

## Department of Geography Annual Review Policy

*Revised April 9, 2012*

*Approved by Dean of Faculties July 9, 2012*

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### **Purpose**

The Department of **GEOGRAPHY** conducts annual reviews of faculty performance in accordance with University Rule [12.01.99.M2](#). The purpose of the review is to assess each faculty member's accomplishments in teaching, research, and professional service in the context of department, college, and university goals and priorities. Cross-cutting activities such as contributions to interdisciplinary/ multidisciplinary collaborations, work that enhances diversity, and international activities are also included in the evaluation.

### **Process**

The Department Head (DH) performs the annual review process in the spring semester of each calendar year. The Tenure and Promotion Committee (T&P) provides an independent evaluation of all faculty who are eligible for tenure and/or promotion, including lecturers and research and instructional professors to the Department Head. All Associate and Full Professors are members of the T&P committee and evaluate Assistant Professors and Lecturers, while only Full Professors evaluate Associate Professors and the department head, alone, evaluates Full Professors. The T&P Committee's written evaluation is then forwarded to the department head.

The evaluation is separated into three components: teaching, research, service. Each component can be scored as: Outstanding (O), Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). An over all score based on the three categories is normally computed by assigning weights of 40% for teaching, 40% for research and 20% for service. That a faculty member's contributions will change over the course of a career is recognized. Thus, the previously listed percentages can be adjusted by mutual agreement between the department head and the faculty member prior to a 3G reporting period.

An overall unsatisfactory evaluation for tenure-track and tenured faculty is triggered either by an unsatisfactory evaluation in teaching, or an unsatisfactory evaluation in research and service. An annual review in which an unsatisfactory performance is determined shall state the basis for the ranking in accordance with the criteria.

If three unsatisfactory evaluations occur, the steps outlined in University Rule [12.06.99.M1](#) is followed.

Upon completion of all evaluations, the DH presents both his or written assessment and that of the T&P committee to each faculty member. The DH meets with every untenured faculty member to discuss his or her performance during the previous calendar year. For tenured faculty, the presumption is that individual meetings with also

take place, although this may be waived if both the DH and the faculty member feel that it is not necessary.

### **Report Format and Content**

Annual activity report in approved college format (e.g., 3G form) and an up-to-date CV.

### **Basis for Evaluation**

#### *Non-tenure track and temporary faculty*

The DH evaluates the quality of the faculty member's performance using the college activity report, the T&P report, teaching evaluations and additional materials (e.g. teaching portfolios) that the faculty member wishes to provide.

#### *Untenured tenure-track faculty*

For untenured faculty, the DH evaluates progress toward tenure and promotion using the college activity report, curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations and any additional materials provided by the faculty member. Success in research, teaching and service are the primary evaluation criteria, and areas of concern should be identified at this time. Based upon these deliberations, the DH makes a determination that the candidate is making outstanding, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory progress towards tenure and/or promotion taking into account the sum of individual faculty activities.

#### *Tenured faculty*

For tenured faculty, the departmental annual review is a means for identifying outstanding or unsatisfactory performance. The DH assigns a rating of outstanding, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory taking into account the sum of individual faculty activities. It is generally recognized that the role of a faculty member may change over his/her career resulting in a shift in emphasis toward or away from one of the areas described above. In such cases the Head will define and clearly communicate the expectations to the faculty member.

Below are the criteria for satisfactory performance in each of the areas to be assessed annually. Exceeding these performance standards is deemed outstanding while failing to meet these standards is classified as unsatisfactory. Examples of outstanding and unsatisfactory performance are also indicated.

**Teaching.** Excellence in teaching and mentoring is a goal of the Department of Geography, whereas unsatisfactory teaching is contrary to our mission and a serious violation of the public trust. Teaching and leadership in interdisciplinary and interdepartmental programs, such as the undergraduate Environmental Programs or the interdisciplinary graduate programs in Water Management and Hydrological Sciences, are assessed with the same criteria used for teaching and leadership within the department.

Satisfactory teaching performance is defined as: (1) the presentation of accurate, up-to-date, well organized information and concepts; (2) demonstrating interest in the course subject and the process of teaching; (3) receiving acceptable or better teaching

evaluations; (4) satisfactory resolution of student complaints; (5) timely graduation of and/or achievement of appropriate progress to degree on the part of mentored graduate students; (6) use of technology and active learning methods in the classroom; (7) efforts to implement pedagogy and course content likely to be effective with and supportive of students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles; (8) mentoring students from groups under-represented in the Geosciences.

Examples of outstanding performance in teaching include: (1) design and successful institution of new courses; (2) extensive implementation of new laboratory exercises; (3) receipt of external grant support for teaching/learning projects; (4) excellent student evaluations or other indications of excellent instruction; (5) authoring of textbooks or other instructional materials; (6) expanding or enhancing opportunities for international studies; (7) selection for a University or professional society outstanding teacher award; (8) placement of graduate students or post-doctoral fellows into significant academic, scholarly or professional positions; (9) purposeful mentoring of students from groups under-represented in the Geosciences; (10) successful implementation of innovative pedagogy including course content likely to be effective with and supportive of students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles.

Evaluation of teaching will be on a regular basis and include consideration by the DH and the T&P Committee of peer evaluations, self evaluations, and student evaluations, plus examination of syllabi, exams, and the like.

Factors for judging teaching performance as unsatisfactory include: (1) persistent negative student evaluations; (2) regular and unresolved student complaints; (3) indifference to teaching; (4) presentation of out-of-date or incorrect information; (5) disorganized presentation of course materials and poor communication of course requirements; (6) persistent lack of progress to degree on the part of graduate students being mentored; (7) unwillingness to mentor graduate students; (8) persistent inattention to university requirements including timely posting of current course syllabi, curricula vitae and student grades; (9) routine refusal to teach courses central to the department mission; (10) excessive cancellation of class.

Unsatisfactory student evaluations, occurrence of unresolved complaints, or complaints made to the DH about teaching of out-of-date or incorrect information may necessitate a comprehensive review of teaching. The DH, in consultation with the faculty member and the T&P Chair, will appoint a teaching review committee. The committee will review the faculty member's syllabus, exams, course notes, and other materials provided by the faculty member and will perform classroom visitations. As appropriate, the review committee will interview graduate students who are not making progress to degree. The DH will use the report of the teaching review committee, together with student evaluations, to determine whether the faculty member's teaching is satisfactory.

**Research.** The generation of new knowledge through research is the hallmark of a world-class university and an integral part of our departmental culture.

Criteria for judging research performance as satisfactory include: (1) regular publication in peer reviewed journals, chapters in books, edited volumes, monographs or special papers; (2) successful pursuit of extramural research support; (3) the performance of other scholarly activities such as attendance at scientific meetings, authorship of review articles, or electronic publications.

In addition to the above, outstanding research performance may include: (1) publication of ground-breaking research; (2) leadership in obtaining funding for large-scale, interdisciplinary or multiple-investigator projects, (3) receipt of major fellowship or research award; (4) frequent citation of publications.

By contrast, unsatisfactory research performance may include: (1) lack of publication in peer reviewed journals, chapters in books, edited volumes, monographs or special papers; (2) inability and/or unwillingness to obtain extramural research support; (3) the absence of other forms of scholarly activity.

**Service.** Service to the department, college, university, and the community at large is recognized as an essential component of good academic citizenship. Criteria for judging service performance as satisfactory include: (1) regular attendance at faculty meetings and participation in other faculty activities such as student and faculty recruitment; (2) substantive contributions to departmental, college, or university committees; (3) performance of substantive service to the larger scientific community such as through manuscript and grant reviews or active participation in professional societies; (4) active participation in scientific societies, (5) academic program enhancement that improves the graduate or undergraduate education experience; (6) serving in an administrative role at Texas A&M University; (7) contributions to enhancing or expanding the diversity of faculty, students, and staff.

Outstanding service activity may include (1) shouldering a large or pivotal service role without reduction in other responsibilities; (2) performance of service to the larger scientific community through leadership in professional societies, (3) editing of journals or membership on advisory boards; (4) serving on a major governmental commission, task force, or board; (5) leadership in enhancing or expanding the diversity of faculty, students, and staff; (6) effective outreach to K-12 community and general public through informal learning and summer programs; (7) communication of applied research results to the general public.

Conversely, an unsatisfactory service performance would include (1) failure to attend faculty meetings regularly, (2) refusal to serve on departmental, college, or university committees; (3) lack of contributions to departmental, college, or university committees on which the faculty member is serving; (4) Persistent insensitive or discriminatory comments and/or actions toward individuals or groups based on individual identity.