



# University of North Alabama

## Staff Handbook

### Performance Evaluation

#### General Policy

Performance evaluation is a basic tool used to appraise each employee's performance and to collaborate with them in setting and meeting future goals. Employee goals and contributions should be tied to the goals of the University. The performance evaluation is a means whereby a personal inventory is taken to identify strengths and areas that would benefit from improvement. A performance appraisal should assist in eliminating barriers to outstanding performance, help each employee grow in their job, and facilitate cooperation between the employee and supervisor to achieve enhanced overall performance. Each performance evaluation should be based on performance factors as they relate to the job responsibilities and duties set forth in the employee's job description, behavioral traits, supervisory factors (if applicable), and standards.

#### Purpose of Evaluation

Performance evaluations are of importance to both the supervisor and the employee for the following reasons:

- **It serves as a management tool.**  
It ensures that an employee's work contributions are judged against objective standards, and it opens the line of communication between the supervisor and the employee. Additionally, it ideally avoids serious disciplinary problems by identifying and addressing problem areas early. It should also lead to high morale and effectiveness of an employee and assure that their growth potential is maximized.
- **It assists the employee in the performance of his/her job responsibilities.**  
It provides information (feedback) regarding how well the employee is doing, identifying strengths as well as areas where performance can be improved. It helps to determine the cause(s) of unsuccessful performance and identifies means of correcting performance deficiencies. In addition, it sets appropriate work standards for the employee and evaluates the employee against those standards.

#### Responsibilities

The rater (supervisor), reviewer (level above supervisor), and Associate Vice President of Human Resources share responsibility for the performance evaluation program. The day-to-day administration is the responsibility of the rater and reviewer, with the Associate Vice President of Human Resources serving in a supporting capacity.

#### The Associate Vice President of Human Resources:

- Provide the rater and reviewer with technical information and training needed to implement and operate the performance evaluation program.
- Ensure that performance evaluations are prompt, complete, and conform with policies and procedures by providing the form and notifying the rater of due dates for employee performance evaluations.
- Maintain completed performance evaluations.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the overall performance evaluation program, conduct research to determine the most effective evaluation techniques, and provide feedback to management and employees.

#### The rater (supervisor):

- Review the performance with the employee in order to advise or assist the employee in achieving a higher performance level or in overcoming obstacles to achieving high-level performance.

- Identify and define major job responsibilities and duties, performance factors, behavioral traits, supervisory factors (if applicable), and standards with the employee prior to the rating period.
- Encourage the employee to participate in the development of performance requirements and performance standards.
- Give the employee an opportunity to demonstrate fully successful performance.
- Assign an accurate rating based on the employee's level of performance during the rating period.
- Provide the employee feedback on how well they are performing the job responsibilities as compared to performance standards.
- Inform the employee of their progress in areas that need improvement and assists the employee in improving their job performance
- Use the results of the employee's performance evaluations as a basis to recommend various personnel actions.

#### **The reviewer (rater's supervisor):**

- Ensure that the rater is capable of conducting a performance evaluation effectively.
- Ensure that written performance evaluations are prompt, complete, and conform with policies and procedures.
- Review the written evaluation of an employee by a subordinate supervisor for accuracy and fairness prior to the rater and employee meeting.
- If the evaluation is deemed to be appropriately prepared and is not contested, sign and forward it to the appropriate vice president.
- Meet with the employee, if requested, to discuss an evaluation prepared by their supervisor.
- Attempt to resolve any disagreement between the rating supervisor and the employee with regard to the evaluation.

#### **The employee:**

- Assist the supervisor in the development of job responsibilities and duties as set forth in the job description.
- Complete the self-evaluation portion of the annual performance evaluation form.
- Participate freely in meetings with the supervisor to obtain a clear understanding of their job responsibilities, behavioral traits, and the standards upon which their performance will be evaluated.
- Seek continual communication with the supervisor during the evaluation period to keep informed of changes in job responsibilities, job-related behavior, performance standards, supervisory standards (if applicable), and feedback on how well they are performing.
- Perform duties in a manner which facilitates fulfillment of standards.
- Sign performance evaluation signifying that they have reviewed the performance evaluation and has been afforded an opportunity to discuss the evaluation with the supervisor.
- Submit an appeal if they believe the ratings do not adequately reflect their performance.

#### **Types of Performance Evaluations**

**Informal evaluation:** An employee's performance is continually reviewed by their supervisor. The employee is encouraged to seek feedback about their job performance from their supervisor. The supervisor should discuss the employee's performance with them at any time. Mid-performance period check-ups are strongly encouraged.

**Annual evaluation:** At least once a year, during the month of July, the supervisor makes a formal written evaluation of the employee's performance. Annual performance evaluations should be administered for employment periods of at least 90 days since the last evaluation.

**Provisional evaluation:** All commitments of regular full-time or part-time employment with non-exempt status are contingent upon satisfactory completion of a three-month provisional period. During the provisional period, the employee has an opportunity to learn more about the job responsibilities and duties and determine whether or not they are satisfied with the position. At the same time, the supervisor has an opportunity to determine whether the employee has the ability and desire to perform the job responsibilities and duties.

Since the provisional period serves as an orientation period, several informal evaluation sessions should be held between the immediate supervisor and the employee. The provisional evaluation should take place by the end of the third month of service.

### **Evaluation Factors, Traits, and Standards**

#### **Performance Factors and Standards**

The employee should be evaluated using five *performance factors* in Part II of the Performance Evaluation Form. The following are generic standards for the five performance factors. As a minimum, these generic standards can be used as stated; however, they should be used in conjunction with specific standards established for each job responsibility and duty.

- **Knowledge, skills, and abilities:** exhibits understanding of job responsibilities and duties; possesses theoretical knowledge and practical "know-how" that relate to the job; understands processes of assignments; displays skills and abilities appropriate for the job; demonstrates abilities to achieve effective results; shows proficiency in application of methods, procedures, techniques, tasks, machines, equipment, materials, etc., necessary to accomplish assigned tasks; possesses required specialized knowledge of job; shows willingness to acquire new or broader knowledge of job; and understands new information and situations quickly.
- **Quality of work:** performs work with acceptable accuracy; performs work that is neat and presentable; performs duties thoroughly; shows attention to detail and accuracy; sets high personal work standards; achieves high quality results; and makes few mistakes.
- **Quantity of work:** completes an acceptable amount of work; does extra work when asked; performs work in a productive and timely manner; uses time and resources efficiently; and meets work schedules.
- **Work habits:** adheres to attendance and punctuality policies; carries out duties in an orderly and diligent manner; works with minimum supervision; complies with instructions, policies, and regulations; organizes and manages time in meeting schedules, projects, deadlines, priorities, appointments, etc.; strives to eliminate nonessential work; plans and organizes work; and devotes efforts to completion of responsibilities and duties.
- **Communication:** displays skills in verbal and written communication; communicates well with supervisors, fellow employees, students, and visitors in an appropriate and timely manner.

#### **Behavioral Traits and Standards**

Behavioral traits are the criteria against which the employee's work-related behavior is assessed. The five behavioral traits in Part III of the Performance Evaluation Form are considered important to all university staff positions. The following standards may be used for each of the behavioral traits.

- **Dependability:** carries out assigned responsibilities and duties in a reliable manner; responds appropriately to instructions and procedures; completes work in a conscientious and timely manner; meets deadlines promptly; trustworthy; works with minimal guidance and supervision.
- **Cooperation:** cooperates and collaborates well with others; helps others willingly; maintains rapport with others; tactful, friendly, courteous, patient, and uses discretion in dealing with fellow employees, supervisors, students, and the public; responds appropriately to the needs of individuals seeking information and assistance; considers new ideas, the views of others and divergent points of view; and accepts additional work assignments.
- **Initiative:** seeks increased responsibility and broader knowledge of job; receptive to new work assignments; makes useful suggestions; attempts to influence events that can affect the achievement of goals; energetic about completion of work; plans; voluntarily starts projects; and attempts non-routine tasks.
- **Adaptability:** receptive to instructions, guidance, suggestions, etc.; interprets and responds to instructions, methods, and procedures; adjusts to new or changing work assignments and situations.
- **Judgment:** evaluates facts and applies sound judgment; thinks logically; reaches sound opinions and logical conclusions; recognizes the need to make decisions; makes practical decisions; responds to instructions and procedures in a favorable manner; and seeks advice and input of superiors, subordinates and other appropriate sources.

### **Supervisory Factors and Standards**

In addition to the five performance factors and five behavioral traits, employees who have supervisory responsibilities should be evaluated on five *supervisory factors* in Part IV of the Performance Evaluation Form. These factors directly reflect the employee's supervisory effectiveness and their overall evaluation. The following standards for each factor may be used as stated.

- **Leadership:** demonstrates effective supervisory abilities; guides and affects positively the actions and results of individuals and groups; establishes rapport, gains respect and cooperation; inspires and motivates subordinates; exhibits fairness and impartiality toward subordinates; supports subordinates; trains, guides, and instructs subordinates effectively; plans, schedules, and makes assignments successfully; directs work group toward common goals; considers new ideas, the views of others, or divergent points of view; maintains poise and adjusts to changes, work pressure, or difficult situations without undue stress; and displays high degree of integrity and trustworthiness.
- **Delegation:** delegates appropriate responsibilities to subordinates; affords subordinates opportunities to succeed by assigning responsibilities, authority, and accountability; gives clear instructions; defines assignments; oversees the work of subordinates; and uses observation, reports, meetings, and other means to monitor and follow up on the work of subordinates.
- **Planning and organizing:** establishes work objectives, standards and programs to assess progress; anticipates future needs; sets priorities, applies innovation in developing new and sound plans; allocates resources and personnel for best effect within budget constraints; implements cost-saving measures; uses financial, material and other resources for maximum benefit; makes sound and timely decisions; plans and organizes work; carries out assignments effectively; coordinates work with that of other related activities; adjusts work operations to meet emergent or changing requirements; and demonstrates the skills to analyze, solve problems, and establish priorities.
- **Administration:** handles administrative requirements; performs day-to-day administrative tasks; manages time; keeps accurate records; administers policies and implements procedures; maintains

appropriate contact with supervisor; completes required reports in a timely manner; demonstrates concerns for cost, waste, and inventories; coordinates work within and outside the cost center, faculty, and staff as required; demonstrates skills in developing improvements in work methods or designing new procedures; and understands and applies the principles required to further the University's goals.

- **Personnel management:** serves as a role model and provides personal assistance with professional growth and development; resolves work-related employee problems; trains and counsels subordinates to solve personnel issues; assists subordinates in accomplishing their work-related objectives; evaluates performance of subordinates effectively; encourages positive performance through appropriate feedback; and supports equal employment opportunity policies as well as overall diversity.

### **Ratings**

The rater has a choice of not rating the employee on the factor or trait, if not applicable, or rating the employee's performance on a scale of Unsuccessful through Exemplary. The rating scale for each factor or trait is as follows.

- **Not Applicable:** This performance/behavior factor or trait cannot be related to standards or requirements of this position.
- **Unsuccessful:** Performance falls short of the minimum criteria and standards of this area. Immediate and substantial improvement is necessary to address this area.
- **Emerging:** Performance in this area is inconsistent and needs alignment and/or development. Performance feedback and efforts to reinforce competency may provide tools to achieve success.
- **Successful:** Performance meets the expected standards. Performance is steady, reliable, consistent, and maintained with a minimum amount of supervision.
- **Exemplary:** Performance clearly exceeds the expectation levels of this area and can be seen as a model for others.

### **Rating Procedures**

**Parts II, III, and IV:** The rater indicates the employee's level in each performance factor or behavioral trait by selecting the trait or factor considered in each section.

**Part V:** The narrative section gives the rater the opportunity to discuss significant strengths and areas requiring improvement and to provide a general summary of the ratings. An overall rating of Unsuccessful, Emerging, or Exemplary in Part V (Overall Performance) must be supported in this section.

**Part VI:** The goals section gives the rater the opportunity to outline and discuss goals for the area and the employee moving into the new evaluation period.

**Part VII:** The employee should indicate in the appropriate field whether or not they agree with the evaluation and then sign the form. The employee's signature only verifies that they reviewed the evaluation and that the above choice (agree or disagree) was selected by them.

### **Performance Evaluation Process**

The performance evaluation process follows a continuous cycle which is repeated annually and is related to the job responsibilities and duties, performance factors, job-related behavior, and supervisory factors. The basic components of the performance evaluation process are:

#### **Communicating the Job Responsibilities and Duties, Factors/Traits, and Standards**

Each employee should have a clear understanding of their job responsibilities and duties, performance factors, behavioral traits, supervisory factors (if applicable), and standards upon which their performance will be evaluated.

### **Observing/Measuring Performance and Behavior**

To make the evaluation fair and accurate, the supervisor should not rely solely upon their memory but should maintain working records. Such records should include notes regarding dates of observations, conferences with or assistance to the employee, quality and quantity of work, strengths and weaknesses, customer reactions, peer evaluation, attendance record, notes of meetings and counseling sessions, disciplinary letters, etc. The supervisor may maintain a running record of critical incidents (events that serve as examples of the employee's job performance) in which the employee performed either above standards or below standards.

### **Providing On-Going Performance Feedback**

Throughout the year, the supervisor should openly communicate with the employee regarding their performance and how their job-related behavior compares with the performance standards, behavioral standards, and supervisory standards. Such communication strengthens supervisor/employee relationships. The supervisor should provide feedback on the positive aspects of the employee's performance and behavior as well as on those areas requiring correction.

### **Preparing the Formal Performance Evaluation**

At the end of the evaluation cycle, the supervisor will prepare a written evaluation of the employee's performance. The employee's performance of the job responsibilities and job-related behavior should be evaluated against established standards. The supervisor should refer to the record they have maintained on the employee's performance throughout the evaluation cycle as a guide in preparing the formal evaluation. The rater must seek review/approval of the completed evaluation from the reviewer prior to presenting the completed evaluation to the employee.

### **Reviewing the Performance Evaluation with the Employee**

After the performance evaluation form has been completed, a meeting with the employee should be set for the purpose of reviewing the evaluation. The evaluation interview should be private and should provide the employee with every opportunity for an open and frank discussion.

The supervisor should give the employee a full and honest picture of how well he/she has performed. The evaluation of the employee's performance should encompass the entire evaluation period and should be evaluated against job responsibilities and duties, performance standards, behavioral standards, and supervisory standards that are known to the employee. Specific examples of performance should be discussed in detail. The employee should be commended for work well done and helped to understand in what specific way they need to improve.

The employee should be afforded an opportunity to review their performance evaluation and sign the form verifying the review. The employee's signature does not necessarily indicate agreement with the evaluation.

### **Uses of Performance Evaluation**

The results of the performance evaluation may be used to aid in decisions about employees such as training, promotion, reassignment, demotion, termination, or re-employment.

**Training:** At the time of the annual evaluation, the supervisor may start action to obtain training or arrange for developmental work assignments. Also, the supervisor may counsel the employee regarding self-development activities that would contribute to their performance or career development.

**Promotion:** Results of performance evaluations should be considered in evaluating an eligible candidate for a promotion to an internal position for which an employee has applied.

**Reassignment, Demotion, or Termination:** When an employee continues to perform at the "emerging" or "unsuccessful" level(s) after being given a reasonable period of time (as specified by the supervisor at the



time) to improve the current performance, the supervisor should contact both their immediate supervisor and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources to determine appropriate actions that should be taken. Reassignment, demotion, and termination are among those to be considered.

**Reemployment:** Upon request, performance evaluations will be made available to a supervisor when consideration is being made of a former employee who applies for re-employment.

### **Continued Performance Deficiency**

After an employee is advised of any performance deficiency and of what must be done to correct it, the employee should be given an opportunity to show performance improvement. During this period, the supervisor should maintain close contact with the employee to provide continual guidance with regard to their progress.

Typically, a second performance evaluation is conducted after no more than 90 days to assess performance improvement. If, after this period of time, it is found that the employee lacks the ability to meet the requirements of their position, or if the employee is able but unwilling to make the effort to perform the work satisfactorily, the individual's supervisor should make contact with their supervisor and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources to discuss any further actions that should be taken and whether or not termination of employment should be recommended. The number of additional reviews and warnings and the time involved before recommending termination of employment are at the supervisor's discretion but should be made in consultation with their direct supervisor.

### **Administrative Procedures**

Instructions for completion of the performance evaluation form are provided on the form and within this policy. Questions concerning the execution of this form should be addressed to the Office of Human Resources.

Each department head should ensure that an annual performance evaluation is completed in July for each staff employee within their area of responsibility.

Copies of employee evaluations are sent to the appropriate Vice President for review. All completed, signed employee evaluations are kept on file in the Office of Human Resources.

### **Evaluation Appeal**

If the employee disagrees with their evaluation, they may request a meeting with their rater or reviewer to discuss informally the performance evaluation before they sign the evaluation.

The employee has a period of ten business days from the date on which they signed the evaluation to file a written appeal. This appeal may be filed if the employee believes the evaluation is not justified, does not adequately reflect their performance, or was unfairly administered. Reconsideration may be requested of any item, including the overall rating.

A written appeal should be addressed to the rater and should state in detail the employee's specific disagreements with the evaluation. If the rater is unable to resolve the disagreement, the appeal will be forwarded to the reviewer.

Upon receipt of the written appeal, the reviewer reviews the appeal and, if necessary, meets with the employee and rater, individually and/or together. The purpose of the meeting(s) is to determine the validity of the employee's appeal. If the reviewer determines that the evaluation is appropriate, he/she informs the employee by letter. The appeal and the letter are attached to the evaluation and forwarded to the appropriate vice president. If the reviewer determines that the evaluation is not appropriate, the reviewer discusses their findings with the rater. If the rater agrees with the reviewer, a new performance evaluation form is prepared. If the rater does not agree to changing the evaluation, the reviewer attaches his/her findings and the appeal to the

performance evaluation and forwards it through the appropriate vice president to the Office of Human Resources for filing in the employee's personnel file.

If an employee disagrees with his/her evaluation but does not desire to file a formal appeal, he/she is entitled to write an appropriate rebuttal that may be attached to the performance evaluation and filed in the employee's personnel file.

*Approved by the SGEC, 05/15/2019*