

POLICY MEMORANDUM NO. 244

TO: All Faculty

FROM: Charles W. Steger *MS*

DATE: October 12, 2007

SUBJECT: Annual and Pre-tenure Faculty Evaluations

Approved by CFA:	February 2, 2007
Approved by Faculty Senate:	February 20, 2007
Approved by University Council:	April 30, 2007
Approved by the President:	April 30, 2007
Approved by the Board of Visitors:	June 4, 2007
Effective Date:	Fall 2007

The Board of Visitors approved a resolution to provide the opportunity for faculty to report on diversity-related accomplishments as part of their annual faculty activity report.

Following is the text of that resolution.

WHEREAS, current university policy calls for annual faculty evaluations based on reports of activity submitted by individual faculty members; and

WHEREAS, departmental practices differ on the extent and nature of the feedback that is given to faculty members annually and to untenured faculty during their probationary period. While some departments do an excellent job of faculty evaluation, some grievances and tenure appeal cases reveal inadequate or inconsistent documentation of performance concerns; and

WHEREAS, constructive written feedback on an annual basis and documentation of expectations for performance improvement when needed are fundamental practices that should be adopted by all departments so that faculty members receive timely and appropriate feedback at every stage of their career; and

WHEREAS, the departmental promotion and tenure committee should conduct a thorough review of each pre-tenure faculty member at least twice during the usual six-year probationary period, providing written and verbal feedback to the faculty member on their progress toward tenure and advising the department head on reappointment; and

WHEREAS, departments are now required to have written policies and practices outlining the process and criteria to be used in faculty evaluations in order to promote consistency and transparency in these important personnel practices;

THEREFORE be it resolved that sections 2.9.1 and 2.8.2 of the Faculty Handbook concerning annual and pre-tenure faculty evaluations be revised to emphasize the importance of these evaluations, to require written documentation of departmental policies and practices, and to require that individual faculty evaluations be shared with and acknowledged by the faculty member.

2.9.1 Annual Evaluation and Salary Adjustments (new material in bold)

All departments are required to have written guidelines outlining the process and criteria to be used in faculty evaluations. The adoption of such guidelines promotes consistency and transparency in this important aspect of faculty life. Guidelines and procedures for the annual review of university or alumni distinguished professors are established by the president and/or provost, who are responsible for their evaluations.

Every faculty member's professional performance is evaluated annually and written feedback is provided separately from confirmation of any merit adjustments. The process begins with submission of a Faculty Activity Report (FAR). All non-temporary faculty members must submit a FAR annually. These reports become part of the basis for performance evaluations, awarding merit adjustments, and promotion, tenure, and post-tenure reviews.

Department heads/chairs are responsible for conducting annual faculty evaluations, either independently or in consultation with an appropriately charged committee in accordance with departmental

procedures. All evaluations must be in writing and include a discussion of contributions and accomplishments in all areas of the faculty member's responsibilities, comments on the faculty member's plans and goals, and any recommendations for improvement or change. Faculty members will receive their written evaluations within 90 days of submission of required materials, and they are asked to acknowledge receipt by signing and returning a copy for their departmental file, or the electronic equivalent. Acknowledgement of receipt of the evaluation need not imply agreement with it. If a faculty member is in substantive disagreement with the evaluation, that member may submit a written response to the department head for inclusion in his or her personnel file.

In addition to their annual evaluation letters, all pre-tenure faculty members receive at least two thorough reviews during the normal six-year probationary period and written feedback on their progress toward tenure by their departmental promotion and tenure committee prior to reappointment in accordance with guidance included in section 2.8.2.

Salary adjustments are based on merit; they are not automatic. Recommendations for salary adjustments originate with the department head or chair and are reviewed by the dean, the provost, and the president. Because salary adjustments are determined administratively on an annual basis, **and** based significantly on the quality of the faculty member's response to assigned responsibility, they may not accurately reflect the full scope of the faculty member's professional development as evaluated by relevant committees in the tenure and promotion process.

The salary adjustments of continuing faculty members are approved by the board of visitors, and each faculty member is informed **in writing** of the board's action as early as possible.

2.8.2 Probationary Period (excerpt, new material only)

Under normal circumstances, departmental promotion and tenure committees review pre-tenure faculty members twice during the probationary period, usually their second and fourth, or third and fifth, years of service. The timing of the reviews depends upon

the nature of the faculty member's discipline and must be clearly indicated in written departmental policies. The terms of offer identifies the initial appointment period. Pre-tenure reviews may be delayed if there is an approved extension as described below. Changes or variations in the standard review cycle must be documented in writing.

These reviews are substantive and thorough. At a minimum, departmental promotion and tenure committees must review the faculty member's relevant annual activity reports, peer evaluations of teaching, and authored materials. It is strongly suggested that promotion and tenure committees and pre-tenure faculty use the promotion and tenure dossier format (see section 2.8.4) in organizing and presenting information for review.

The pre-tenure reviews analyze the faculty member's progress toward promotion and tenure and offer guidance regarding future activities and plans. All reviews must be in writing, with the faculty member acknowledging receipt by signing and returning a copy for his or her departmental file. In addition, the promotion and tenure committee and the department head will meet with the faculty member to discuss the review and recommendations. Individual faculty members are also encouraged to seek guidance and mentoring from senior colleagues and the department head. Pre-tenure faculty members bear responsibility for understanding departmental expectations for promotion and tenure and for meeting those expectations.