



# Performance Evaluations and Conversations

Human Resources

January 2018

# Keys to Best Success for Employee Evaluations, Reviews & Conversations

For Staff:

- ▶ Clearly communicate (in writing and verbally) the expectations/goals on at least an annual basis.
- ▶ Update workplans - outline goals and objectives for each evaluation period.
- ▶ Meet throughout the evaluation period with staff to allow for best feedback, communication of employee needs, etc.

For Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:

- ▶ Goal Setting is important – comparing performance to faculty's stated goals.

For All:

- ▶ Communicate in a timely way when issues arise.
- ▶ Keep the conversations to the facts of the matter.
- ▶ Provide follow up communication, in writing, which outline the conversation and expectations to correct action/future actions.

# Staff Employees

- ▶ What goals/objectives were met during this evaluation period? How were they achieved? Can these efforts be duplicated towards the unmet expectations or goals?
- ▶ What goals/objectives were not met during this evaluation period? What did the employee need to do in order to be successful? **What steps did the supervisor take to monitor the work plan and expectations?**
- ▶ Are there skills which need to be learned, reviewed or updated? What training could be recommended?
- ▶ Outline what the employee needs to do in order to meet the expectations, including timelines where applicable.

# Tenured and Tenure Track Faculty

- ▶ Were self-determined goals met?
- ▶ Which goals were achieved? What made these successful? What should be duplicated next year?
- ▶ Which goals were not meet? What are the reasons the expectations were not met?
- ▶ What is needed from the Chair/Director/Associate Chair in order to help the faculty member towards their success throughout the year working on their goals?

# Lecturers

- ▶ What is the assessment of the following – Article XIX: Performance Evaluation, of LEO 2013-2018 Bargaining Agreement?
  - ▶ Command of subject matter
  - ▶ Ability to organize material and convey it effectively to students
  - ▶ Successful design and/or planning of courses and course materials
  - ▶ Ability to communicate and achieve appropriate student learning goals
  - ▶ Effective interaction with students
  - ▶ Growth in the subject field and in teaching methods

## Examples: Staff

- ▶ *Customer Focused* - It is important that you establish and maintain relationships with our students in a manner that provides for the best opportunity for student success. As mentioned to you X times this year, you demonstrated that you were not actively listening to what the student was saying which resulted in you providing incorrect options to the student for a positive resolution. It is expected that you will take the time needed with each student to listen thoroughly and engage the student in additional conversation, as needed, in order to provide the best responses.
- ▶ *Achieving Results* – Over the past few months, you have frequently missed deadlines and appear to either not take responsibility, blame others or simply don't care. What is causing you to miss these deadlines (be specific as to the deadlines that were missed)? How are you going to not miss deadlines in the future? Why did you believe it was someone else's fault?
- ▶ *Collaboration* – Faculty and other staff have provided feedback to me stating that you are not easy to work with on a project (be specific where you can). Are you aware of this feedback? Why do you think they would feel that way? How do you plan to work on this appearance of non-teamwork?

## Examples: Staff

- ▶ *Problem Solving/Processing Improvements* – This past year, our department has experienced a number of changes to our policies, processes and structure. You have stated that you are having a hard time with these changes and are slow to get involved with the changes or respond to others who are trying to move forward. It is important that you are taking advantage of opportunities to help move the department forward. What are the concerns you have moving forward with these changes? How can I help you overcome these concerns?
- ▶ *Communication* – As our institution strives to provide and sustain an inclusive environment, it is important that all of our staff effectively communicate with those of differing opinions and levels of understanding. I encourage you to be sure you are keeping this in mind when working with the student temporaries in our office and with the students we service, who come from various backgrounds, so that you provide a positive regard for all and are considerate of the needs of the members of our campus community.

# Examples: All faculty

## Course Syllabus or Materials

- ▶ You made content errors in your syllabus and course materials for [specific class] that went uncorrected which gives the appearance that you do not have command of the subject matter. What is your plan to increase your content knowledge? You will need to correct these errors and provide evidence of the increase in content knowledge in your syllabus and course materials by [specific date].
- ▶ Your course materials appear to be mostly borrowed or copied from other faculty members or from a publisher. It is important to be sure to stay current on the subject matter and provide materials which reflect your own original work. Borrowing other faculty member's documents not only gives the appearance that you may not have command of the subject matter but also using outdated materials. You will need to submit to the Chair course materials which are either all or mostly developed by you by [specific date].
- ▶ Our department practice is that faculty need to provide lecturer materials which provide students with the best opportunity to learn the subject. You have been utilizing voice recorded lectures which are not yours and have not been updated. It is expected that you will provide new, high-quality voice recorded lectures for your courses scheduled for this [specific semester] by [specific date].

## Examples: All faculty Course Syllabus or Materials

- ▶ Your syllabus for [specific class] is missing key dates and assignment deadlines are not clear. This is not in alignment with our department practices or expectations for successful student learning. Why did you design your syllabus this way? How do you plan to revised your syllabus to be in alignment? All of your syllabi need to be consistent with the department practices by [specific date].
- ▶ The course materials in your [specific class] are unclear and show a low expectation of our students. Please provide how you will enhance student engagement and a higher expectation for the students in this course.

# Examples: All faculty Developing Course Materials

- ▶ While it is appropriate to collaborate with your fellow faculty members on courses, it is not acceptable to continue to use other faculty member's lectures in your courses as the content can become outdated very quickly and it fails to showcase your expertise in the faculty-student learning environment for your assigned courses.
- ▶ The lack of timely preparation for courses was noted in your annual review for 2016-2017. Although you knew of your teaching assignment in June 2016, other department faculty were required to step in and find placements for your students in your [specific course] when they became aware that you were unprepared for the student placements late in August/September for the Fall 2016 semester.

# Examples: All faculty Student Interaction/Grading

- ▶ Regarding your presentation as evidenced by student evaluations and faculty observations - Overall 4.47 for the course and 4.59 for faculty. These are very good! Effort is needed to improve evaluations in the [specific course...and list the current ratings] to increase these to above 4.0."
- ▶ Grade inflation in some classes needs to be addressed. These courses include [specific courses] where the student evaluations, submitted student documents and quiz scores do not lead to the higher level of As in the classroom. This is the second year this has been noted as an area of concern. Please provide a plan of action to your chair as to how you will address this issue for the next semester and academic year by [specific date]."
- ▶ Thanks for your efforts to be sensitive to the varying needs of our students. More active strategies and activities as well as more skillfully invited guests to the classroom will also inspire more positive student interactions.

## Examples: All faculty Student Interaction/Grading

- ▶ There appears to be a low attendance and/or low student participation in your in-class sessions and low participation in on-line discussion boards. Please take advantage of the expertise of senior faculty (perhaps classroom observations) and OEL tools to increase attendance and participation.
- ▶ Please consider test questions which move away from multiple choice questions to more problem or case-based type questions. This will allow a better learning outcome for the type of class you are teaching.
- ▶ Classroom observations indicate - Interactions between faculty and students was appropriate. However, student to student interactions appear to be trailing away from the content being discussed. In addition, it appeared that the faculty member was not in control of the classroom. Consider working with senior faculty members, TCLT and the Dean of Students to strategize for better command of the classroom and how to provide relevant student activities/interactions.

## Examples: All Faculty Non-Instructional

- ▶ In order to contribute to the development of a community of faculty and student scholars for our school and for the UM-Flint campus community, you need to be actively engaged with faculty peers and your students. Be clear about what you need, such as: In order to contribute to the development of a community of faculty and student scholars for our school, this involves you being present on campus or engaged in school/campus activities, which are outside of the classroom/office hours, and positively impact our students learning or campus community.
- ▶ It is required that you be present at as many faculty/department meetings as possible during the academic year. During the past year, there were X department meetings and you were present (in person or remotely) in only X of these meetings. Unless there is a reasonable and appropriate reason for your absence from a department meeting, you are expected to participate in all department meetings.
- ▶ Each senior faculty member of the department is expected to complete their stated service goal of providing a training module for other department faculty. You promised to deliver your module by the end of academic year of 2016-2017. However, you have not documented any completed modules as of today's date. In order to meet your obligation in this matter, you must submit evidence of the completed module to your chair by [specific date].

## Examples: All Faculty Non-Instructional

- ▶ Per our mutually stated goal, it is an expectation that you will demonstrate progress in scholarship and professional development by submitting a minimum of 2 articles to a peer-reviewed professional journal this year and deliver a minimum of one presentation on a topic of scholarly interest at a professional conference, symposium or related venue.
- ▶ The instructor needs to be more involved outside of the classroom to school/university. Please talk to members of code and nominating committee for memberships in committees that appeal to you.

# Case Studies: #1

- ▶ A faculty member went on short term medical leave for nearly 4 weeks and did not tell the department. The faculty member did not get anyone to cover their classes and did not alert the students that there would not be any class each session so students kept showing up to an empty classroom. This same semester, in one class, the faculty member had given only 1 homework assignment in which everyone got an A and then a number of students did very poorly on the final and complained to the department about their grades.
  - ▶ Included in our meeting today is a policy which has recently been drafted.
  - ▶ Do all your faculty know how to report absences? This should be an annual reminder.
  - ▶ The faculty member must also abide by university policies (more than two weeks of absence, then the university must have appropriate documentation SPG 201.11-1).
  - ▶ This includes delays in providing required feedback to students about their performance (before drop/add date).
  - ▶ Documentation, expectations, and follow-up
  - ▶ Outcomes may be different depending if the faculty member is LEO or tenure-track

## Case Studies: #2

- ▶ A tenured faculty member has a long history of bullying behavior that has created a toxic environment in the department. Behavior includes accusations, yelling, manipulation, etc. The behavior has never been addressed in a review. It is difficult to imagine a way that a chair (who may be junior to said faculty member) can address (and thus stop) the behavior. Untenured faculty members are frightened and concerned for their ability to succeed and thrive in this environment.
  - ▶ You can not go back and use something that is not recorded or reported.
  - ▶ You have to document the behavior beginning now.
  - ▶ Set and document expectations (expectations outlined in SPG 201.96).
  - ▶ Review, monitor and document if expectations are, or are not, being met.
  - ▶ Follow-up and take it to the next level (bring to the Dean's Office)

## Case Studies: #3

- ▶ Faculty member recently received consistently good student course evaluations and peer observations. However, the faculty member had been teaching a summer-term course for several years and over time the Chair noted cases during academic advising where students failed the winter semester version of the course then earned an A when they repeated the course in the summer. Also, some of the students took a course for which the course in question was a prerequisite. Those students failed or did very poorly in that subsequent course. The Chair then used Webfocus to compare the grade distributions of the winter course versus the summer course. While the winter course routinely had 20-25% of the students earn less than a C- in the course, virtually all of the student in the summer version of the course received A's with only an occasional student receiving a B.
  - ▶ Ask the faculty member to talk about the differences in teaching methods, action plans, and expectations on the syllabus. (Things to consider...the number of students in the class, how is the faculty member responding to students, number of assignments, etc.)
  - ▶ Ask specifically about the grading process for each semester...number of assignments, how are they weighted, is there a different rubric for each of the terms.
  - ▶ If there is no logical explanation to the differences, let the faculty member know that this discrepancy is not acceptable...both courses should be more similar than not.
  - ▶ Ask the faculty member to submit how they will correct this course of action in the next semester taught (winter or summer) to be consistent with each other.

## Case Studies: #4

- ▶ What if a Lecturer has been teaching a course for a while which isn't necessarily what was intended and isn't that Lecturer's expertise. This happened under other chairpersons. Now, I would like to remove the Lecturer from teaching this course because we offer many sections per year (at 80%+ capacity) with our only faculty member who has specialized training and expertise in this area teaching only 1-2 of these sections.
- ▶ Our students are consistently failing this portion of the exit exam in the Lecturer's courses, but in reviewing these same students' exit exam performance for 2012-2017, they are not failing in other areas. This is also documented in peer observations (suggestions to cover basics rather than non-core topics) and in student evals (consistently lower ratings in this course than other courses taught by same Lecturer).
- ▶ While the Lecturer may be open for changes which need to be made, due to their lack of expertise/qualifications according to our own department best practice, they shouldn't be teaching the course. How do I address this in a review?

## Case Studies: #4 (continued)

- ▶ Considerations for response:
  - ▶ It is the discretion of the Chair, Associate Dean/Dean which faculty teach which courses. If the course is assigned to a tenure track member, there is no additional conversation needed. If the course is assigned to another Lecturer, then the question of Experience, Ability and Performance (aka EAP) applies which should be discussed with the Dean's Office and Human Resources before action is taken.
  - ▶ If the reassignment of a course results in a Lec II, III or IV taking a reduction in overall effort, then there is a need to review what other courses can be provided to the Lecturer to make them whole. If another course cannot be reassigned, then a conversation needs to occur between Chair, Associate Dean/Dean and HR to determine how to notify the Union since the Lecturer has taught the course in the past and not been notified. This may result in a special conference or special conditions in order to remove the faculty member from this course.
  - ▶ It is appropriate and our obligation to notify the Lecturer of any issues related to student grades, non-preparedness for additional courses, etc. In addition, this should be part of the annual report.

## Case Studies: #5

- For a number of years, the evaluation of lecturers has not been particularly thorough or serious. A new chair is confronted with some performance concerns, but is uncertain how to proceed since there is no documentation of a history of concerns (though it is clear that concerns have been ongoing). Complicating matters is the fact that the choices for a LEO review seem to be "everything is fine," or remediation.
  - You have to start at the point that you have information – you can't use comments that are not documented.
  - Conversations should be followed-up with an email.
  - Do not ignore the problem and leave it to the next chair.
  - If concerns are, or are not addressed, document in an annual review.
  - Make sure you are following-up on the situation. (throughout the year, not just at annual evaluation times.)
  - Don't wait until the Major Review to bring up problems. Bring the concerns up in a timely manner and in appropriate reviews along the way (such as annual reports).

## Case Studies: #6

- ▶ A lecturer has been unable to demonstrate command of the subject matter. Multiple peer observation reports serve as evidence that the lecturer provides superficial instruction at best, often conveying inaccurate information or spending a disproportionate amount of time on 'popular fluff'. Grade distributions clearly indicate inflation. The lecturer has reacted defensively to constructive criticism, choosing to defend herself rather than attempt improvement. Though prior reviews have included similar concerns, the LEO Review Committee seems to rely most heavily on student evaluations. The lecturer has a warm, approachable style and student evaluations are strong. Thus, she continues to receive 'satisfactory' ratings from the review committees. How might administrative remarks and peer observations be best written to make them more relevant to the Major Review committee?
  - ▶ Though similar points can be made as were raised in the previous case study, this scenario also raises a number of additional concerns
  - ▶ Are the expectations clear to all faculty?
  - ▶ Are components of the evaluations equally weighted?
  - ▶ Does the review committee understand the criteria and how they are weighted?
  - ▶ In short, if a faculty member does not know what the expectations are, how can you expect them to be successful?

# Questions

- ▶ Human Resources is available for consultation regarding performance evaluations.
  - ▶ Lori Burger, Assistant HR Director for Academic HR, [loric@umflint.edu](mailto:loric@umflint.edu), 762-3047
  - ▶ Beth Manning, HR Director, [bmanning@umflint.edu](mailto:bmanning@umflint.edu), 766-6644

Flint HR works directly with Academic HR to be consistent with University of Michigan best practices related to academic HR matters.