



Annual Evaluation

1. Focus of Evaluation

- a. The university requires that all faculty be evaluated annually. The evaluations are performed by the associate dean for research and faculty affairs during the first two to three months of the calendar year. The focus of these evaluations is the faculty member's performance over the previous calendar year. If the associate dean for research and faculty affairs does not hold the rank of full professor, the evaluations of full professors will be performed by the dean.
- b. "The annual evaluation provides, on a regular basis, an opportunity to judge the progress of a faculty member's performance during the past year and to develop goals and objectives of achievement for the future; it forms the basis for any annual merit salary raises and other rewards. Cumulatively, the annual evaluations establish a continuous written record of expectations and performance that will encourage professional growth and provide support for promotion, tenure, and other recognition. The annual evaluation process helps develop the best match between the faculty member's expertise and the institutional mission." ["Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty" adopted by the Faculty Senate in 2001]

2. Purposes of Annual Evaluations

- a. The annual review process is conducted in the context of each faculty member's apportionment to:
 - i. Provide faculty members an opportunity to assess their work for the previous year and make plans for the coming year. For the faculty who are not fully promoted, this opportunity shall include discussion of the progress they are making toward promotion and/or tenure.
 - ii. Provide an opportunity for the faculty member and administrators to discuss the faculty member's contributions to the work of the college and to identify possible areas of excellence and areas of continuing development as well as ways to support accomplishing that development.
 - iii. Support the career development of each faculty member and strengthen the college as a whole.

3. Student Evaluations of Teaching Performance

- a. All instructors of college courses should encourage their students to complete the university's student evaluations of teaching. UNL guidance on student evaluations, however, cautions against using bonus points or other rewards for completion of the evaluations.
 - b. Instructors should review the evaluations they receive and take into consideration the scores and comments as they plan their courses for the next semester.
 - c. The college follows the UNL guidance on interpretation of student evaluations, which says, "Student responses represent information that is fundamentally qualitative and should not be used for quantitative analysis. Any quantitative information gathered should be used for peer review and self-reflection."
- 4. Peer Observations of Teaching
 - a. Purpose and Frequency.
 - i. Peer observations of teaching are an important tool for improving teaching and evaluating the classroom work of instructors. All faculty members shall have at least one peer observation of their teaching every academic year. The faculty member performing the observation should hold rank equal to or higher than the faculty member whose teaching is being observed. To the extent possible, lecturer-Ts should have a peer observation at least once every academic year. The annual peer observations also will inform the more detailed peer evaluation required for submission when a faculty member seeks tenure or promotion. The associate dean for research and faculty affairs will coordinate peer observations of teaching for all faculty members.
 - b. Forms for Peer Observations.
 - i. Faculty members conducting peer observations shall use the forms available on the college website (<https://journalism.unl.edu/teaching-observation-program-top>).
- 5. Timeline for Annual Evaluations
 - a. Deadline for faculty to submit materials: third Friday in January.
 - b. Deadline for scheduling meetings with faculty: fourth Friday in January.
 - c. Deadline for completing meetings with faculty: second Friday in March.
 - d. Deadline for sending draft review letters to faculty: last Friday in March.
 - e. Deadline for responses to draft review letters: second Friday in April .
 - f. Deadline for final review letters to faculty last Friday in April.
 - g. Deadline for responses to review letters: 14 days after receipt of final letter.

- h. It is expected that all faculty and administrators will meet the stated deadlines. Failure to meet the stated deadlines may be a consideration in the evaluation of performance for both faculty and administrators.
- 6. Annual Evaluation Materials
 - a. Annual evaluation materials provide faculty an opportunity to communicate of their accomplishments during the previous calendar year. For the annual evaluation faculty will submit a report of activities from digital measures, an updated curriculum vitae, teaching evaluations, peer observation of teaching forms and a narrative addressing achievements in each area of their apportionment.
 - i. Digital Measures
 - 1. Faculty shall enter into Digital Measures (<https://journalism.unl.edu/digital-measuresfaculty-insights>) information about their research and creative activity, including publications, grants, awards, service, and other relevant matters. Information about courses taught and enrollments is automatically entered into Digital Measures. After faculty members have entered their materials for the calendar year, they shall have the program prepare a report for inclusion in the annual review materials.
 - ii. Updated Curriculum Vita
 - 1. Each faculty member shall submit a current curriculum vita that includes all publications, grants, awards, and other accomplishments throughout their career.
 - iii. Other Materials
 - 1. Teaching
 - a. The teaching component of the annual review materials should consist of the following:
 - b. Student evaluations for all classes taught.
 - c. Peer observation reports for the previous calendar year.
 - d. A self-reflection in which faculty members, drawing upon student evaluations, peer observations and their experience, evaluate the previous year's teaching and discuss possible adjustments to improve for the coming year.
 - 2. Self-Reflection Statements on Other Components

- a. Faculty members should submit a reflection statement on each component of their apportionments: research and creative activity, service, administration, and extension. The reflection statements should describe what the faculty members accomplished during the previous calendar year, what obstacles they encountered, how they dealt with them, and what they have planned for the coming year. In reviewing these materials, emphasis will be placed on what was accomplished in light of unexpected opportunities and obstacles faculty members encountered and how they dealt with them.
7. Reviews of Probationary (Tenure-Track) Faculty and Not-Fully-Promoted Faculty
 - a. The university requires reviews for all personnel on an annual basis. For faculty on tenure track and faculty who have not been fully promoted, the university imposes additional review requirements.
 - b. Probationary (Tenure-Track) Faculty
 - i. UNL's "Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion and Tenure" identify several mandatory procedures for evaluations. Two of these mandatory procedures pertain to tenure-track faculty:
 1. In the case of probationary faculty, the supervising administrator must consult annually with the appropriate group of tenured faculty to discuss the performance of the faculty member being evaluated.
 2. The written evaluation of probationary faculty should clearly indicate any serious concern the evaluating administrator or faculty has regarding the faculty member's performance. Faculty members should be apprised, through the annual evaluations of performance, of deficiencies in time for them to take corrective action. The review will make recommendations for improvement and professional development which will enhance the probationary faculty member's chances of eventually achieving tenure.
 - ii. For the College of Journalism and Mass Communications, the "appropriate group of tenured faculty" shall be all tenured

members of the faculty. Annual review materials submitted by tenure-track faculty shall be made available to the tenured faculty for review. The associate dean for research and faculty affairs shall convene a meeting of the tenured faculty no later than March 1. The tenured faculty shall elect a chair who shall preside over the meeting and draft a letter summarizing the tenured faculty's evaluations of each tenure-track faculty member, noting any deficiencies and making recommendations for improvement and professional development to enhance each member's chances of achieving tenure. Those recommendations shall be forwarded to the associate dean for research and faculty affairs for inclusion in the faculty member's annual review letter from the dean.

c. Not-Fully-Promoted Faculty

- i. This provision applies to all assistant professors of practice, associate professors of practice, assistant research professors, associate research professors, and tenured associate professors. For these faculty members, the university requires reviews by promoted faculty once every three years. The purpose of the three-year reviews is to help faculty who are not fully promoted prepare for promotion. The relevant provision from the UNL Guidelines states:

1. In the case of not fully promoted faculty, either tenured or non-tenured, the supervising administrator will meet periodically, but at least once every three years, with the appropriate group of faculty to discuss the performance of the faculty member being evaluated. If the appropriate faculty group votes on a recommendation on the faculty member's status, that vote may be a secret ballot.
- ii. The associate dean for research and faculty affairs shall establish a schedule for the three-year reviews of faculty who are not fully promoted based on the date when the faculty member was hired. For assistant professors of practice, the "appropriate group of faculty" shall be all faculty holding the rank of associate professor, associate professor of practice, associate research professor, full professor, full professor of practice, or full research professor. For all associate professors, either tenured or of practice, the "appropriate group of faculty" shall be all full professors, full professors of practice, or full research professors.

The three-year review is a cumulative review of achievements during the review period and shall follow the same calendar as the tenure and promotion process in the college. The faculty member undergoing review shall submit at least the annual review materials for the most recent three years, which will be due the Friday before classes begin in the fall semester in which the review is being conducted. These materials shall be made available to the relevant sets of promoted faculty members for review. The associate dean for research and faculty affairs shall convene meetings of the relevant sets of faculty members no later than September 15. The faculty members shall elect a chair who shall preside over the confidential meeting and draft a letter summarizing the faculty's evaluations of each faculty member who is not fully promoted, noting any deficiencies and making recommendations for improvement and professional development to enhance each member's chances of securing promotion to the next higher rank. Those recommendations shall be delivered in a letter to the candidate by October 15, following the same procedure and dates as the tenure and/or promotion process in the college.

- iii. If the candidate wishes to challenge the letter or seek corrections, the candidate shall immediately notify the chair of the senior faculty. The candidate shall have two weeks to submit a written response and offer any additional information that might be relevant. The faculty reviewers shall consider any objections and new information within two weeks of receiving candidates' letters and decide whether to alter the letter. All appropriate faculty are required to provide comments of support or dissent. If a faculty member is unable to attend the meeting, that person shall share opinions in writing via proxy. The associate dean shall turn the proxy over to the elected chair of the meeting, who shall include it in the final candidate materials. Once the letter has been reviewed and approved by all appropriate faculty, it shall be sent to the candidate and the associate dean for research and faculty affairs. All materials and accompanying letters must be provided to the candidate and dean by Nov. 15.
- iv. After receipt of the materials, the dean shall make an independent review of all the materials and prepare a letter

making any recommendations for improvement and professional development to enhance each member's chances of securing promotion to the next higher rank. The dean's letter shall be sent to the candidate no later than December 15. There is no challenge to be made to the dean's letter during a midterm review; however, the dean can choose to make a correction as needed.

- v. Faculty who complete a midterm review in the fall of an academic year will have reduced documentation requirements for their annual review materials in the spring, unless directed specifically by the dean or associate dean of research and faculty affairs.
- vi. In the unusual case that a faculty member completes a midterm review in the spring (generally due to a spring hiring date), the same procedure applies. Materials will be due by the Friday before spring classes begin. The senior faculty committee shall be convened by February 15. A letter summarizing the committee's recommendations shall be provided to the candidate by March 15. The candidate will have up to two weeks to challenge or seek corrections, following the same procedure as outlined (see iii above). All materials and accompanying letters must be provided to the candidate and dean by April 15. The dean's letter shall be sent to the candidate by May 15.

8. Administrator Evaluations

- a. All administrators in the college shall be evaluated by the dean on an annual basis. In addition, administrators shall receive cumulative reviews, usually every five years, in accordance with the procedures described in §2.3.2.1 of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Bylaws.
- b. All faculty members shall have an opportunity every year to submit anonymous feedback on college administrators. The comments on appointed administrators in the college, as defined in the bylaws, shall be submitted to the dean and taken into consideration in performing the annual reviews of the administrators.
- c. Comments on the dean shall be collected and submitted to the executive vice chancellor.

9. Evaluations of Lecturer-Ts (Part-Time Faculty)

- a. The associate dean for academic programs shall be responsible for reviewing and meeting with lecturer-Ts who taught during the previous calendar year. In carrying out these reviews and meetings, the associate

dean may have assistance from course coordinators who are supervising multiple sections of the same course.

- b. The associate dean for academic programs shall submit to the associate dean for research and faculty affairs summaries of their evaluations of the work of the lecturer-Ts. These summaries shall be incorporated in annual review letters that will be signed by the associate dean for research and faculty affairs and the associate dean for academic programs and sent to the individual lecturer-Ts for signatures.

10. Annual Review Letters

- a. The annual review letters for all faculty members shall state whether or not the faculty member is eligible for a merit increase.
- b. Faculty members who complete their mid-term review in the fall of the academic year will receive an annual review letter based on the reduced documentation requirements and on the mid-term review.
- c. Decisions about annual merit increases for faculty are made by the dean in consultation with the associate dean for research and faculty affairs after consideration of a number of variables including the availability of funds and the equity of salaries. The evaluation of performance will be a factor in merit increase decisions.
- d. The annual review letters also shall include any adjustments to the apportionments of faculty members as agreed to by the faculty and the dean.
- e. Review letters for faculty of practice shall include the dates of expiration for the faculty member's current contract. The letter shall also include the contract durations for which faculty members of practice are eligible at their current rank. For assistant professors of practice, contracts may have terms of one to three years; for associate professors of practice, contracts may last from one to four years; and for full professors of practice, contracts may run from one to five years. The faculty member and the dean may discuss the faculty member's expectations for contract renewal, the duration of the next contract and the criteria for calculating the duration.

Adoption

The policy on annual evaluation was approved by the faculty on April 11, 2025.