens to be lower than that of his or her peers. Both chairs and faculty members will find performance counseling more acceptable, however, when they see that it can pave the way for more palatable decisions about promotion, tenure, and salary increases.

Chairs are also reluctant to provide performance counseling because it demands a complete understanding of department goals and objectives, the ability to make specific assignments for faculty members, and experience in assessing what constitutes acceptable

performance standards. Meeting these requirements is no small matter and requires a great deal of thought and maturity. Further, the skills involved cannot easily be taught, because they require an intuitive judgment that not all chairs possess equally.

Perhaps the most important advice that can be given to performance counselors is—avoid distorting the record. Chairs often tend to look for strong points that can offset weak points or gloss over problems, especially those considered minor. Another distortion results when justifiable criticisms are turned into compliments. For example, a faculty member who gives unreasonably difficult examinations and fails an excessive number of students may be described by the chair as a teacher who “demands a high standard of excellence from students!” Such distortions merely avoid the issues and undermine the counseling approach, if not the entire evaluation procedure.

Dealing with Unsatisfactory Performance

One of a chair’s most difficult and unpleasant duties is to inform faculty members that their performance has been unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, unsatisfactory performance must be dealt with, since bad situations often deteriorate even more if left unattended. Because chairs are colleagues of the faculty members whose performance is deemed inadequate, the problem of how to confront those colleagues is often perplexing. Some basic principles, practices, and techniques can be useful when attempting to remedy certain situations.

Unsatisfactory performance is handled most effectively if it is identified early. Early detection of an unhealthy situation allows time for diagnosis and remediation. How, then, does a chair recognize a developing problem that requires attention? First, the faculty member’s performance must be compared with predetermined standards of satisfactory performance. In this discussion we will assume that the department has developed criteria that are used to determine whether or not a faculty member’s performance is acceptable in areas of teaching, research, service, and other assigned duties.

Some unsatisfactory behaviors, such as unethical or illegal conduct, must simply be stopped to prevent irreparable harm. Other problems that occur because of rule or policy infractions generally are easily handled provided the chair has at least a modicum of courage. Institutional policy statements, faculty constitutions, or collective bargaining agreements may give the chair significant authority in such matters. For example, most institutions require that faculty members who accept outside employment report such employment before beginning the work. Such activity may well affect performance, especially if the faculty member is off campus one or more days per week. A faculty member’s failure to follow this rule should be dealt with directly and firmly if the violation appears to be intentional.

Another example of unacceptable behavior is a faculty member’s failure to hold office hours as required by university regulations or to meet scheduled classes. Repeated behavior of this type simply cannot be tolerated. The chair’s job is not to be a policeman but to correct actions that are not in the best interests of students and the department. The effective chair simply must engage in direct action, through informal as well as formal means.

Unsatisfactory performance, like most behavior, usually has a discernible cause or cluster of causes. The chair must learn to search for possible causes before attempting to discuss with the faculty member the behavior in question. Most instances of unsatisfactory performance are usually linked to personal matters, environmental matters related to employment, or both.

Personal matters that may cause unsatisfactory performance include the following:

1. *Lack of competence.* Incompetence takes various forms. A faculty member may perform poorly in teaching a certain course because he or she was trained in another area and does not possess the requisite knowledge to teach the assigned course. Other persons may lack pedagogic skills or may be unable to organize course content or to manage field experiences.
2. *Lack of mental or physical ability to carry out assigned duties.* Certain faculty members not only demonstrate incompetence but also seem unable to acquire necessary skills, no matter how hard they try. For example, a biology professor whose training was in taxonomy lacked the detailed knowledge of biochemistry and physiology necessary for teaching courses in modern biology. Furthermore, he seemed to lack the mental ability to master the new material. Another example is an education professor who lacked the physical stamina required to travel extensively while supervising interns. A few faculty members perform poorly because they are simply too lazy to devote the necessary effort to their tasks.
3. *Lack of understanding of what is expected.* Some faculty members do not have a clear idea of what their duties are, or their view of their responsibilities conflicts with the views of the chair and the department. For example, a faculty member who felt that teaching was her main responsibility received a poor evaluation because of her lack of research activity. She did not understand that all members of her department were expected to conduct research. Another faculty member thought that teaching off-campus courses fulfilled his responsibilities and refused to serve on committees. As a result, his overall evaluation in the area of service was unsatisfactory.
4. *Lack of proper attitude or appropriate temperament.* Some faculty members do not have the appropriate temperament or attitude to carry out certain assignments. For example, some extremely competent scholars seem temperamentally incapable of teaching undergraduate general education courses. Although very successful with graduate courses in their specific fields, they lack patience and understanding with students whose major interests may lie elsewhere. Other faculty members are resentful of duties they consider demeaning. Such duties may include undergraduate counseling, off-campus teaching, service on certain committees, and attendance at official functions. These negative attitudes often lead to poor performance.

Environmental matters that may contribute to poor performance include the following:

1. *Social pressures and lack of acceptance by colleagues.* A faculty member's apathy and poor performance may be linked to lack of acceptance by colleagues. There are many reasons why some faculty members are not socially accepted. Some are perceived as having abrasive personalities. Others may be thought of as unwelcome intruders thrust upon the department as a result of reorganization. Still others may be rejected because of differences in age, sex, or lifestyle. Some persons collapse under the pressure of trying to emulate successful colleagues.
2. *Lack of incentives.* Some faculty members are not motivated to perform well because of insufficient incentives. These incentives may include adequate financial rewards, public recognition for achievements, and

perquisites such as travel expenses for professional meetings or even a parking space.

3. *Lack of appropriate facilities and pleasing environment.* A faculty member's performance may suffer because of inadequate physical facilities and resources such as laboratory equipment, office space, libraries, and classroom environments. Dissatisfaction with the social and physical climate of the community at large may also affect the quality of his or her performance.
4. *Lack of adequate leadership.* In some instances a faculty member's poor performance may be directly related to counterproductive interaction with the department chair. The faculty member may receive insufficient encouragement, praise, direction, or supervision. As a result, he or she may perceive a lack of concern on the chair's part. Other chairs may supervise too closely (micromanage) thereby causing undue anxiety and tension.

In attempting to deal with a faculty member whose performance is considered unsatisfactory, the chair should first learn as much as possible about the personal and environmental matters that may be affecting the faculty member's behavior. The chair may know some of these circumstances from personal observation, some from observation by other faculty members. In most instances it is advisable for the chair to meet with the faculty member in question to discuss the matter. The chair should prepare for the encounter by giving thought to the following suggestions.

First, it is difficult to tell someone that his or her performance has been unsatisfactory without provoking a defensive reaction. Defensiveness is natural, and even the chair may become defensive when confronting a faculty member whose performance is unsatisfactory. But defensiveness is counterproductive and should be minimized whenever possible. If the discussion regarding the faculty member's performance is seen as a counseling session rather than as an interview for formal evaluation, any potential defensiveness may be diffused. The discussion should be just that—a discussion, not a lecture. The chair should try to involve the faculty member, rather than reprimand him or her. As mentioned earlier, the chair should start a dialogue with a faculty member at the first hint of difficulty and continue the dialogue at regular intervals. In this way, discussion of instances of poor performance will arise within a context of openness and will not provoke an immediate negative reaction. The chair should avoid lumping all a faculty member's shortcomings into one bundle and dumping it on the unsuspecting person without warning.

The chair may perceive unsatisfactory faculty performance as a personal insult or as a poor reflection of his or her leadership abilities. He or she may also feel guilty about a faculty member's shortcomings. These reactions should not be allowed to develop into anger or hostility toward the faculty member. The chair should be as self-controlled and as calm as possible, since emotional responses are always counterproductive. Yet the chair needs to recognize his or her feelings and anxieties and not try to repress them completely. At times, however, poor performance may be caused by the chair's behavior. In such cases, the chair should admit to this possibility and not try to project an image of omniscience and infallibility.

The faculty member should be made to feel that the chair is genuinely interested in bringing about positive changes and is willing to spend as much time and effort as is necessary to do so. The faculty member should also be made to feel that his or her poor performance need not be shouldered alone, that it is a problem for the whole department and can be solved cooperatively for the good of the department. What must be determined,

therefore, is how best to solve the problem, not who should be blamed. Problem solving requires the chair's empathetic understanding of the faculty member and the ability to see the other person's point of view. To relieve the faculty member's anxiety, the chair must point out that others have had similar problems that have been successfully resolved.

When the chair has achieved the proper frame of mind for performance counseling, he or she should again review the personal and environmental matters discussed earlier to see if anything can be done to change the situation. The faculty member should be encouraged to participate in the dialogue and make suggestions for change. If the dialogue goes well, some of these suggestions may correspond to those of the chair. At the same time, the chair should be flexible enough to change his or her mind when new insights emerge as the result of dialogue. Some measures within the realm of the department's authority or control include providing opportunities for retraining faculty members who lack certain competencies; providing opportunities for reassignment for those who lack the ability to gain competence or whose health requires less demanding tasks; providing more preparation time for those who are overloaded or overworked; and changing or upgrading facilities for a better research atmosphere. Faculty members who are experiencing a personal crisis may benefit from a new assignment, for the change may give them a renewed sense of importance and productivity. Sometimes unsatisfactory performance cannot be remedied. Although an attempt should be made to resolve the problem, the chair must be able to recognize and accept the fact that some faculty members' performance cannot be improved.

Initiating and Conducting a Dialogue about Unsatisfactory Performance

The importance of dialogue in solving problems of poor performance has been emphasized. Following are some concrete suggestions to the chair about how to initiate and conduct a discussion with a faculty member.

- Make a personal contact, during which you can invite the faculty member to meet with you to talk about his or her progress towards reaching performance expectations. Do not send a memorandum to the faculty member listing his or her areas of unsatisfactory performance and asking that an appointment be made with you to discuss them. A private and uninterrupted meeting should be arranged for this purpose.
- Try to allay the faculty member's anxiety by being calm and cool. Let the faculty member know that his or her personal worth is respected and that his or her abilities are appreciated, but that specific changes in performance are necessary.
- Be open-minded, tolerant, and cooperative, and encourage the faculty member to express his or her point of view. Be considerate. Listen attentively to what is being said without interrupting, and keep sufficient control over the discussion so that it does not develop into a shouting match or an abusive argument.
- Be as empathetic as possible and give credit where credit is due, but try to focus on those areas that need improvement and on the possible solutions to the problem. Feelings of friendship should not be allowed to stand in the way of challenging unsatisfactory performance.
- When pinpointing poor performance, be specific and descriptive, rather than ascribe a blanket negative value to the performance. Be ready to offer concrete suggestions about what needs to be done, especially when the

faculty member seems unable to develop his or her own plan. At the same time, keep the plan flexible.

The meeting should result in the development of a course of action that is agreed upon by both chair and faculty member and that includes specific objectives and a schedule for achieving them. The chair should arrange additional meetings, if necessary, and keep a written record of the dialogue and its conclusions. The faculty member deserves to have a copy of the record of the meeting. A note of caution: the chair should not try to give psychological counseling to the faculty member or even suggest that it is needed. Experience has shown that giving this kind of advice, even when it is solicited, sometimes results in legal action against the chair or the university or both.

Maintaining a Record of Performance Counseling

The chair's responsibility for maintaining a record of performance counseling, including comments on successful and outstanding accomplishments as well as problem areas, is increasingly important. This record need not be extensive or detailed, and it should not be kept secret from the faculty member involved. It can be as valuable to the faculty member as it is to the chair, since the faculty member soon gains a clearer picture of the performance standards expected by the chair. The performance counseling record is a valuable document when decisions about promotion, tenure, or salary adjustments are made. When promotion, tenure, or salary adjustments must be denied, the chair must be able to document that a reasonable effort has been made to assist the faculty member to improve poor performance. Summaries of performance counseling actions should go in the faculty member's evaluation folder.

The department chair, then, should establish a regular pattern of performance counseling with the department faculty members. This effort may be formal or informal, but the real purpose of the counseling is to establish a close working relationship with faculty members and to encourage actions that the chair feels will benefit both the faculty member and the department. Counseling must be based on clear, definite assignments and on reasonable standards of performance in each major academic area—teaching, research, and service. The chair must document performance counseling activities as accurately and as quantitatively as possible without overreacting with either positive or negative comments.

The improvement in faculty members' performance as a result of performance counseling can play a significant role in promotion, tenure, and salary adjustment decisions. Performance counseling may also prove to be important to the chair as a way of establishing and maintaining meaningful communication with faculty members.

Encouraging Good Performance

In facing the day-to-day problems of running a department, the chair can easily overlook the importance of encouraging acceptable performance. Most faculty and staff members feel encouraged when their chair makes the effort to identify good performance and offers a sincere comment on the work. Chairs must find time to compliment special efforts by faculty members. Obvious performance—such as unusually high student ratings, a published paper, a successful grant proposal, or an outstanding presentation to a group of local businessmen—is easy to identify and deserves favorable comment. The recognition of less obvious accomplishments—such as completing an assignment ahead of schedule, spending extra time with a group of students, or being available to help with an unexpected problem—can be an even greater boost for a faculty member's morale.

The chair should also take every opportunity to encourage actions by faculty members that will lead to successful promotions and tenure decisions and to ensure that good performance is properly documented. The chair's task is *not* to build the case for the faculty member but to have as much supporting evidence as possible when making a case for promotion or tenure.

Questions

1. Think about the evaluation criteria, methods, and procedures of your department. Are the measures specific? Subjective?
2. How does your department conduct annual evaluations? Is there a departmental committee? Is annual evaluation the sole responsibility of you as chair?
3. Do you meet with each faculty member to discuss the annual evaluation? Do you follow up the meeting with a written statement of what was discussed? (See example letters on following pages.)
4. Do you make notes of accomplishments/activities for each faculty member? Make notes of specific suggestions for improvement?
5. Does your department have a set method for peer review of teaching? If so, does each evaluator use a departmental form for this evaluation of teaching?
6. Do you believe your university, college and/or department evaluate teaching as a major component for promotion and tenure?
7. Does your department mentor a new faculty member, explain tenure and promotion requirements completely, and follow the research and publication progress of that new member?
8. Does your department conduct third-year performance reviews? Do you use the third-year review as a benchmark for successful progress toward tenure?
9. If the third-year review is inadequate, do you counsel the faculty member to seek other employment? Do you help?
10. How can a chair who is essentially grading a faculty member's performance also counsel the faculty member? What is the difference in a performance evaluation and performance counseling? Could or should these be done at the same time?
11. Should a department chair establish a regular pattern or schedule to review performance during the year? How would these meetings affect the annual evaluation session?
12. Following is a list of situations that call for some performance counseling. Expand each situation into a scenario based on your experience and/or imagination. Assume that you are the chair who will deal with the faculty members in question. What

would you say to them? Under what circumstances would you meet with each of them? Anticipate their response. What kind of help could you offer them?

- Dealing with the faculty member whose teaching performance is unsatisfactory. Assume that the faculty member in this instance has never been counseled before regarding this problem.
- Dealing with the faculty member whose research output is inadequate. Assume that the faculty member in this instance has been counseled once before regarding this problem.
- Informing a non-tenured assistant professor who has been in the department for three years that his contract will not be renewed the following year. Assume that the assistant professor has received no performance counseling prior to this meeting.
- Dealing with a productive faculty member whose morale is low because his application for promotion was denied.
- Dealing with the faculty member who is productive in areas not related to the department's mission. His efforts need to be redirected.
- Counseling with the faculty member who casually visits your office to talk about an apparent simple problem while underneath is a considerably more fundamental problem.
- Counseling with the faculty member who has been the subject of gossip about improper behavior but there is no hard evidence.
- Dealing with a tenured faculty member occupying a funded chair who has suddenly lost all interest in his work.

Case study

The past chair of a certain department has rated Professor Smith as being more productive than Professor Jones for each of the past four years. His method of evaluation was based primarily on his overall impression of these two faculty members. This year, as new chair, you have decided to follow a more complex evaluation system which requires that each of the three primary activities—teaching, research, and service—be broken down into its component activities, that each component activity be rated separately using numbers rather than descriptive words, and that the numbers be treated statistically so that an overall numerical rating could be determined for each faculty member. Using this method, you have determined that Professor Jones has an overall higher rating than Professor Smith.

- a. Give reasons that might account for the discrepancy.
- b. What must the new chair do?

Ineffective Letter - 2nd Year Appraisal

May 27, 2023

Mary B. Goode, Assistant Professor
Any Florida University
Any Department
Sunny, FL 33333

Dear Professor Goode:

The purpose of this letter is to review the matters discussed at your annual evaluation with me. While I value you highly as a colleague and respect the contributions that you make as a teacher and advisor, I have some concern about the level of scholarly production and publication. You need to publish more. As a consequence of this concern I have decided to reduce your teaching load to one course during the Fall 2024 semester.

As you may know, the criteria for promotion and tenure have changed and the university expects more from faculty. Please do not hesitate to call on me for assistance.

Sincerely,

C. L. Useless
Chair and Professor

Effective Letter - 2nd Year Appraisal

April 12, 2023

Dr. Jane Jones, Assistant Professor
Department of Sociology
Any Florida University
Sunny, FL 33333

Dear Dr. Jones:

The purpose of this letter is to provide written feedback on your progress to date toward promotion and tenure. I will comment on your performance thus far in teaching, research and service.

In the area of teaching, I am basing my comments on my observations of your classroom teaching and on informal feedback from students. (I would remind you again that you must complete the SUSSAI evaluations in the fall semesters and would encourage you to have these evaluations done in other semesters as well.) Overall, I found your class quite enjoyable. You were obviously well prepared and used an interesting strategy for reviewing the course content for the test. It appeared that the students were well versed in the material you had covered. You knew all of the students' names, which is a sign to me that you have taken the time to get to know your students. I would encourage you to continue this level of energy and commitment to your teaching. I would also encourage you to be timely in your feedback to students on their performance and written work. I have heard from three students, two in SOC 5105 and one in SOC 3221, that you either have not returned their papers or that you did so several months after the class had ended. Students must be given such feedback in a timely manner. Please arrange to return all student papers by the end of the semester in which the course is offered.

In terms of your research and scholarship, your vitae and evidence of performance indicate that you have one book chapter, a case study, and two book reviews since coming to AFU. You also indicated that you had submitted one article that was presented at ASA to the *Journal of Symbolic Interaction*. Two additional articles are to be submitted in summer 2024. You presented a total of five papers since 2020 at either the ASA or MSA meetings. While your presentation rate is good, I would encourage you to continue submitting for publication the papers you prepared for presentation. A modest goal would be to achieve at least two publications per year, one of which is in a peer-reviewed journal. You should also plan to submit some of your work to ISI high-impact journals (e.g., *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Annual Review of Sociology*). As I have discussed with you previously, it would also strengthen your research program to have some type of funded project. I would be glad to assist you in locating an appropriate funding source and in providing the support staff and services necessary to complete a proposal. As I have already assigned a doctoral student to you this semester for this purpose (Smith), I expect that you should have a concrete plan for preparing a proposal. The obtaining of such grant support would strengthen your ability to conduct either community-based or educationally-based

research and add to your stature as a researcher and scholar. While such efforts are sometimes frustrating and time-consuming, they are well worth your while.

With respect to your service activities, I realize that as Chair of the Specialization Committee you have spent considerable time this year in organizing and generally “cleaning up” the program. You have done an outstanding job in this area. I would urge you to use your committee and support staff to the fullest so you do not end up having to do everything single-handedly. Obviously, your leadership is essential, but the other faculty involved can certainly share some of the burdens. Your other service activities to the school, the university and to the discipline (ASA and SSA work) are all excellent. Here again, I would encourage you to consider combining, somehow, your interests and efforts in sociological education with the need for scholarship. Some of your conference paper presentation topics would be ideal candidates for subsequent publication. More of this type of “dual” payoff will build your reputation as a scholar.

I would also encourage you to approach tasks and activities in the department with a spirit of cooperation and respect for colleagues. While I believe you have the best interests of the department in mind, there have been occasions in which other faculty have interpreted your actions or memos as somewhat brusque and abrupt. I do not think that was your intention. Be aware that the impact you have on others often affects their willingness to work cooperatively with you in the future. I am giving you this feedback with the intention of being helpful and supportive. Please do not hesitate to ask for my advice and consultation whenever you need it.

It is obvious to me that you are working very hard to do the kinds of things that will further your career and enhance the reputation of the department. I hope that you continue in this level of activity and take my suggestions into account. Let me know if there is anything I can do to help support you in these efforts.

Sincerely,

Max DeConstruct
Chair and Professor
Department of Sociology

Ineffective Letter - 3rd Year Appraisal

May 27, 2023

Professor Lorna Doone
Any Florida University
Any Department
Sunny, FL 33333

Dear Professor Doone:

This letter is a summary of matters discussed at your annual evaluation conference with me. First, I have received several anonymous notes from students about your unusual ideas expressed in class. You need to be careful about what you say to the students.

I have some concern that your past assignment precluded you from developing a sustained record of teaching graduate and undergraduate classes with substantial enrollments. It is clear that you have substantial capacity for teaching and it is important that we move to a system of assignments that enables you to have contact with larger numbers of students on a regular basis.

The need to develop a strong record in research and publication is paramount to your successful achievement of promotion and tenure. You should probably have a plan for this.

Your service to the department has been very good. I hope it continues. I greatly appreciate the significant contribution you make to the department and I am confident that you are making excellent progress.

Sincerely,

Knott Goode
Chair and Professor
Any Department

Effective Letter - 3rd Year Appraisal

May 10, 2023

Dr. John Doe, Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology
Any Florida University
Sunny, FL 33333

Dear Dr. Doe:

The purpose of this letter is to provide written feedback on your progress to date toward promotion and tenure. I will base my comments pertaining to teaching, research and service on student evaluations, my own observation of your teaching and your evidence of performance and the Faculty Evaluation Committee's recommendation. I have discussed these areas with you previously in your annual evaluation meeting with me in April, 2023.

In the area of teaching, I reviewed SUSSAI from four courses (PSY 4650-2 sections; 4784 and 5931). All of these courses were either research or statistics courses which are not among some of our students' favorites. Yet, your evaluations were consistently positive and well above both the department and university averages. I found your research class session on 10/15/22 to be outstanding. I was impressed with your willingness to go over the test and your overall approach to testing discussed immediately after the exam. The students were surprisingly positive. You integrated real examples with the research concepts very well. Your sense of humor was a definite plus. I also note positively that you are serving on one doctoral student committee and have directed one DIS.

In terms of research and scholarship, you published six journal articles and one book chapter, have four articles in press, submitted five additional articles, and have 13 manuscripts in some phase of preparation. You also completed two technical reports. You delivered six papers at national conferences and two invited colloquia. This level of scholarly productivity is outstanding and will serve to hasten your status as a national and international scholar in adolescents. For the most part, you are targeting top tier journals. I would encourage you to consider publishing in more journals that are ISI indexed. I continue to be impressed with your seemingly tireless efforts at proposal writing and your repeated success in securing state contracts with Dr. Freud. The funding of your NIH proposal will significantly strengthen your reputation and future grant and publication prospects. I also remain appreciative of your willingness to collaborate with other junior colleagues in the department on projects that will lead to greater scholarly productivity. In short, your research and scholarship thus far are excellent.

In the area of service, you have participated on two standing and one ad hoc committee in the department and served as an active member of the University's Research and Human Subjects Committee. You have served on federal grant review panels, local United Way Citizen's Review Team and review boards of two journals.

These activities are very important and demonstrate excellent citizenship for the department. In the coming year, I can only suggest greater involvement in departmental governance and leadership activities.

Overall, you are making outstanding progress toward promotion and tenure. My suggestions given here are intended to help you succeed. I know that you are working extremely hard to make contributions that will further your career and enhance the reputation of the Psychology Department. I highly value your efforts and productivity. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help support you in your efforts.

Sincerely,

I. M. Goode, Chair
Department of Psychology