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MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 3, 2016

TO: Deans, Department Chairs, School Directors, and Faculty

FROM: Gary W. Perry, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Sustained Performance Evaluation Policy

An excellent faculty is essential to the core teaching, scholarship, and service missions of Florida Atlantic University. The Sustained Performance Evaluation (SPE) is a periodic review of tenured faculty that is designed to foster sustained excellence and professional development, and to recognize and reward outstanding achievement.

The SPE is separate and distinct from annual and other employee evaluations in that the evaluation will focus on long-term accomplishments over a period of multiple years. Its main objectives are to:

- provide a forum for a regular, constructive conversation regarding each faculty member's role in his or her academic unit and College, the University, and discipline at large;
- identify ways in which the University can help facilitate faculty success;
- recognize and reward sustained excellence in scholarship, research, teaching, public service, or academic leadership; and
- identify and address unsatisfactory performance in these areas.

Most importantly, the SPE process has been designed to uphold the University's fundamental principles of tenure, academic freedom, due process, and confidentiality in personnel matters.

A. Evaluation Cycle

The SPE will follow a seven-year cycle for each tenured faculty member, with the following exceptions:

- Any successful application for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor resets the applicant's seven-year cycle. If such an application is unsuccessful, then upon request of the applicant the University Provost may, at his or her discretion, add one extra year to the faculty member's SPE cycle.
- Faculty members on phased retirement, in DROP, or whose retirement date the University has accepted are exempt from the SPE.

- Faculty holding special positions that require regular reviews beyond the standard annual evaluation — such as named chairs, endowed chairs, and Eminent Scholars — are exempt from the SPE.
- Time a faculty member spends serving as a Department Chair, School Director, Dean, Associate Dean, or in any other full-time administrative position subject to regular administrative review may not count toward the SPE cycle. The faculty member may choose, upon returning to a non-administrative faculty position on a full-time basis, whether his or her seven-year cycle either restarts or resumes.
- Time a faculty member spends on medical or family leave may be included or excluded in the SPE cycle at the request of the faculty member.
- The SPE may be postponed for one year for faculty who will be on leave (including sabbatical) during the year when it is scheduled to occur.

The office of the Dean of each College shall maintain a schedule of SPE evaluations listing all tenured faculty members in the College. The Dean's office shall notify faculty members of upcoming Sustained Performance Evaluations no less than three months in advance of the due date for the evaluation file.

To avoid an overwhelming number of evaluations in a single year, the SPE policy will be phased in over its first seven-year cycle. The first Evaluation of each faculty member who received promotion to Associate Professor or Professor prior to August 2011 will occur in the year determined by the last digit of his or her Z-number, as follows:

- 0 or 5: AY 2018-19
- 1 or 6: AY 2019-20
- 2 or 7: AY 2020-21
- 3 or 8: AY 2021-22
- 4 or 9: AY 2022-23

This first Evaluation will examine the previous seven years of the faculty member's activities. The first Evaluation for tenured faculty members who were promoted to Associate Professor or Professor after August 2011 will occur seven years after their most recent promotions.

B. Evaluation File

The SPE will be conducted based on a file containing a brief summary of the faculty member's activities during the entire seven-year period under review. The file should contain:

- a current *curriculum vita* that clearly highlights accomplishments in teaching, scholarship, and service during the period under review,
- copies of the faculty member's last seven annual assignments and annual evaluations,
- a copy of the report of the previous SPE, if available,
- a copy of the published performance expectations from the faculty member's academic unit (see Articulation of Unit Expectations below), and
- a brief (2 page) narrative from the faculty member.

These are the documents required throughout the University. Each College may establish guidelines (see Establishment of College-Wide Evaluation Policies below) requiring additional items to be included in its faculty members' SPE files.

The contents of each SPE file are to be kept confidential throughout the Evaluation process.

C. Peer Evaluation Process

The faculty member shall deliver his or her SPE file to the Chair, Director or Associate Dean of the academic unit that conducts his or her annual evaluation by a date fixed by the College. The Chair, Director or Associate Dean will pass all collected SPE files from the academic unit to a Peer Evaluation Committee appointed according to guidelines established by the College. (See Establishment of College-Wide Evaluation Policies below.)

The Committee will review each SPE file in light of the academic unit's published performance expectations, and assess whether those expectations have been met. In doing so, the Committee should consider:

- that faculty members have varying responsibilities within their academic units, as reflected in their annual assignments,
- that faculty can make essential contributions to the University's mission in various ways,
- that the nature of an individual's contributions may vary over time,
- that innovative scholarly work may take time to bear fruit, and may sometimes fail,
- that unusual or unpopular scholarship, teaching, and service are not by themselves sufficient cause for a negative evaluation, and
- that faculty are evaluated annually on their annual assignment

The Dean of the College (or his or her designee) may meet with the Committee if requested during its deliberations.

The Committee will prepare a brief report, to be added to the SPE file, summarizing its recommended assessment of each faculty member's performance during the evaluation period. The committee's report will indicate whether the faculty member's performance Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Fails to Meet Expectations, and cite specific reasons and evidence to support their conclusion.

The Committee will return all SPE files to the Chair, Director or Associate Dean by a date fixed by the College.

D. Administrative Review and Appeals of Outcomes

The Dean of the College will also review the SPE files of all faculty members along with the Committee reports. If the Dean concurs with the SPE Committee recommendation, the decision will be final. In case of disagreement about the recommendation, the Dean shall meet with the SPE committee to discuss the case and attempt to reach a shared recommendation. If a shared recommendation cannot be reached, the Dean shall add a letter to the SPE file citing specific reasons for his/her recommendation and final decision.

The faculty member may appeal the final decision to the University Provost. The faculty member will be allowed one week after receiving the Dean's written decision to prepare a written response to it. After reviewing the SPE file, the Provost (or his or her designee) will meet with the faculty member; the Chair, Director, or Associate Dean; and the Dean of the College to discuss the outcome of the SPE. The Provost will prepare a written decision, which is not subject to further appeal. The faculty member shall receive a copy of this written decision.

Regardless of the outcome of the SPE process, the Chair, Director or Associate Dean will meet with each reviewed faculty member to discuss the final outcome. The discussion should center on the faculty member's future professional development, with the goal of enhancing meritorious work and/or improving performance in areas identified by the Evaluation. The faculty member shall receive copies (paper or electronic) of the Committee's report and the letter from the Dean regarding the outcome of the SPE at or before this meeting.

E. Performance Exceeding Expectations

Any faculty member whose performance Exceeds Expectations in the judgment of both the Peer Review Committee and the Dean of the College shall receive a 3% performance increase to his or her base salary. This concludes the SPE.

F. Performance Meeting Expectations

Any faculty member whose performance Meets Expectations in the judgment of both the Peer Review Committee and the Dean of the College shall receive a 1.5% performance increase to his or her base salary. This concludes the SPE.

G. Performance Failing to Meet Expectations

Any faculty member whose sustained performance Fails to Meet Expectations shall work in concert with the Chair, Director, or Associate Dean to draft a Sustained Performance Improvement Plan (SPIP) setting specific annual milestones that the faculty member will be responsible to meet over a period of no less than three and no more than five years. The Dean of the College must approve the draft SPIP before it becomes final. The faculty member has the right to appeal the contents of a SPIP that has been approved by the Dean of the College to the University Provost. The Provost will meet with the faculty member, the Chair, Director or Associate Dean, and the Dean of the College to finalize the Sustained Performance Improvement Plan.

The performance targets laid out in an SPIP will be implemented through a series of annual Performance Improvement Plans. For in-unit faculty, the relevant section [currently 10.3(c)(4)] of the Collective Bargaining Agreement will govern these annual Performance Improvement Plans. Satisfactory performance in meeting SPIP targets should result in positive Annual Evaluations during this period, but the faculty member will continue to receive annual Performance Improvement Plans until all targets of the SPIP have been met or until the three- to five-year term of the SPIP ends.

At the end of the SPIP, or when all of its specific targets have been accomplished, the faculty member will prepare a written summary of how and when those targets were achieved. The Dean, in consultation with the Chair, Director or Associate Dean, will decide whether the targets laid out in the Plan have substantially been achieved, or whether some of those targets should become the basis for further Performance Improvement Plans in subsequent annual evaluation(s).

H. Reporting and Record Keeping

Once all Sustained Performance Evaluations are complete, the Chair, Director or Associate Dean will forward all complete SPE files to the College Dean's office. The Dean's office will prepare a report to the University Provost listing all Evaluations in the College that year, and the result of each. The University will store the SPE files in accordance with its general policies for evaluation files. In all cases, however, the Dean's office should retain copies of all Performance Improvement Plans for consultation during the annual evaluation cycle.

I. Establishment of College-Wide Evaluation Policies

Each College Faculty Assembly will appoint a committee to develop SPE guidelines specific to its College during AY 2016-17. These guidelines should describe:

- the required contents of the SPE file that each faculty member will prepare for the Peer Evaluation Committee,
- whether the College will form a single, College-wide Peer Evaluation Committee or the individual academic units within the College will form separate Committees,
- whether the College's SPE Committee(s) will include only Professors or will also allow Associate Professors to serve,
- whether the College or its separate academic units will store SPE records, and
- Evaluation procedures to be established in guidelines set by its individual academic units.

In all cases, any person with a plausible, perceived conflict of interest in evaluating a particular faculty member cannot serve on the SPE Committee in the year of that faculty member's SPE.

No College policy may conflict with a University or Provost's policy. Accordingly, the Provost must approve the College policy prior to its implementation or amendment. The Provost may either approve the College policy or send it back to the College committee with instructions to modify it.

J. Articulation of Unit Expectations

Each academic unit that does annual evaluations shall define expectations for sustained performance among its tenured faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. These expectations should reflect the customs and practices of the academic unit, the professional discipline(s) of its faculty, and its overall mission as part of the University.

In view of the various kinds of contributions faculty members make during the course of their careers, unit expectations must also be sufficiently flexible to embrace the variability of faculty interests, activities, and strengths.

Since the SPE explicitly considers the annual assignments of each faculty member, unit

expectations should weight appropriately the full range of assignments a tenured faculty member may receive.

As with other policies for faculty evaluation, the academic unit's expectations for sustained performance must be approved by the Dean of the College. Once approved by the Dean, each unit's sustained performance expectations will be submitted to the University Provost for final approval. The Provost or designee may either approve the expectations or send it back with instructions to modify it. Once final, the Provost will publish the unit expectations on a central website.

K. SPE Policy Committee

The Provost shall convene a broadly representative *ad hoc* committee of faculty every three years, or more frequently if needed, to review the SPE policies and procedures described above. The SPE Policy Committee will examine the outcomes of SPEs conducted since it last met in order to assess the policy's effectiveness in fostering continued professional development and outstanding achievement among the University's tenured faculty. The Committee may recommend changes to the Provost's SPE policy to make it more effective. The SPE Policy Committee has no oversight role, however, over the findings of individual Evaluations, or over the contents of individual Performance Improvement Plans.

Cc: Michele Hawkins, Vice Provost