

**Annual Review Policy in the Department of Geography**  
*(Approved by Geography Faculty on 2/1/2017)*

**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 for all faculty members. The DH annual review is based on performance during the previous calendar year only. The annual evaluations are separated into three components: teaching, research and service. Each component can be rated as Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory. An overall rating based on the three categories is normally computed by assigning weights equivalent to the percentage of effort assigned to each category in their annual appointment letter. That a faculty member's contributions will change over the course of a career is recognized. For tenured & tenure track faculty, the percentage effort allocated to any category will not be 0% except in cases where there is a termed appointment that necessitates changes to the standard appointments. APT faculty will be evaluated based on the percent effort in their annual appointment letter.

An overall unsatisfactory evaluation for tenure-track and tenured faculty is triggered by the criteria outlined in University Rule 12.06.99.M0.01. An annual review in which an unsatisfactory performance is determined shall state the basis for the rating in accordance with the criteria.

If three unsatisfactory evaluations occur, the steps outlined in University Rule 12.06.99.M0.01 is followed.

Upon completion of all evaluations, the DH presents the written assessment 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., FARG 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 and additional materials (e.g. teaching portfolios) that the faculty member wishes to provide.

#### *Untenured tenure-track faculty*

For the untenured faculty, the DH evaluates progress toward tenure and promotion along with annual performance 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. The DH evaluates the candidate's performance as Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

#### *Tenured faculty*

For the tenured faculty, the departmental annual peer review is a means for continuing professional development. The annual performance review conducted by the DH assigns a rating of Outstanding, Exceeds Expectations, Satisfactory, Needs Improvement 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 or Exceeds expectations while failing to meet these standards is classified as Needs Improvement or Unsatisfactory.

**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 program in Water Management and Hydrological Sciences, are assessed with the same criteria used for teaching and leadership within the department.

Satisfactory teaching performance is evidenced through (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; and/or (8) mentoring students from groups under-represented in the Geosciences.

Outstanding and Exceeds Expectations ratings in teaching are evidenced through (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 position; (9) purposeful mentoring of students from groups under-represented in the Geosciences; and/or (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 of peer evaluations, self evaluations, and student evaluations, plus examination of syllabi, exams, and the like.

Examples of Needs Improvement ratings in teaching include: (1) repeated negative teaching evaluations; (2) inattention to university requirements including timely posting of current course syllabi, curricula vitae and student grades; (3) complaints regarding out-of-date or incorrect information; (4) unresolved student complaints.

Examples of Unsatisfactory ratings in teaching include: (1) persistent negative teaching evaluations; (2) regular and unresolved student complaints; (3) indifference to teaching; (4) disorganized presentation of course materials and poor communication of course requirements; (5) persistent lack of progress to degree on the part of students being mentored; (6) unwillingness to mentor students; (7) persistent inattention to university requirements including timely posting of current course syllabi, curricula vitae and student grades; (8) routine refusal to teach courses central to the departmental mission; (9) excessive cancellation of class.

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

Satisfactory research performance is evidenced through (1) regular publication in peer reviewed journals, chapters in books, edited volumes, monographs or special papers; (2) successful pursuit of extramural research support; and/or (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 or Exceeds Expectations 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; and/or (4) frequent citation of publications.

Examples of Needs Improvement ratings in research include: (1) limited publication in peer reviewed journals, chapters in books, edited volumes, monographs or special papers; (2) few proposals for extramural research support; and/or (3) limited other scholarly activity such as attendance at scientific meetings, authorship of review articles or electronic publications.

Examples of Unsatisfactory ratings in research 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; and/or (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. Satisfactory service performance is evidenced through (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; and/or (7) contributions to enhancing or expanding the diversity of faculty, students, and staff.

Outstanding and Exceeds Expectations 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; and/or (7) communication of applied research results to the general public.

Examples of Needs Improvement ratings in service include: (1) minimal contributions to departmental, college and/or university committees; (2) limited participation in professional societies; (3) irregular attendance at faculty meetings

and participation in other faculty activities such as those for student and faculty recruitment.

Examples of Unsatisfactory ratings in service include: (1) failure to attend faculty meetings regularly; (2) refusal to serve on departmental, college or university committees; and/or (3) lack of contributions to departmental, college or university committees on which the faculty member is serving.