

Dept. of Oceanography

Annual Review Policy

Revised April 9, 2012

Approved by Dean of Faculties July 9, 2012

Purpose

The Department of Oceanography 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 annual review process is initiated by the Department Head (DH) in the spring semester of each year. The review period covers the previous calendar year. This annual review is performed by the DH who is advised by the departmental Tenure and Promotion Committee (T&PC). The latter provides an independent evaluation of all faculty members, including research professors, who are eligible for tenure and/or promotion. Membership of the T&PC is determined by the DH from the full professors in the department, on a rotational basis. The T&PC submits a report on each faculty member to the DH.

The evaluation is separated into three components: teaching, research, service, with the last split between undergraduate teaching and graduate mentoring. The overall evaluation takes these three components into account and factors in the distinct ways in which the individual contributes to the department and how they can best be encouraged to improve in all areas. For example, faculty with strong research programs will have their research evaluation and graduate mentoring weighted more heavily in the overall score whereas faculty who put more time and effort into classroom teaching have their teaching, along with any undergraduate mentoring, weighted more heavily. The norms of different research sub-disciplines within the oceanography community are taken into account in the overall evaluation. This could cover, for example, differing expectations for publication rates within each sub-discipline or the exceptional time requirements needed to organize cruises.

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.

On completion of the annual evaluation the DH presents a written assessment to each individual faculty member. The DH meets with all untenured faculty members to discuss their performance during the previous calendar year. For tenured faculty, the presumption is that individual meetings will also take place, although this may be waived if both the DH and the faculty member feel that it is unnecessary.

Report Format and Content

Annual activity is reported via the approved college format 3G, together with an updated curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, and any additional materials provided by the faculty member for consideration by the TP&C committee and the Department Head.

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, teaching evaluations (if any), and additional materials (e.g. teaching portfolios, research reports) 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, any additional materials provided by the faculty member, and the report from the T&PC. Success in research, teaching and service are the primary evaluation criteria, and areas of concern will be identified at this time. The DH determines, based upon these materials, whether the candidate is making outstanding, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory progress towards tenure and/or promotion.

Tenured faculty

For tenured faculty, the departmental annual review is a means for recognizing outstanding or unsatisfactory performance; the latter may lead to a Post Tenure Faculty Review. 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 DH and faculty member will discuss shifting responsibilities and the DH will 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 Oceanography, 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.

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. A teaching review committee of three faculty members will be appointed by the DH, in consultation with the faculty member. 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; (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.