

# SOME COMMENTS ON THE WRITTEN EVALUATION PROCESS



Institute for Academic Leadership  
Department Chairpersons Workshop  
By Dr. Catherine Longstreth

# Evaluations of performance are required by:

- Law
- Rules
- Collective Bargaining Agreement



# Chair is responsible for the annual written evaluation



And other evaluation reviews that may be necessary.

# Purpose of written evaluation is the assessment of performance



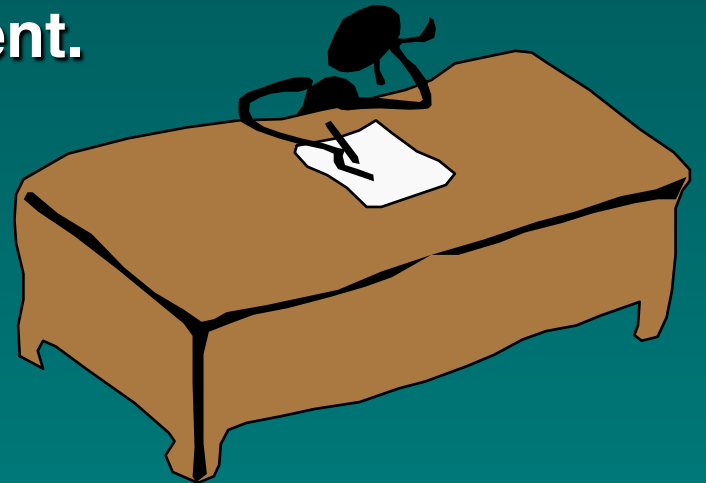
- recognition of performance
- acknowledgement of accomplishments beyond the assignment
- identification of deficiencies or area needing improvement
- suggestions for improvement/ professional development
- appraisal of progress toward tenure and promotion

**The chair's assessment of performance in the annual written evaluation review should be based on:**

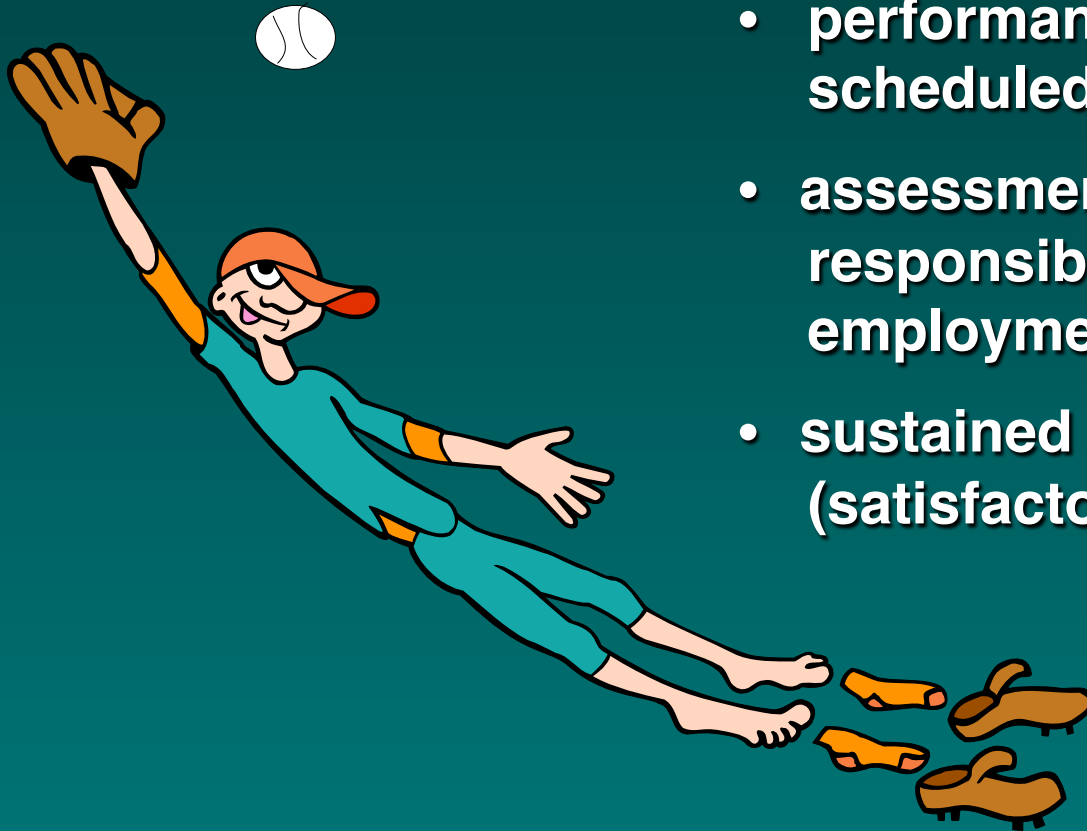
**Assigned duties - scheduled and non-scheduled**

**and**

**Other responsibilities and obligations expected of a faculty member or pertinent to employment.**



# In assessing performance the chair should consider:



- performance in assigned duties - scheduled and non-scheduled
- assessment of attendant responsibilities and obligations of employment
- sustained performance (satisfactory/unsatisfactory)

# **In preparing the letter of evaluation -**

## **The chair should seek evaluative input...**

- **from the faculty member being evaluated -**  
annual reports, goals and objectives, copies of instructional materials, abstracts, papers, completed works and works in progress, etc.
- **from peer reviews -**  
based on the results of classroom observations, reviews of annual reports, etc.

# And consider evaluative information received from:

- **Students**
- **Others (e.g., other professionals, peers outside institution, alumni, users of services, patients and members of public)**
- **Administrators/ supervisors**





# The chair's written annual performance evaluations should:



- reference results of peer reviews and the like
- reference measurable indicators when possible
- use judgments or opinions based on direct observations, if possible
- use qualifying descriptive modifiers consistently in the process.

## **The evaluations should:**

- **include meaningful and constructive comments**
- **note strengths and document weaknesses**
- **be accurate and factual**
- **review and possibly reference previous year's evaluation and annual reports.**

**Consider including statement addressing overall indicators of performance.**

# Suggestions ...

**Provide for an employee response encouraging suggestions and ideas regarding the:**

**mission of the department**

**role of the chair or supervisor.**

**Provide an opportunity for the employee to respond to the letter and attach to the evaluation in the record.**



# Pitfalls ...

- **Compiling annual evaluation without reviewing previous year's evaluation.**
- **Re-using last year's evaluation without a critical review.**
- **Indicating a satisfactory performance in assigned duties, but with overall assessment of less than satisfactory -- *without* an explanation.**



# More Pitfalls ...

Issuing performance evaluations which:

allow little variation among employees

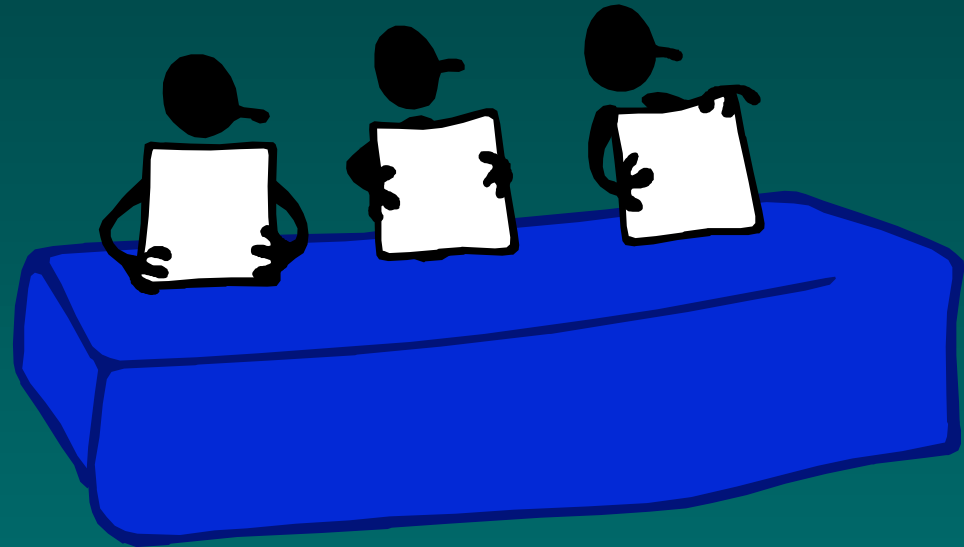
are overly general, confusing, misleading, and/or poorly prepared.



# Teaching/Instructional Activities

Indicate \_\_\_\_% of effort - then review assessment of performance, including the reasons for the assessment, based on the assignments such as:

Classroom/Lab  
Advising  
Clinical Teaching  
Extension  
Curatorial  
Librarianship



# Teaching/Instructional Activities...

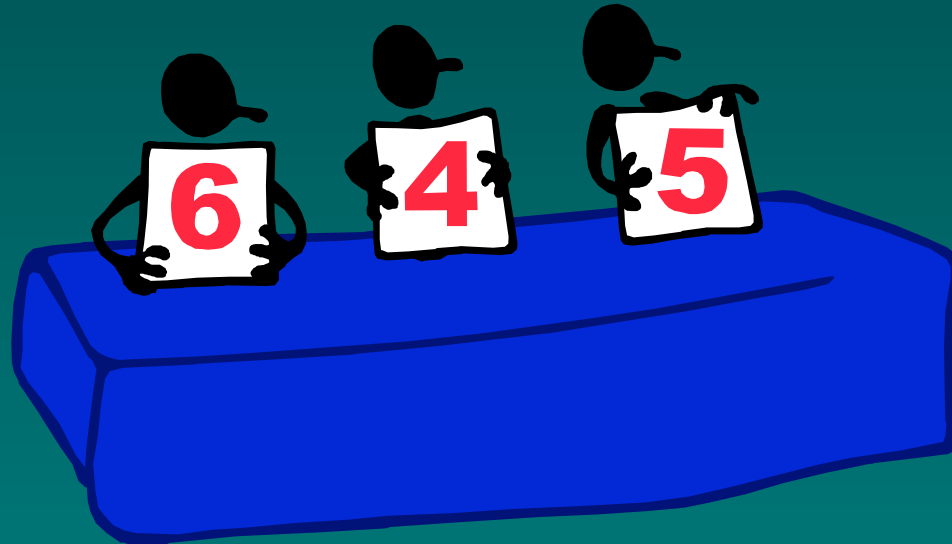
And performance in other related responsibilities such as:

Preparation of institutional material

Interactions with students, peers and administration, etc.

Compliance with rules and policies

Currency, innovations and presentations



# Research

Indicate \_\_\_% of effort - then review assessment of performance, including the reasons for the assessment, based on the assignment, such as:

Departmental Research

Sponsored Project

Peer-reviewed grants accepted

Publications (peer-reviewed and non peer-reviewed)

Presentations (peer-reviewed and non peer-reviewed)

Review and editorial activities

Artistic or creative works





# Research

And performance in other related responsibilities such as:

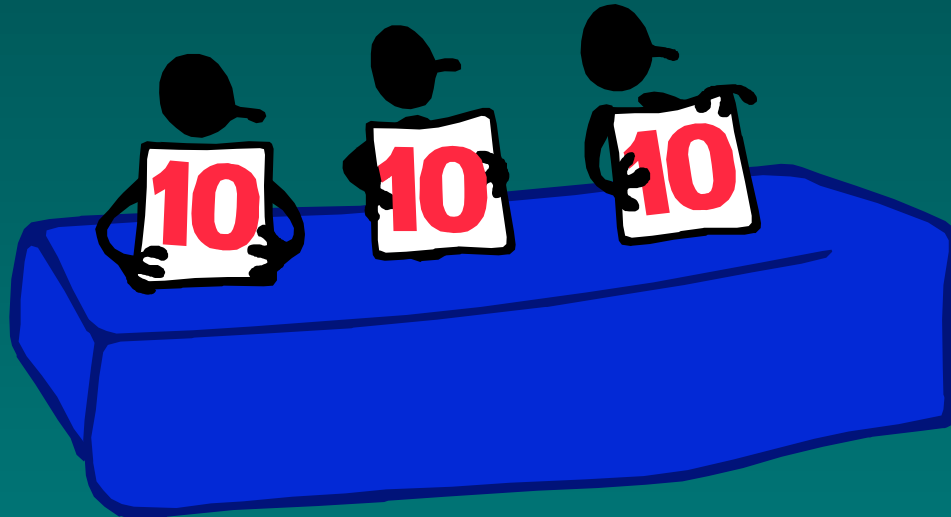
Compliance with rules and policies

Review of materials, works in progress

Conduct in research

Interactions with others involved in research

Contributions to field



# Service Activities

Indicate \_\_\_\_% of effort - then review assessment of performance, including the reasons for the assessment based on, but not limited to activities such as:

Departmental, college, university service

Public School service

Professional involvement and service

Administrative service



# **Attendant Responsibilities and Obligations**

**Assessment of overall performance as a faculty member  
such as:**

**compliance with rules and policies**

**adherence to professional ethics**

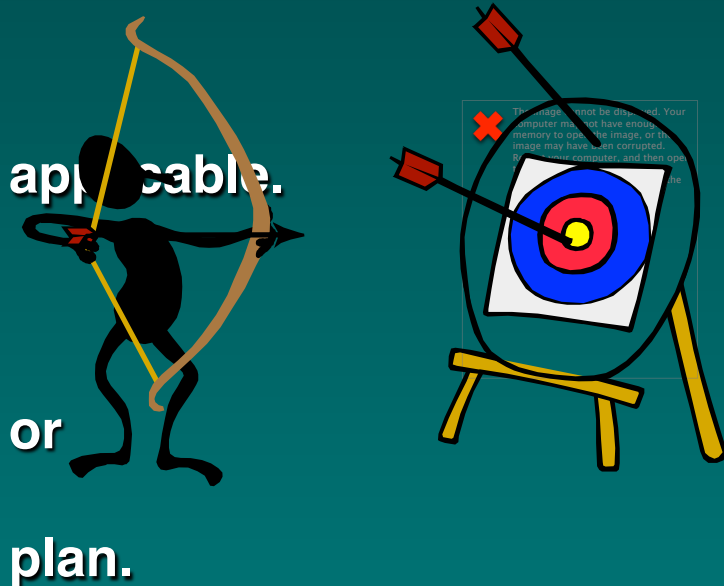
**contributions to the mission of the department, college  
and the university**

# Suggested Components of the Evaluation Letter

1. General language for introduction/closing statements (optional).
2. Assessment of performance of *assigned* duties based on percentage of assignment.



3. Assessment of responsibilities and obligations *expected* of a member of the academy and *pertinent* to employment .
4. Summary statement regarding *overall* assessment of performance of all assigned duties *and* those attendant responsibilities and obligations.



5. Appraisal of progress toward tenure or promotion, if applicable.
6. Sustained Performance Assessment, if applicable, indicating “*satisfactory*” or “*unsatisfactory*” performance with description of an improvement plan.

## 7. Other areas to be addressed, as appropriate, are as follows:

- Comments on goals and objectives
- Acknowledgement of activities *above* and *beyond* assignments related to employment.
- Review of performance concerns and improvement plan, if appropriate.
  - Counseling regarding concerns
  - Suggestions for improvement
  - Consequences if no improvement
  - Warning, if failure to perform - drawing “line in sand”



## **8. Notification of -**

- **Reappointment**
- **Assignment (Specific and Attendant)**
- **Appraisals for tenure**
- **Promotion**
- **Supplemental appointment**

**Other information pertinent to employment**

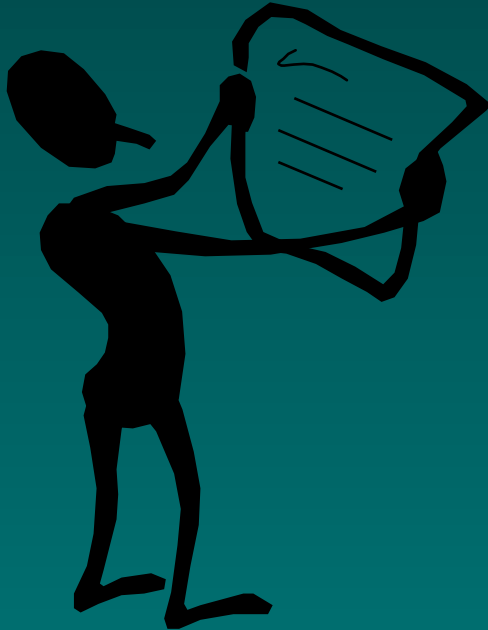
## **9. Closing Information -**

- **Draft Evaluation**
- **Final Evaluation**



# Suggestions for preparing draft and final written evaluation

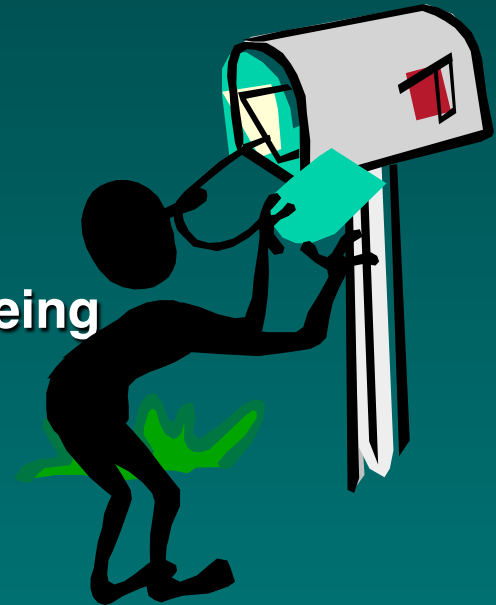
**Prepare draft (unsigned) -**



- **for dissemination and discussion to person being evaluated**
- **for comments from person being evaluated with stated deadline for the response.**



1. **Send two copies of the *final* written evaluation**
  - to person being evaluated with signature line to indicate receipt,
  - with space to check if concise comments are attached to be placed in evaluation file.
2. **Copy placed in personnel file, with any attachments if provided by the person being evaluated.**



**Reminder - Evaluations of academic performance *are not* public access documents!**





## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

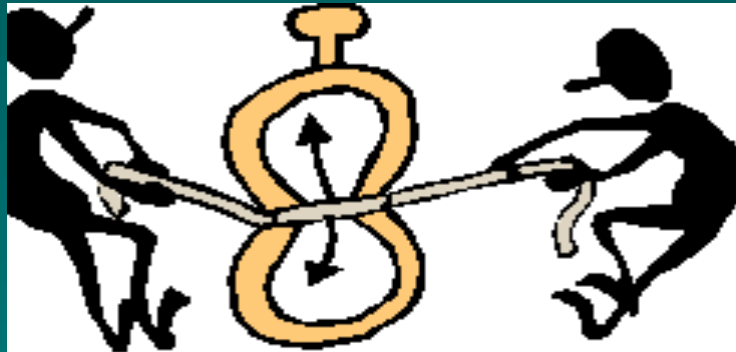
I. Professor Non-tenured brought in two years of tenure eligibility as an Associate Professor when appointed a year ago. This past year his students ranked him outstanding in his instructional assignments (teaching/advising). His advising is also excellent as is his work on various university committees. The chair is very supportive of his tenure/promotion nomination which the faculty members anticipate presenting this coming fall.



However, the members of the faculty committee who review faculty for renewal of appointments, and tenure and promotion do not think he has demonstrated the continual excellence required to be a permanent member of the department.

## ANSWER I:

The Chair needs to advise the faculty member of the opinion of faculty who will be voting on his tenure— i.e., his being awarded permanency as a member of the department. Since he is requesting “early” consideration, it might be wise to suggest he delay consideration in order to demonstrate “continual excellence.”



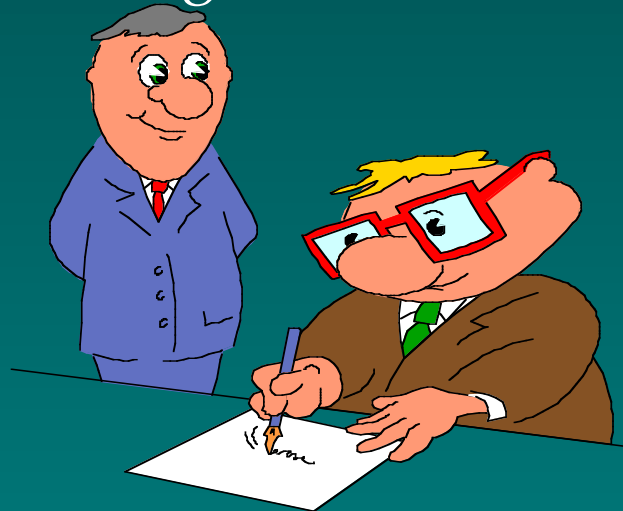
## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

II. Professor Emeritus is in the Post Retirement Employment Program. He did an excellent job of his teaching and has made a request to “volunteer” his services as an advisor for both spring and summer.



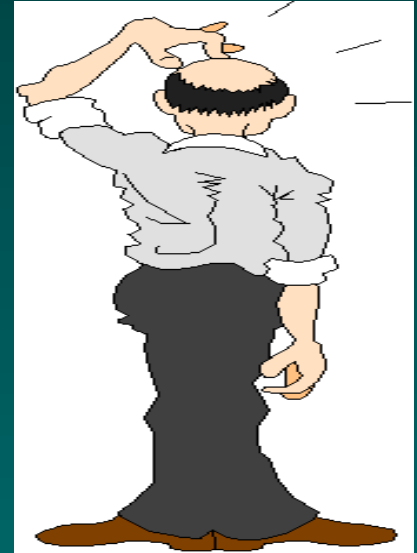
## ANSWER II:

The Chair needs to address the request to be a volunteer — if agreed to, a letter of appointment and assignment and a courtesy appointment should be made for the Spring and Summer Terms. The response to the request could be included in the evaluation letter if the Chair includes the re-appointment and annual assignment in these letters.



## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

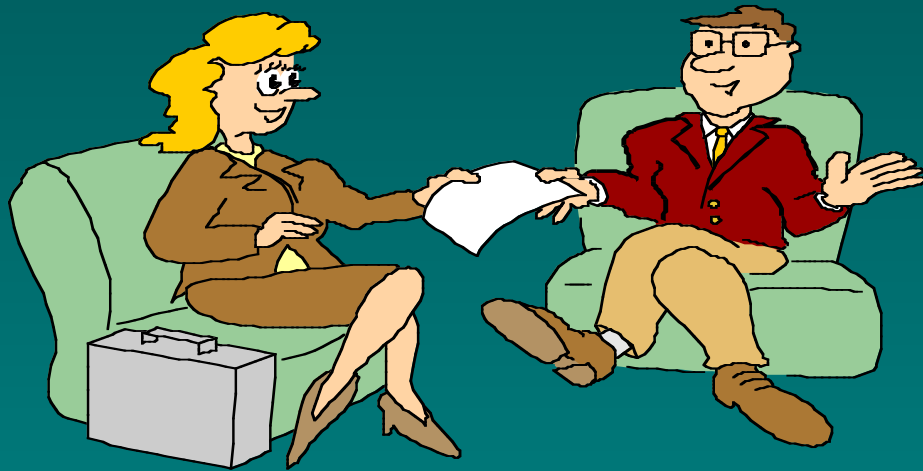
III. Professor Tenured will be returning from a two-semester Professional Development Leave (Sabbatical). Included in the report is a note stating she will not be returning to the University for the Fall Term until the second week in September, which is over one month after the term begins!





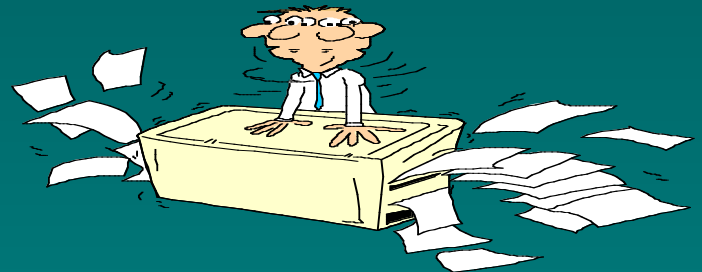
## ANSWER III:

The Chair needs to address the “requested” leave extension, in writing with reasons for the decision. The absence from duties could be addressed in the evaluation letter.



## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

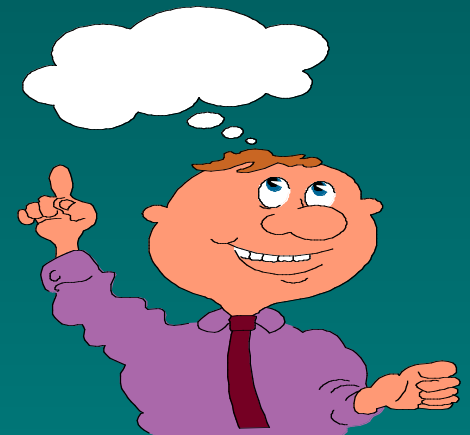
IV. Professor Tenured continues to do a poor job in her assignment of .80 FTE teaching. She failed to provide syllabi or any written instructional materials and frequently is known to cancel class and/or give assignments that do not require class attendance. She has shown little evidence of scholarly activity in the remainder of her assignment so she cannot possibly be current in her discipline which is very dynamic. She claims that her student ratings, which are low, are based on the fact that she is a female in a traditionally male field.



## ANSWER IV:

The Chair needs to address deficiencies, noting how these could affect personnel decisions including those of a continuing tenured appointment. Methods of improving the deficiencies (Performance Improvement Plan) should be suggested as well as the consequences if there is no improvement.

She should be asked to provide evidence of her discrimination claim so it can be reviewed as appropriate.



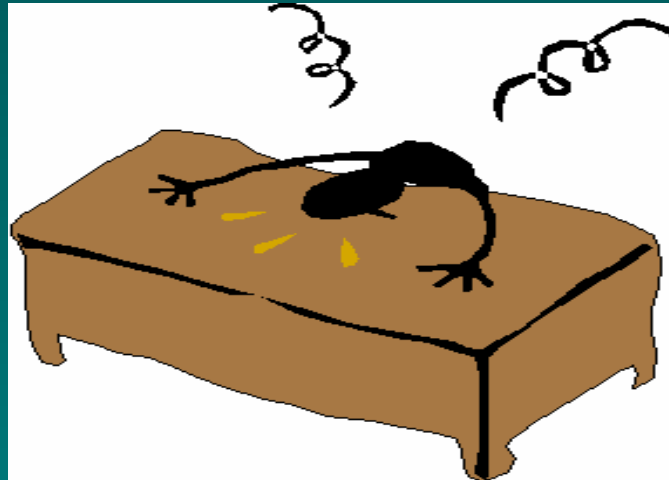
# WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

V. Professor Tenured is considered an excellent researcher with a national reputation. Last year he was assigned to teach one graduate class and to advise graduate students (.40 FTE) in addition to his research. He has continued to conduct his research but has totally neglected the teaching and advising component of his assignment possibly hoping you will change this portion of his assignment for the upcoming year.



## ANSWER V:

The Chair needs to state his instructional performance is unsatisfactory. Suggestions for improvement developed (a Performance Improvement Plan) and the consequences if he continues his “misconduct” need to be clearly stated in the evaluation. And the Chair needs to tell him his performance will be reviewed again in three months, including several visits in the classroom.



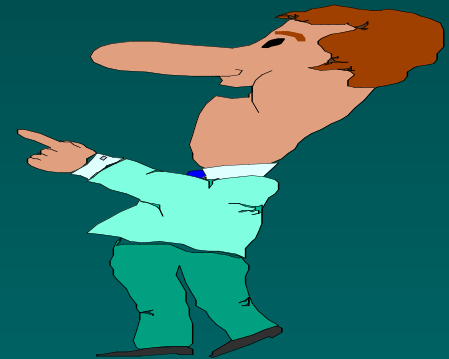
## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

VI. Assistant-in X has completed this year with excellent rankings from all those he has worked with and he requests a promotion to Associate-in. There is, however, some concern about the continuation of this position.



## ANSWER VI:

The chair needs to address the possibility of a non-renewal in his response to the promotion request. This could be included in the evaluation letter regarding the promotion or in separate letter responding to the faculty member's request.



## WHAT ELSE SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE EVALUATION LETTER?

VII. A faculty member who is very dissatisfied with her unsatisfactory evaluation refuses to sign the evaluation and informs you that it cannot be placed in her performance file or used, unless she signs it. You have given her a specific date to provide you with her comments which you will add to the letter and place in her file. She fails to respond by that date.



## ANSWER VII:

The chair should place the letter in her file with a note explaining that the faculty member failed to meet the deadline for adding comments or attachments to the letter and refused to sign the letter challenging that it could not be placed in her personnel file without her signature. The chair should notify the faculty member of the action taken.

