

Statement on Evidences of Activity in Instruction, Research, Extension and Administration that are Appropriate for Use in Evaluation of Faculty

College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

Department of Agricultural Economics

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A Preamble

Faculty in the Department of Agricultural Economics understand and agree that the process of regularly discussing performance standards is far more important than any written policy statement that attempts to document expectations. This document is our best attempt to specify our evidences of activity associated with instruction, research, extension, and service. The document will be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect the current state of faculty thinking on such evidences and how they relate to promotion and tenure processes. By following this approach, we meet the University requirement to have such evidences documented while recognizing the more important role of the process itself.

Background and Introduction

Faculty members have different appointments, interests, and opportunities, and these result in a variety of instruction, research, and extension programs. Hence, the evidences of activity presented here are intended to be descriptively general and not exclusive. They are designed to be helpful in annual and biennial merit reviews as well as in two- and four-year reviews and progression in promotion-eligible title series. These evidences are consistent with University regulations for promotion and tenure but provide considerably more detail for faculty in this department. Specific university administrative regulations for faculty performance review and promotion and tenure for teaching, research, and extension appointments can be found at: <http://www.uky.edu/regs/ar.htm>. For faculty in a special title series, the source of evidences for evaluation is the position description and criteria for ranks that were reviewed by the appropriate academic area committee and approved by the Provost. The department's statement on evidences for the Lecturer Title Series is a separate approved document.

Two critical areas for faculty performance evaluation are contributions in publication (peer-reviewed journal articles, research and extension publications, as well as articles for the general public) and contributions to resident and non-resident educational programs. Educational programming includes instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels as well as extension educational programming for adults and youth. Candidates for Associate Professor are generally expected to have achieved regional recognition for excellence in these two areas, whereas candidates for the rank of Professor are generally expected to have achieved national and international recognition for excellence in these areas. In addition, the department values contributions to collaborative disciplinary and interdisciplinary team efforts as well as activities that create new capacity for instruction, research, and extension contributions.

Individual faculty members have latitude in developing a specific mix of writings, educational activities and other contributions that result in regional, national and international recognition. Awards for excellence in instruction, advising, and extension activities document and strengthen the case for excellence in educational programming. Recognition for quality publications such as awards for the best journal article or quality of communication from regional and national associations indicate regional and national recognition that further documents the case for excellence. A faculty member's success in attracting external funding, especially competitive funding, is also viewed as evidence of beneficial instruction, research, and/or extension efforts (i.e. those that have a positive impact on the profession, clientele, and students).

Because the interests and opportunities open to faculty members are diverse, faculty members must make wise choices in allocating their time. It is the responsibility of the individual faculty member to determine the combination of state, regional, national and international activities that will most effectively fulfill job requirements and fulfill university regulations regarding promotion and tenure. The University exists only because of the support of the people it serves. While recognizing that faculty members have a great deal of freedom to pursue their own unique research and extension programs in pursuit of regional, national and international recognition for excellence, faculty members should also devote a portion of the narratives within their merit package to explaining how their particular program addresses issues and problems of importance to Kentucky, its people, and its economy.

A performance review, two- or four-year review, or promotion dossier should articulate a cohesive and impactful research and/or extension program. These documents should exhibit linked focus areas that build in a coherent direction and are consistent with the job description/distribution of effort under which the person is currently employed. Interaction and teamwork are strongly encouraged among research and extension faculty within the department, across college departments, the university, or at other institutions, and with other groups such as county agents, farm commodity groups, national, state, or local decision-makers, agribusinesses, and others. In preparing evaluation materials, faculty should explain how they worked as part of a team as well as outlining their specific contribution in helping the team succeed. Emphasis should be on what the research and/or educational program accomplished. Attention should primarily be focused on the quality of the scholarly output and the value of the research, teaching, and extension programs to academia and general society. This is more highly valued than a simple listing of publications, extension presentations, or courses taught.

The department also values professional service activities not directly related to excellence in publication and/or excellence in educational programs. These activities are, however, complements to excellence in publication and/or educational programs rather than substitutes. Examples of professional service activities include, but are not limited to, elected offices in regional and national professional associations, administrative service, participation in campus and student organizations and honorary societies, editorships of professional journals and other publications, service on university, college and departmental committees, and review work for professional journals as well as review of grants and project proposals. Service activity related to the expertise of the

faculty member as well as awards for service performance are acknowledged as evidence of quality service engagement.

The end-users of educational programs and the readers of faculty writing are frequently in the best position to evaluate scholarly contributions. The perspectives of students, extension clientele, research and extension colleagues worldwide, representatives of clientele groups, and public decision makers are often important inputs into evaluations of faculty performance. While no single evaluation instrument can succinctly and accurately measure overall quality, a set of formal and informal evaluations from a variety of appropriate resources should guide faculty in developing, modifying, and maintaining excellence in instruction, research, extension, and service. Thus, with the knowledge and agreement of the candidate, the Chair may request letters for promotion and tenure dossiers from faculty in other departments at UK, county agents or professional staff at UK, students, or non-academic professionals. Those asked to write letters should have appropriate experience and expertise to evaluate the record and contributions of the candidate. Such letters should be placed in a separate section of the promotion dossier from either department faculty letters or external letters and should not substitute for the required external letters.

While recognizing that evidences of excellence in educational programs and excellence in publication are consistent across all appointments, identifying more specific evidences related to performance in the areas of instruction, research, extension, and service can assist faculty members in program design and evaluation. The following are more specific evidences to guide faculty members in developing documentation for annual, biennial, and two- and four-year reviews and to provide a foundation for documents prepared for promotion and tenure dossiers.

Instruction

Performance of faculty members in instruction focuses on the development of innovative course materials, lectures, assignments, alternative teaching methods, and on examinations that provide educational benefits to students. Courses should be content driven with measurable student learning outcomes clearly stated. Course content is expected to be up-to-date, applicable to the subject matter, and at the appropriate level. Course assessments such as examinations and assignments should reflect course materials and lectures, and evaluations based on those materials should be returned to students within a reasonable period. Instructors are expected to be available to assist students outside of the classroom and to follow all University rules and policies concerning student rights.

End of term Course and Teaching Evaluations by students should generally reflect a positive learning environment, but not be the primary factor in evaluating instruction. The entire teaching portfolio (which includes numerical course evaluations as a part) should be used as the primary tool to evaluate teaching. In addition to the required elements of the teaching portfolio (described in Appendix 1 to AR 3.10), instructors are encouraged to include student learning goals for each course, descriptions of instructional methods/practices (e.g., assignments, activities) implemented to further student

understanding for each learning goal, and methods for evaluating student learning outcomes for each goal.

Other suggested items to include in the teaching portfolio include evidences of instructional methods/practices and assessment mechanisms such as samples of course materials and innovative instructional methods, formative course observations/feedback, peer reviews, teaching awards, numerical ratings, courses taught, new course development, student advising, student mentoring, teaching workshops and professional meetings, student organizations, student recruitment, refereed journal articles related to teaching, non-refereed publications related to teaching, teaching grants, and other relevant evidences.

Research:

Performance of faculty in research is evidenced by, but not limited to, awards and recognition for research excellence, publications (refereed, non-refereed, and books), evidence of being cited in other scholarly work, the quality of journals in which the individual is publishing, usefulness of applied research for extension clientele, Doctoral and M.S. students completed, successes of graduate advisees, invited presentations, and participation in regional and/or national research committees. Furthermore, faculty should engage in the discovery, dissemination, and application of new and noteworthy knowledge. Funding obtained in support of research efforts, especially competitive funding, is also viewed as evidence of a successful research program. Our department seeks to develop a distinguished faculty whose exemplary research and scholarship are noted not only within the university but also across the nation and world.

Extension:

Performance in extension teaching and publication is content-driven and is often most profoundly evidenced by positive participant behavior changes. The faculty member must identify one or more areas of specialization or focus and demonstrate how their expertise contributes to broader institutional extension education efforts. Excellence in programming should demonstrate the ability to communicate complex concepts and/or issues to participants with widely varying backgrounds that have a need for the faculty member's expertise. The faculty member should provide evidence of participation in collaborative development and delivery of extension programming with assessment of contribution by the evaluation of the collaborators and/or clientele. Demonstrated quality programming delivery to extension audiences, including extension agents in appropriate program areas, producers, agribusinesses, or other public audiences, as well as professional colleagues within and across disciplines and within and across states is essential. Quality determinants include but are not limited to peer review of programs and publications, participant evaluations of programs, evaluation by extension agents, and other regional, national and international recognitions of successful extension programming.

A notable distinction that exists between extension teaching and campus-based teaching is that extension audiences often contain a wide diversity of educational backgrounds and levels of expertise. Publications and programs must be designed to be of value and relevance to a broad spectrum of participants and end-users. County and regional

extension programming and presentations, participation on regional or national extension committees, an applied research program, in-service training programs for extension agents, innovative and appropriate delivery methods for a diverse audience, participation in regional or national professional associations, assisting policy makers, farm/commodity groups, and agribusinesses, refereed journal articles, refereed and non-refereed extension publications, software tools (budgets, decision tools, apps, etc.), public press output (such as radio programs, news releases, magazine articles), extension awards, contributions and reach of social media platforms, and grant funding are all considered in evaluating performance in an extension appointment.

Service:

Performance in service shall be evidenced by one's willingness to assist the department, college, university, profession, and clientele groups in achieving desired goals and objectives. Examples include serving on department, college, university, or professional organization committees, serving as an officer in college, university, or professional organizations, editorships, participating as a journal or project reviewer, service on clientele boards, and other outreach activities not associated with teaching, research or extension.

Administration:

Faculty members who do not hold formal administrative positions (e.g., Department Chair), may nevertheless, from time to time, be tasked with departmental, college or university administrative duties that are reflected in the formal distribution of effort (DOE). Examples of such duties include, but are not limited to, administrative service as Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS), Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), or Extension Coordinator. Within their areas of responsibility, those with such administrative duties demonstrate performance by: providing leadership to faculty committees; directing the unit toward the establishment of stated goals and objectives; developing and implementing appropriate assessment measures; contributing to periodic unit self-evaluations and reviews; ensuring that the unit is compliant with relevant University regulations and policies; mentoring junior faculty; and, in conjunction with the formal administrative supervisor (e.g., the Department Chair or Dean), coordinating the unit's efforts within the area of administrative responsibility. This list is intended to be illustrative, rather than exhaustive, of the various ways that faculty can demonstrate administrative performance.