



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
Office of the Provost
777 Glades Road, AD10-309
Boca Raton, FL 33431
tel: 561.297.3062
fax: 561.297.3942
www.fau.edu/provost

MEMORANDUM

DATE: DRAFT

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

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

SUBJECT: Sustained Performance Evaluation Policy

A. Sustained Performance Evaluation Policy Statement

1. An excellent faculty is essential to the core teaching, scholarship, and service missions of Florida Atlantic University.
2. The Sustained Performance Evaluation (SPE) policy described below is to foster continued professional development and recognize outstanding achievement among its tenured faculty.
3. The SPE is separate and distinct from annual or other employee evaluations.
4. It provides a peer assessment of each tenured faculty member's long-term accomplishments over a period of multiple years.
5. Its main objectives are to:
 - create an opportunity 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,
 - identify and address unsatisfactory performance in scholarship, research, teaching, or public service
 - provide faculty at the rank of Associate Professor with feedback on their progress toward promotion to Professor based on University, College and unit criteria, and
 - provide faculty at the rank of Professor with feedback on their activities and accomplishments based on unit expectations of faculty at this rank.

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

B. Evaluation Cycle

1. The SPE will generally follow a five-year cycle for each tenured faculty member.
2. There are, however, exceptions to this general rule:
 - Any successful application for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor resets the applicant's five-year cycle. If an application for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor is unsuccessful, upon request of the applicant, the Provost at his/her discretion may delay the SPE period for one year.
 - Faculty members on phased retirement, in DROP, or whose retirement date has been accepted by the University 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 any other full-time administrative position subject to regular administrative review does not count toward the SPE cycle. The five-year cycle starts when they return to a non-administrative faculty position on a full-time basis.
 - Time a faculty member spends on medical or family leave, or which otherwise be excluded when computing time in rank, does not count toward the SPE cycle.
 - 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.
3. The office of the Dean of each College will maintain a schedule of SPE evaluations listing all tenured faculty in the College.
4. The Dean's office will notify faculty members of upcoming Sustained Performance Evaluations no less than three months in advance of the due date for the evaluation file.
5. Associate Professors awarded tenure at FAU will receive an initial Evaluation in the fourth year after receiving tenure.
6. Special provisions for this initial post-tenure review are described below.
7. After this first Evaluation, subsequent SPEs for Associate Professors will follow the regular five-year cycle.
8. Faculty hired at the ranks of Associate Professor or Professor will have their first Sustained Performance Evaluation five years after being granted tenure at FAU.
9. To avoid an overwhelming number of evaluations in a single year, the SPE policy will be phased in over its first five-year cycle.

10. 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 2016-17
 - 1 or 6: AY 2017-18
 - 2 or 7: AY 2018-19
 - 3 or 8: AY 2019-20
 - 4 or 9: AY 2020-21
11. Associate Professors who received tenure after August 2011 will have their first Evaluations in the fourth year after receiving tenure, as usual.

C. Evaluation File

1. To minimize the burden on faculty, the SPE will be conducted based on a file containing a brief summary of the faculty member's activities during the entire period under review. The period under review for the first SPE for faculty members who received promotion to Associate Professor or Professor prior to August 2011 is five years.
2. The specific contents required in the SPE file will be determined by each College (see Establishment of College Evaluation Policies below), but in all cases should contain at least:
 - a current *curriculum vita* that clearly highlights accomplishments in teaching, scholarship, and service during the period under review,
 - copies of all annual assignments and annual evaluations since the previous SPE, or since the granting of tenure or for the last five year period under review,
 - 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.
3. The contents of each SPE file are to be kept confidential throughout the Evaluation process.

D. Peer Evaluation Process

1. The faculty member will 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.
2. The Chair, Director or Associate Dean will pass all collected SPE files from the academic unit to a Peer Evaluation Committee (see Establishment of College Evaluation Policies below), which will conduct the Evaluation.

3. 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.
4. In doing so, the Committee should consider:
 - that faculty members have varying responsibilities within their academic units, as reflected in their annual assignments,
 - that there are multiple ways faculty can make essential contributions to the University's mission,
 - that the nature of an individual's contributions may vary over time, and
 - that innovative scholarly work may take time to bear fruit, and may sometimes fail.
5. The Committee will prepare a brief report, to be included in the SPE file, summarizing its overall assessment of the faculty member's performance during the evaluation period.
6. If the Committee concludes that a faculty member's performance does not meet expectations, then its report should cite specific reasons for the finding.
7. The fixed-term University Distinguished Professorship position is described in a separate document.
8. The Committee will return all SPE files to the Chair, Director or Associate Dean of the academic unit by a date fixed by the College.

E. Administrative Review and Appeal

1. The Chair, Director or Associate Dean of the academic unit will meet with each reviewed faculty member to discuss the Committee's report.
2. 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 Committee or the Chair, Director or Associate Dean
3. The faculty member will receive a copy of the Committee's report (either paper or electronic) at or before this meeting.
4. After meeting with the faculty member, the Chair or Director will forward the SPE file to the Dean with his/her comments. If the Dean agrees that the faculty member's overall performance meets the academic unit's published expectations, then the SPE is complete. The Dean will advise the faculty member of its final outcome in writing.
5. If the Committee or the Dean find that the faculty member's overall performance does not meet unit expectations, then the faculty member will be advised in writing by the Dean of that preliminary decision and the reasons, and be given the opportunity to appeal.
6. A faculty member receiving an unsatisfactory Evaluation will be allowed at least one week after receiving the Dean's notice to prepare a written appeal to the

Committee's report for inclusion in the SPE file. If no appeal is taken, the preliminary decision becomes final and the Performance Improvement Plan process will begin.

7. If a written appeal is submitted, the Dean will then meet with the faculty member and the Chair, Director or Associate Dean together to discuss the SPE and the appeal. After the meeting, the Dean will reevaluate considering the meeting and appeal before preparing a written final decision for inclusion in the SPE file.
8. If, upon appeal, the Dean decides that the faculty member's performance meets the unit's published expectations, then the Evaluation is complete.

F. Creation of a Performance Improvement Plan

1. If the College Dean finds that a faculty member's performance does not meet unit expectations, then the Chair, Director or Associate Dean will work in concert with the faculty member to draft a Performance Improvement Plan (Plan).
2. The Plan should consist of specific steps the faculty member will take over a period of no less than three and no more than five years, including measurable annual target requirements, to resume a satisfactory standard of performance.
3. If the faculty member and the Chair, Director or Associate Dean agree to a Plan, then both will sign a written draft of the Plan for inclusion in the SPE file, which will then be forwarded to the Dean of the College for approval.
4. The Dean may either approve the draft Plan or send the SPE file back to the Chair Director or Associate Dean with instructions to modify it.
5. The Dean of the College must approve the draft Plan before it becomes final.
6. If the faculty member and the Chair, Director or Associate Dean cannot agree on a Performance Improvement Plan, then the Chair, Director or Associate Dean will prepare a draft plan, and the faculty member will be allowed one week afterward to prepare a written response.
7. The SPE file, including both the draft Plan and the faculty member's response, will then be forwarded to the Dean of the College.
8. The Dean will review the file and meet with the faculty member and the Chair, Director or Associate Dean regarding the Plan.
9. The Dean will issue a final Performance Improvement Plan after this meeting.
10. A faculty member may appeal the final Performance Improvement Plan approved by the Dean of the College to the University Provost by notifying the Dean and Chair/Director/Associate Dean in writing.
11. The faculty member may prepare a written response to the Dean's Plan within one week from receiving the Plan for inclusion in the SPE file, which will then be forwarded to the Provost.
12. The Provost will review the entire SPE file, including the published unit expectations, and may also review other recent SPEs and Plans in the same academic unit to ensure the uniform application of those expectations.

13. The Provost will then meet with the faculty member, the Chair, Director or Associate Dean, and the Dean of the College together to discuss the Performance Improvement Plan.
14. The Provost may adopt or amend the Dean's Plan, which then will become final and binding.

G. Implementation of a Performance Improvement Plan

1. If an SPE results in a Performance Improvement Plan, then the faculty member's adherence to the Plan should become a key component of his or her annual evaluations throughout the period it covers.
2. Satisfactory annual evaluations should indicate accomplishment of the Plan's targets and requirements, but failure to achieve the minimum annual targets laid out in the Plan may result in unsatisfactory annual evaluations.
3. While an unsatisfactory SPE by itself is not grounds for disciplinary action by the University, an unsatisfactory annual evaluation received for not meeting the annual or long-term targets or requirements of a Performance Improvement Plan or other reason is just cause for disciplinary action for poor performance and/or incompetence, with sanctions up to and including dismissal from the University.

H. Reporting and Record Keeping

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The University will store the SPE files in accordance with its general policies for evaluation files.
4. 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

1. Each College Faculty Assembly will adopt its College SPE guidelines during AY 2015-16.
2. The guidelines should describe:
 - the contents of the SPE file 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 Peer Evaluation 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,
 - any Evaluation procedures to be established in guidelines set by its individual academic units.
3. In all cases, any person with a perceived conflict of interest in evaluating a particular faculty member cannot serve on the Peer Evaluation Committee in the year of that faculty member's SPE.
 4. No College policy may conflict with a University or Provost's policy. The College policy must be approved by the Provost prior to implementation or amendment. The Provost may either approve the College policy or send it back to the College Faculty Assembly with instructions to modify it.

J. Articulation of Unit Expectations

1. Each academic unit that does annual evaluations will define, in writing, specific and uniform expectations for sustained performance among its tenured faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service.
2. These expectations should reflect the customs and practices of the unit, the professional norm of its discipline(s), and its overall mission as part of the University:
 - The expectations should reflect a standard of performance commensurate with the unit's existing criteria for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor, and with the duration of the review period.
 - 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.
3. As with other policies for faculty evaluation, the academic unit's expectations for sustained performance must be approved by the Dean of the College.
4. 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. Special Provisions for Third-Year Post-Tenure Evaluation of Associate Professors

1. Associate Professors will receive a preliminary SPE in the fourth year after being granted tenure at FAU.
2. The third-year post-tenure evaluation is intended to provide timely feedback and mentoring to Associate Professors as they progress toward promotion to Professor.

3. In particular, the third-year post-tenure SPE cannot result in a formal Performance Improvement Plan.
4. It especially should aim to identify potential barriers to or resources needed for securing promotion.
5. As with the third-year progress towards tenure review of Assistant Professors, Associate Professors should be aware that a satisfactory third-year post-tenure Evaluation does not guarantee promotion to Professor or a future satisfactory SPE.

L. SPE Policy Committee

1. The Provost will convene an *ad hoc* committee of faculty every three to five years to review the SPE policies and procedures described above.
2. 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.
3. The Committee may recommend changes to the Provost's SPE policy to make it more effective.
4. The SPE Policy Committee has no oversight role, however, over the findings of individual Evaluations, nor over the contents of individual Performance Improvement Plans.