

# FACULTY EVALUATION MODEL<sup>1</sup> AT VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## INTRODUCTION

Valdosta State University wants its faculty members to succeed and to be productive members of the VSU community; therefore, the university and its colleges, departments, and divisions continuously use a series of evaluation processes that are intended to be both summative and formative. They should not only provide an accurate picture of the faculty member's performance in teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service, but they should also assist faculty members in defining and meeting their own professional goals in these areas.

Faculty members at Valdosta State University are evaluated both by themselves and others numerous times over the course of their careers:

- (1) Every semester, students are given the opportunity to express their opinions about classroom instruction through the **Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI)**.
- (2) Each year, faculty members evaluate themselves through an **Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan** to which their department/unit head adds an **Annual Evaluation**.
- (3) Each year, faculty members are evaluated according to individual departmental standards for the award of **merit pay**.
- (4) During their third year of full-time service at VSU, tenure-track faculty members are also evaluated by departmental committees as well as their department/unit heads when they participate in a **Pre-Tenure Review**.
- (5) Beginning in their fourth year of full-time university service (if hired as an Assistant Professor or the fifth year if hired as an Associate Professor), tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply for **Promotion**, and they are eligible to apply for **Tenure** in their fifth year. In both these processes, faculty must show the results of their earlier evaluation processes to departmental colleagues, department/unit head, the appropriate dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
- (6) Every five years after the award of tenure (unless interrupted by another personnel action such as promotion), faculty members participate in a **Post-Tenure Review**. During this review, they are evaluated by their departmental colleagues and their department/unit heads.

The Faculty Evaluation Model at Valdosta State University seeks to provide the  
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Each institution shall establish definite and stated criteria, consistent with the Regents'



all phases of its operations. Expenditures for operation of the University System, including salaries, are therefore necessarily contingent upon legislative appropriations. While compensation could be reduced as a consequence of actions of the governor or General Assembly, it is the stated intent of the Board "to maintain current salary commitments in so far as possible to every employee and the Board will exert its composite influence and best efforts to that end." (Board of Regents' Policy Manual, Section 803.1401).

Salary increases for full-time teaching faculty are awarded on the basis of merit. Merit ratings should be based on departmental evaluation procedures established in accordance with university policies and represent a consensus arrived at by the department/unit head, dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Criteria for the determination of merit increases will include teaching ability, completion of significant professional development activities (including the attainment of additional academic degrees,) promotion in rank, seniority, research productivity, academic achievements and publications, academic honors and recognitions, relevant professional achievements and recognitions, and non-teaching services to the institution

Department/unit heads and deans of the colleges are responsible to convey in writing at the beginning of each academic year the method of evaluation of the criteria for merit that are specified in the preceding paragraph which will be utilized in determining merit pay increases. Faculty should be apprised of their success in meeting these evaluative requirements throughout the year and as part of the annual evaluation for which merit will be determined. If upon merit evaluation, the faculty member is not satisfied with the evaluation, the faculty member may appeal the decision through the normal appeal process for faculty.

#### **(4) PRE-TENURE REVIEW**

##### **Preamble**

Two of the significant milestones of any professor's career involve the awarding of tenure and promotion in rank. Tenure resides with each institution and is not guaranteed; one normally must be employed in a tenure track position for at least five years of consecutive service before a tenure decision is considered. In order to be tenurable, faculty must meet the criteria set forth in the university's statutes and the Board of Regents' policies. The decision to grant tenure to a member of the faculty involves an extensive commitment of the institution's resources. Both the institution and the affected faculty member should maintain close contact with the individual's progress towards tenure. Each college or unit will hold an annual meeting to review the goals and needs of the institution in relation to tenure.

##### **Process**

Upon accepting a faculty appointment, new faculty should be provided with the guidelines for tenure followed by their college and department/unit. While insuring one's tenurability is primarily the responsibility of the individual, all tenured members of a department/unit have a professional obligation to help guide untenured faculty through their probationary period. The pre-tenure review process is one of the formal mechanisms through which untenured faculty gain positive and corrective feedback about their performance and how it relates to their tenure progress. This pre-tenure review process will employ the colleg

department/unit. A copy of the report should be included in the faculty member's personnel file.

If the faculty member feels that the report of the committee is unfair, the faculty member can follow the University's established appeals process.

## **(5) PROMOTION AND TENURE**

### **Promotion**

Promotions in rank are based on merit and are not automatic. The Board of Regents has fixed certain minimum criteria for promotion from one rank to another; these criteria include superior teaching, outstanding service to the institution, academic achievement, and professional growth and development. In at least two of these four areas, the faculty member's accomplishment should be noteworthy, with the greatest emphasis on teaching. Regents policies also state that there should be appropriate involvement of faculty in making recommendations for promotion. Each department/unit should have written procedures for making recommendations for promotion, and these procedures should be available to all faculty members.

At Valdosta State University, the terminal degree or its equivalent is normally required for promotion to associate or full professor. Strong uniipm012.24 12. (a)4 (1)-2 (1)-2Strong uniipm012.24





Valdosta State University (VSU) already evaluates the performance of all faculty members through an established annual review process. This process is designed to guide faculty in maintaining a high level of professional competence and to recognize and reward faculty for outstanding achievement. The annual evaluations will serve as the guide for the post-tenure review, and each annual evaluation should end with a statement that clearly specifies if the previous year's performance was satisfactory, needs improvement, or unsatisfactory.

The post-tenure review process should not place an onerous burden on faculty to document their continuing competence, which is why the primary documentation submitted by faculty are the five most recent annual evaluations and a current curriculum vitae. Generally, faculty with three or more satisfactory annual evaluations with at least two of these within the three years prior to the review will be considered as candidates for reward and recognition by the department/unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee. Faculty who have two or more unsatisfactory annual evaluations at least

reward outstanding faculty accomplishments. The University will develop a reward structure that recognizes faculty excellence, supports distinguished faculty work, attracts and retains outstanding faculty, and enhances the academic reputation of VSU. Such a reward program should include, among other measures, the following:

- (1) increased visibility for faculty achievements in teaching, scholarship, and service;
- (2) substantial merit-pay increases that are in addition to those awarded through the annual evaluation process; and
- (3) continuation, expansion, and support of course reassignment policy and an enhancement of the leave of absence program for the development of faculty scholarship, other creative professional activities, and teaching.

**Goal 3: Detect and remediate sub-standard professional performance**

If, as a result of the review process, the need for faculty development is recommended, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will provide a written summary of its findings and any recommendations to the department/unit head. Department/unit heads should add their own comments, confer with the faculty member, and present the findings. Both the department/unit head and the faculty member must sign the report indicating the results had been presented and discussed. If a development plan is proposed, recommendations from the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be forwarded to the department/unit head for additional suggestions.

This development plan must accomplish the following:

- (a) define specific goals or outcomes;
- (b) outline activities to be undertaken to achieve these goals or outcomes;
- (c) contain a schedule; and
- (d) define the criteria by which the faculty member's progress will be monitored.

The department/unit head will be responsible for forwarding the faculty member's development plan resulting from post-tenure review to the appropriate administrator at least one level above the faculty member's unit and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The department/unit head and administrative officer are responsible for arranging appropriate support for the approved plan, if required. This process will be integrated into the timetable for personnel decisions and merit pay decisions established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The development plan will be signed by the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the department/unit head, and the faculty member. A copy of this signed plan will be provided to the faculty member, committee members, the department/unit head, and the appropriate dean. As part of the annual evaluation, the department/unit head will

For a faculty member who fails to achieve the improvements identified in the development plan within the agreed-upon timetable as evidenced by the department/unit head's evaluation, both the faculty member and head will be asked to submit a written explanation to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The faculty member's account should explain why the faculty member has been unable to meet the terms of the development plan. The Promotion and Tenure committee may respond to these written explanations in one of three ways. The Promotion and Tenure Committee:

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strengthening the overall quality of education at VSU by encouraging highly motivated and professionally active tenured faculty.

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## APPENDIX A

### Guidelines for Interpreting Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI)

Note: The following recommendations are taken from the University of North Dakota website, with only slight modifications.

[http://www.und.edu/dept/oid/evaluation\\_literature.htm](http://www.und.edu/dept/oid/evaluation_literature.htm)

Student course ratings have many uses, particularly if viewed over time and across courses. Student ratings provide information that instructors can use to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement in their teaching. Furthermore, departments and teaching units can use student ratings in the aggregate to assess the overall performance of multi-course and multi-instructor units, as well as to evaluate individual instructors for personnel reasons, such as decisions regarding retention, promotion, tenure and merit pay.

The recommendations listed below can provide helpful guidelines for the use of student course ratings in personnel decisions.

- 1. Student ratings must be used in concert with other data that relate to the quality of a faculty member's teaching, rather than as a sole indicator of teaching quality.** Other sources such as peer reviews of classroom sessions, peer reviews of curricular materials, and faculty self-reflection should be assessed in addition to student evaluations to gain a true sense of the teaching skills and performance of a faculty member. Consideration of these other sources of evidence is especially important because student ratings alone do not provide sufficient evidence of the extent of student learning in a course.



proportions decrease, particularly in small classes, there is greater opportunity for the rating of one or a few students to disproportionately affect the results.

Cashin (1995) provides the following guidelines for assuring that acceptable levels of reliability are achieved for student evaluations when making personnel decisions.

1. Reliability will



- B. More advanced students give higher ratings than less advanced students.
- C. Grades are weakly correlated with student ratings: Higher grades are associated with somewhat higher ratings.
- D. Humanities courses receive higher ratings than social science courses, and social science courses receive higher ratings than science courses.

The variables listed below are the ones that many people believe are correlated with student ratings, but for which inconsistent results have been found.

- A. Size of the class (although, keep in mind the issue of reliability when class size falls below 15).
- B. Gender of the student
- C. Gender of the instructor
- D. An interaction between gender of the student and gender of the instructor
- E. Time of day that the course is offered.
- F. Whether students are majors or non-majors.
- G. Rank of instructor

Information regarding the type of variables that have an impact on student evaluations must be kept in mind when comparing evaluations from different courses. At the very least, department heads and deans should be aware of the impact of variables on student

C. Teacher/student interaction, or rapport

**Mean**—The mean score represents the numerical average for a set of responses. The following points assume a scale in which a low score is assigned to negative responses (i.e., poor) and a high score to positive responses (i.e., excellent).

**Generally, the higher the mean score, the better the evaluation.**

On a 5-point scale, items with mean scores above 4.0 generally reflect teaching aspects that are particularly effective.

**Standard Deviation**—The standard deviation represents the distribution of the responses around the mean. It indicates the degree of consistency among student responses. The standard deviation is often abbreviated in data tables as  $s$ ,  $\sigma$ ,  $\sigma_x$ , or  $\sigma_y$ .

The standard deviation in conjunction with the mean provides a better understanding of your data. Begin by adding the standard deviation to the mean. Next subtract the standard deviation from the mean. The range between the two calculated values represents where approximately 2/3 of your students' responses fall. For example, if the mean score is 3.3 with a std of 0.4, then 2/3 of the students' responses lie between 2.9 (3.3 - 0.4) and 3.7 (3.3 + 0.4).

The standard deviation represents the degree of similarity among the students' responses. A small standard deviation (as in the example above) reflects a high degree of consensus among the students. Since there is a small numerical range (2.9 - 3.7) in which 2/3 of the ratings fall, the response pattern among your students is very consistent.

A large standard deviation indicates that there is considerable disagreement among the students' responses. For example, if the mean score is 3.3 with a std of 1.0, then 2/3 of the students' responses lie between 2.3 and 4.3. This indicates a wide disparity among the responses to this item, with the mean simply representing a numerical average of the responses and not a consensus rating by the class.

#### **More on Standard Deviation & Mean**

<http://www.brevard.edu/fyc/fya/CuseoLink.htm>

The standard deviation for individual items is an index of agreement or disagreement among student raters. Perfect agreement yields a standard deviation of 0. Deviations of less than 1.0 indicate relatively good agreement in a 5-point scale. Deviations of 1.2 and higher indicate that the mean may not be a good measure of student agreement. This situation may occur when opinion in a class is strongly divided between very high and very low ratings or, possibly, is evenly dispersed across the entire response scale, resulting in a mean that does not represent a "typical" student opinion in any meaningful sense. A mean of 3.0 or 3.5 [on a 5-point scale] cannot be construed to represent "average" performance in the sense of middle-range performance when the mean is simply an artifact of strong disagreement among students.

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## **UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN COMMENTS IN THE STUDENT OPINION OF INSTRUCTION (SOI)**

Individual written comments should be interpreted only in the context of all written comments and student ratings; an individual comment should not be considered meaningful unless it is supported by other written comments or by the ratings. Any analysis of comments should seek patterns rather than focusing on isolated statements.

<http://www.radford.edu/~mayleswo/sef/Principles.html>

<http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/GuidelinesforStudentEvaluation.pdf>

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Appendix B  
Student Opinion on Instruction (SOI)

As you answer the questions below, be aware that successful

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1. WHAT WERE THE BEST FEATURES ABOUT THIS COURSE?

2. WHAT ARE YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S STRENGTHS?

3. WHAT SUGGESTIONS WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR INSTRUCTOR FOR  
IMPROVING THE COURSE?

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**Appendix C**  
Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan

Faculty Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_

**The Annual Faculty Activity Report, Action Plan, and Annual Evaluation document plays an important role for faculty, departments, and the units within the university as part of strategic planning and development. This document is also a critical component of the promotion and tenure process for faculty; it serves as the primary source of information for the university annual report and as a means to evaluate individual units' progress toward meeting strategic goals. Individual programs and departments should develop policies that address specific components of the report such as allocation of loads for service or special assignments. It is important that research and scholarly activities be discussed in departments and colleges so that listings of activities are clearly and consistently reported across the unit.**

**Faculty members completing this form should make every effort clearly to address all of the areas within this document that relate to individual responsibilities at the university.**

**Activities should be list(w)10.9v.r(v)-11.1 ( d ) ] T J E T o l a f t n c a u n i t h i n i s e u n 5 1 2 ( s s ) - 1 1 . 4 ( p f ) 5 . 2 ( t e l ) - 1 1 . 4 t q 1**

## **A. TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION**

Teaching and instruction are defined as those activities associated with the design and delivery of



**4. Guided independent study, internships, or other teaching responsibilities:**

Name of Student	Description of Activity

**5. Awards or special recognitions earned in this area.**

*Please be prepared to include materials supporting your report ( 2 2 Tm ( ) T2 0.9 ( i ( rea ) - 1 1.5 ( s ) .*

**B. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY**

Professional growth and productivity is defined as improving the competence of faculty members to better fulfill the role and responsibilities of their position within the institution, professional achievement or contribution to the teaching/learning process, or education profession in the faculty member's area of expertise.

**1. Publications, Performances, Exhibitions, and/or Creative Research:**

Please list publications, performances, exhibitions, and/or creative research (attach a copy of each publication and use a standard bibliography form, including page reference and date. For artistic or creative activity, include appropriate citations, references, or documentation).

**2. Research/Scholarship and/or Artistic Work in Progress:**

**3. Appearance on professional programs:**

Professional Association	Nature of Contribution	Date

**4. Other research completed during the current year and not reported above:**

**5. Applications for university and external funding/funding received**

Title	Funding Agency	Amount Requested/Received

**6.**

## **GOALS**

**C. COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE**

College service is defined as service rendered by a faculty member in support of the division, department, college, or university. Community service is defined as the application of a faculty member’s recognized area of expertise, in the community, without pay. The acceptance of pay constitutes consulting and, as such, is considered under Professional Growth and Productivity. For purposes of evaluation, service to the college or community does not include any functions defined and included elsewhere.

**1. Advising:**

- a. Estimated Number of \_\_\_\_\_  
     Advisees
  
- Undergraduate \_\_\_\_\_
  
- Graduate \_\_\_\_\_

b. List any positive innovations used in advising.

**2. Departmental, Division/College, University, and University-System Committees:**

Committee	Nature of Service (Chair, Member)	Level (System, University, College, Department)

**4. Membership/Leadership/Participation in community organizations/activities**

Community organization or activity	Role

**5. Unpaid consultancies, workshops, professional development activities provided.**

**6. Awards or special recognitions earned in this area.**

- Please be prepared to include materials supporting your report if requested. Letters of support or appreciation, reports, information from conferences shared or utilized by your department would be appropriate support material for evidence in this area.*

**GOALS**

**Planning is an important part of the evaluation process. When completing this section include specific goals and objectives, remembering that goals should be broad and flexible and recognizing that they may be subject to change. Relate your goals to past Faculty Activity Reports; Department Head Evaluations; Departmental, College, and University Goals; and Strategic Plans. Some plans may need specific timelines or may need to be set**

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**Valdosta State University  
Annual Faculty Evaluation  
(Calendar Year \_\_\_\_\_)**

Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

College/Division:

Department:

Name:

Highest Degree Earned: \_\_\_\_\_ Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Appointment Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Appointment Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Year First Promotion: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Second Promotion: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Years at VSU: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in Present Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Next Scheduled Personnel Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**FACULTY ANNUAL EVALUATION**



\_\_\_ Satisfactory

\_\_\_ Unsatisfactory

**4. Recommended**