

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS AND ASTRONOMY ANNUAL FACULTY PERFORMANCE EVALUATION GUIDELINES

Adopted by vote of the faculty – August 28, 2001

Note: Procedures for evaluating faculty performance with respect to these guidelines are given in the Department of Physics and Astronomy Bylaws.

I. EVALUATION MATERIALS

Each faculty member will be asked to submit by March 1 a Professional Activities Report [PAR] summarizing activities for the period specified by the Bylaws. The Personnel Committee will determine the format of the PAR. The PAR will provide the opportunity to include a description of activities considered meritorious by the faculty member, but not specifically requested.

II. DISTRIBUTION OF EFFORT

The faculty member will report on the PAR activity weights that reflect the proportion of total effort devoted to the following areas: Research, Teaching, and Service. The exact mix of weights most commonly will differ between faculty members, and the weights may also vary from year to year.

Effort distributions will normally vary between 30% and 60% each for instruction and research, and between 10% and 30% for service. The anticipated weights must be reviewed and approved as described in Section 3 of the bylaws.

III. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Personnel Committee will examine the evaluation materials for each faculty member and assess the performance of each faculty member by awarding a score on an integer scale extending

from 1 to 4 for each of the separate categories of instruction, research and service. A score of 4 is considered to be outstanding (consistent with “responsibilities of the position exceeded in a sustained and outstanding manner”), 3 is meritorious (consistent with “responsibilities of the position exceeded”) and 2 is satisfactory (consistent with “responsibilities of the position fulfilled”). A score of 1 will be awarded for performance that is deemed unsatisfactory in a given area of activity (consistent with “responsibilities of the position not fulfilled”).

For faculty on sabbatical leave, sabbatical activity may be weighted at a percentage up to the fraction of the evaluation period spent on leave. Research, teaching, and service for the remainder of the evaluation period will then be weighted as above and adjusted to reflect the fraction of the evaluation period not spent on sabbatical leave. For faculty granted leave or release time by the chair, weighting factors outside the specified ranges may be negotiated.

IV. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION GUIDELINES

This section describes the guidelines used by the Personnel Committee to calibrate the evaluation scale in terms of performance profiles. The performance profiles given here are intended as examples of levels of performance that would correspond to the respective integer scores.

The Personnel Committee will take into account the weights for various areas when applying the following criteria (e.g.: a particularly large weight in an area would imply a correspondingly larger expectation for results for a given performance level in that area).

Score 4: Outstanding

Teaching

Evidence of outstanding performance includes one or more of the following: strong activity in course innovation or new course development, possibly documented by publications or presentations, textbook authorship, extensive involvement of undergraduates in laboratory research; volunteering to teach course loads significantly above the average for the faculty member's research status, with positive teaching evaluations; particularly successful mentoring of students at the undergraduate, graduate and/ or postdoctoral levels, as evidenced by exceptional improvements in student performance, national student awards, competitive major predoctoral or postdoctoral fellowships, faculty appointments, etc.

Research

Evidence of outstanding performance includes: prolific publication, or selective publications in high-impact journals; book authorship; holding multiple patents; a high level of funding, possibly from multiple sources, most or all of which are peer-reviewed; participation in one or more major multi-investigator projects; speaking invitations; and research honors and awards.

Service

An outstanding performance level is evidenced by effective performance in service activities that are both time-consuming and significant; activities which include: energetic service on, or chairing, multiple active committees; dedicated service on, or chairing, an exceptionally demanding committee or committees; service on demanding external review panels; journal editorship; extensive community outreach activity; organizing a major meeting; administering major multi-investigator research or educational groups within the university; service as an elected or appointed leadership position at the local (Department, College, or University) or professional society level.

Score 3: Meritorious

Teaching

A meritorious evaluation includes one or several of the following measures: consistently positive teaching evaluations in classroom teaching assigned at the normal course load for that faculty member; involvement in new course development and teaching innovation; involvement of undergraduates in research experience; voluntary assumption of additional teaching loads; successful mentoring of graduate students who perform publishable or patentable research and graduate in a reasonable time; and successful mentoring of productive postdoctoral fellows

Research

Meritorious performance is documented primarily by number and quality of publications and presentations; citations; and reviews. Funding levels will be used as evidence of a faculty member's evaluation by her /his peers external to the department. A sustained level of peer-reviewed major funding is evidence that the quality and productivity of the research is externally acceptable to a knowledgeable peer group and is also viewed as intrinsically beneficial to graduate students involved in the research. For participants in multi-investigator projects, the level of individual contribution will be taken into account in assessing merit. Successful patent activity may also constitute evidence of meritorious research performance.

Service

Evidence of meritorious performance includes chairing an active Department, College, or University committee; active participation in more than one committee; and professional service external to the university.

Score 2: Satisfactory

Teaching

A satisfactory level corresponds to acceptable performance, documented by teaching evaluations at the minimum course load, and in acceptable progress towards graduation of any graduate students mentored.

Research

A satisfactory ranking is evidenced by publication in a peer-reviewed journal (averaging one paper per year), minor funding from internal or external sources, or significant efforts to obtain funding by preparing and submitting research proposals.

Service

Satisfactory service consists of serving on at least one committee at the department, college or university level that is active and productive during the evaluation period.

Score 1: Unsatisfactory

Teaching

An unsatisfactory rating would be given to a faculty member who consistently teaches less than his/her minimum load, as decided by the Chair in consultation with the Personnel Committee and communicated in writing to the faculty member.

An unsatisfactory rating would also be appropriate in cases where persistently poor performance in teaching was documented even though an acceptable minimum load was carried. An unsatisfactory performance rating could result from one or more of the following:

- (a) The presence of (i) adverse student evaluation scores as indicated by consistently significantly poorer ratings than other faculty members who have taught similar courses, and (ii) student complaints documented by written student

evaluations or a record of complaints to the Chair, and (iii) a peer review report consistent with the data in (i) and (ii).

- (b) Abandonment of assigned classes. When travel to fulfill professional responsibilities is unavoidable during the semester, a faculty member's class should be covered, by prior arrangement, by another faculty member. Classes should not be taught by a postdoctoral fellow or teaching assistant unless prior approval of the Chair or Associate Chair is obtained in writing. Repeated failure to obtain this approval would constitute unsatisfactory performance. Continuing failure to meet assigned classes without acceptable cause is unsatisfactory.
- (c) Continuing refusal to mentor students would be viewed as unsatisfactory in this aspect of faculty teaching activity.
- (d) Failure to be available adequately to students outside class hours.

Research

A rating of unsatisfactory is appropriate where a faculty member makes little or no attempt to pursue research. Evidence of an attempt to pursue research is publication, submission of a patent application, or seeking funding at any level from federal to internal university funds by writing proposals. Supporting research solely out of non-competitive departmental funds other than for a brief interim period during a funding lapse may be considered unsatisfactory. Attempting to pursue research with no funding is considered detrimental to any graduate student involved in that research, and is unsatisfactory in the long term. Chronic lack of involvement of students in research is viewed as unsatisfactory.

Service

Refusal to serve on any committee is unsatisfactory. Documented failure or refusal to perform assigned duties on a committee is also unsatisfactory.