The annual faculty evaluation process at Texas A&M University-Commerce provides a system of feedback and support to (a) increase transparency regarding expectations for faculty performance, and (b) facilitate faculty members’ development and long-term success. Results of this annual review are used to make decisions regarding the terms and conditions of the employment relationship between the faculty and the university, including merit pay, promotion, tenure, and post tenure review.

An annual review is conducted for all tenure-track and tenured faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor; and all non-tenure track faculty members at all ranks.

Criteria for Evaluation
Faculty members are evaluated on their performance in the areas of teaching/contributions to student learning; research or other scholarly and creative activities (RSCA); and service to the university, profession and community. Evaluation is based on university-wide and departmental criteria. Although collegiality is not considered a separate criterion for annual evaluation of faculty, nevertheless it is implied within each category of teaching/contributions to student learning, RSCA, and service.

At Texas A&M University-Commerce teaching/contributions to student learning is considered to be the first priority and prime objective of the university. Producing knowledge and performance in professional/creative activities are essential aspects of faculty roles. Service to the profession (discipline), the university, and the community is an integral part of a faculty role. For more information on university-wide criteria for evaluation of teaching/contributions to student learning, RSCA, and service see A&M-Commerce Procedure 12.99.99.R0.13.
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Specific measures and criteria used in annual evaluations will differ depending on academic department. All full-time faculty members in each academic department, as a group, are responsible for identifying comprehensive measures and criteria for evaluating teaching/contributions to student learning, RSCA, and service suitable to their own discipline and professional interests. However, departmental criteria and measures for evaluating faculty must be consistent with the general framework of university-wide criteria.

Procedure for Annual Evaluation

A department’s plan, including evaluation criteria and measures, must be approved by the department head or equivalent, academic dean/director of school, and provost, and regularly updated as necessary. The department head or equivalent is responsible for distributing the approved plan among current and new faculty.

Additionally, the departmental faculty will develop procedures for determining how the areas of teaching/contributions to student learning, RSCA, and service will be weighted. Relative weights for each area will be based on such criteria as the department’s involvement in graduate programs; national disciplinary standards; and applicable reassigned time for faculty members for research grant, service, and administrative assignments. However, it is important for department faculty to keep in mind that assigning lower weight for RSCA in the annual evaluation could disadvantage them in the long run when they are evaluated for promotion, tenure, and post tenure review.

Faculty members are evaluated on their performance during the calendar year (January through December). Before the beginning of each calendar year, each faculty member and his or her department head or equivalent will discuss and identify goals related to his or her teaching, RSCA, and service, based on the framework of the department’s plan. They will then formulate an individual faculty plan for achievement commensurate with faculty rank and seniority. First year faculty members will file a plan in September and will be evaluated for the fall semester only.

By January 5, each faculty member will prepare for the department head or equivalent an annual report on accomplishments in teaching effectiveness, RSCA, and service as per the individual faculty plan for achievement formulated the previous January. The department head or equivalent will draft an assessment of the degree to which the faculty member fulfilled his or her individual plan. The department head or equivalent’s assessment will be based on the departmental measures and criteria for annual evaluation.

Timeline for the Evaluation Process

1. Each faculty member will meet with his or her department head or equivalent for the annual evaluation conference, scheduled between January 5 and January 30. At this conference, the department head or equivalent will explain and discuss the assessment of the faculty member’s performance for the year. If a faculty member disagrees with the department head or equivalent’s evaluation, he or she will have a right to write a rebuttal by stating specific reasons for the disagreement. The rebuttal, if any, becomes a part of the faculty member’s evaluation report for the year.
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2. The department head or equivalent will forward a copy of signed faculty reports and department head or equivalent recommendations to the academic dean/director of school by January 30. The academic dean/director of school will review the materials. If the dean/director wishes to revise any faculty member’s overall merit rating, he or she will have a conference with the department head or equivalent and faculty member involved.

3. The academic dean/director of school will forward faculty reports, department head or equivalent recommendations, and dean/director’s recommendations to the provost and vice president for academic affairs by February 15.

4. The provost and vice president for academic affairs will review the recommendations. In instances of disagreement with the dean/director’s recommendations, the provost and vice president for academic affairs will consult with the academic dean/director of school. Any changes made in ratings at whatever level will be shared with the department head or equivalent and faculty member. The provost and vice president for academic affairs will make faculty merit recommendations to the president by March 1.

Merit and Professional Development Action
Each faculty member’s level of effectiveness is rated in each area of teaching/contribution to student learning, RSCA, and service ranging from 1 (the highest level of performance) to 5 (an unsatisfactory performance). These rankings, weighted according to the faculty member’s involvement in each area in a given year, are used to calculate merit.

If a faculty member receives an overall rating of 4 or 5, the department head or equivalent and the faculty member will develop formative recommendations in the following year’s plan to help the faculty member overcome deficiencies or shortcomings in teaching/contribution to student learning, RSCA, or service.

Annual Evaluation of Full-Time Non-Tenure Track Faculty
The evaluation process for full-time non-tenure track faculty members follows general principles and guidelines given in the university’s Annual Evaluation of Faculty procedure (12.99.99.R0.13), as described above. For non-tenure track faculty of all ranks, the annual review process serves primarily as an evaluation focusing on performance, review of requirements established in the initial letter of appointment, and any additional requirements added during the annual review. The performance evaluation takes into consideration expectations for non-tenure track faculty that may include an increased teaching load and decreased or no requirement to engage in RSCA compared to tenure-track faculty in the same program or department; or in the case of research track faculty members, little or no requirement to teach courses. Overall, the following procedures will be used for evaluating the work of these faculty members at both departmental and college or school levels.
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DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW FOR THE ANNUAL EVALUATION: Department reviews of non-tenure track faculty take place at least six weeks prior to the notification date for non-reappointments during each year of employment (see below: Notification Dates for Non-Reappointment of Probationary Faculty).

The candidate for reappointment submits to the department head or equivalent a portfolio of teaching, service, and professional activities. The portfolio will contain the candidate’s dossier, which consists of (a) a statement (typically not to exceed three pages) on goals, philosophies, strategies and emphases in carrying out his or her professional responsibilities in the areas of assigned responsibility; (b) a current curriculum vitae; and (c) evidence of quality performance in the areas of assigned responsibility.

The department head or equivalent will use the following to evaluate the candidate’s performance: (a) student evaluations of courses taught; (b) evaluation of faculty member’s dossier, particularly course syllabi, class assignments, and use of pedagogical techniques; (c) evaluation of professional assignments other than teaching (e.g., lab work, field-based work, leadership, service, professional or scholarly activities, and credentials as appropriate); (d) feedback from department faculty (including at least one non-tenure track faculty member) on the candidate’s work; and (e) other criteria as appropriate for particular departments or programs.

Upon review of all necessary criteria for evaluating the candidate’s work each year, as per the academic calendar, the department head or equivalent will make a recommendation to the academic dean/director of school regarding reappointment or non-reappointment.

COLLEGE OR SCHOOL REVIEW: The academic dean/director of school will review all recommendations for reappointment of non-tenure track faculty forwarded by department heads or equivalent and will make a recommendation to the provost and vice president for academic affairs. The academic dean/director of school shall inform the department head or equivalent and the faculty member of approval or denial of the reappointment. When the academic dean/director of school does not concur with the departmental recommendation, he or she will inform the department head or equivalent of the reasons for disapproval.

For more information on the annual review process, the evaluation procedure, evaluation of faculty members who have split appointments, and calculation of merit see 12.99.99.R0.13.
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Notification Dates for Non-Reappointment of Probationary Faculty:
Written notification of non-reappointment, or of intention not to reappoint a faculty member must be sent:
(a) No later than March 1 of the first academic year of probationary service, or, if a one-year appointment terminates during an academic year, at least three months in advance of its termination. The appointment will terminate at the end of the spring semester.
(b) No later than December 15 of the second year of probationary service. The appointment will terminate at the end of the spring semester.
(c) At least twelve months before the expiration of a probationary appointment after two or more years of service (See 12.01.99.R1, Academic Freedom and Responsibility, Section 5).