Faculty Evaluation Plan, Environmental Studies Program

PURPOSE: To articulate the standards and procedures for the annual evaluation of faculty within the Environmental Studies Program.

APPLIES TO: Faculty within the Environmental Studies Program

I. Introduction

The Environmental Studies Program (hereafter, the “Program”) is dedicated to excellence in environmental education, research, and service. Outlined below are the criteria used by the Program in the evaluation of its base-budgeted faculty personnel (hereafter, “faculty”). Evaluations are performed annually and later provide the basis for merit salary allocations, recommendations for faculty development or awards, and personnel decisions. These evaluations do not form the basis for any part of the tenure and promotion evaluation process. If a faculty member’s performance is judged as inadequate over a three-year period, such evaluations may be used in deliberations and proceedings concerning termination of his/her appointment.

The Program is interdisciplinary, and to achieve that, it engages in joint base-budgeted faculty appointments with other units of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and in research centers of the University. In every joint appointment, one of the units involved is designated the primary unit. Any other unit(s) in which the faculty member serves is designated as a secondary unit(s). A primary unit is named only to ensure that policies and procedures concerning joint appointments are followed. Such designation does not limit the authority or responsibility of the administrator(s) of the secondary unit(s). It has been customary for Environmental Studies to be the secondary unit of each faculty appointment. This, however, does not preclude the Program from being designated as a primary unit of an appointment. Though promotion and tenure guidelines in the program are discussed elsewhere, it is important to establish that each individual faculty member is employed by the University, not by departments or major academic units. The designation of "tenure" resides with the University, not with a specific unit.

This document is prepared to comply with the Board of Regents’ policy requiring that all units have established performance evaluation plans for their faculty and that they are reviewed and updated every three years. The following sets forth the Program’s procedures and criteria for evaluation its faculty at all levels.

II. Statement of Performance Expectations

A. Program Expectations

1. Teaching/Advising

Considering the standard joint appointment of 50% Program/50% some other unit, and the general workload division of 40% Research, 40% Teaching, and 20% Service in the University, Program faculty are expected to teach two classes per year for the Program. The number of classes expected per year for individual faculty is adjusted proportionally to the actual percent (or FTE) appointment in the program. The courses taught are chosen by each faculty member in consultation with the Director and in accordance with the needs, requirements, and expectations of the Program. These courses include undergraduate required and elective courses offered by the Program, ranging from introductory to advanced specialty courses, and seminars in the faculty member’s area of specialization. Teaching responsibilities include:

a. Preparing and teaching classes that meet the needs of the Program and other KU students;
b. Preparing relevant and fair evaluations of student work;
c. Being available and prepared for advising students in curricula; scholarship, professional, and applied interests. Faculty members are expected to discuss career options with students and to assist students in selection of appropriate elective courses to complete the major; and
d. Being polite, courteous, and respectful toward students and colleagues.

2. Scholarly/creative activity

Active research by the faculty is essential. The Program expects the faculty to make the study of environmental issues an important part of their research. Faculty members are expected to use methodologies standard to particular disciplines in addition to demonstrating an effort to use frameworks and methods that transcend disciplinary boundaries. Such research may include critical evaluations and artistic creations as appropriate to the faculty member’s disciplinary training, and is expected to culminate in some combination of books, refereed journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings papers, grants, and other similar works. Faculty members are expected to show leadership in research. Leadership is often demonstrated through, but not limited to, PI and co-I status on grants and primary authorship on publications. Guidelines for promotion of Program faculty to different ranks are provided in the Environmental Program Studies Promotion and Tenure Procedure.

3. Service

Program faculty are expected to perform service for the Program, the College, University, the professional and scholarly community, and the general community at local, state, national, or international levels. Service activities of particular importance for the Program include Program committees, both standing and ad-hoc. Possibilities for fulfilling service obligations may include, but are not limited to:

a. Serving on Program, department, College, University or other campus committees;
b. Tangible contribution to the Program or broader KU community by activities not part of a formal committee (e.g., web site development, writing Program grant proposals);
c. Serving in special appointments or administrative positions (e.g., Director/Chair);
d. Giving public lectures;
e. Serving as advisor or sponsor for student activities or organizations;
f. Serving on local, regional, or state boards;
g. Reviewing papers, proposals, or other manuscripts;
h. Holding office or committee responsibilities in professional societies;
i. Serving as editor of professional journals;
j. Serving on review panels;
k. Serving on advisory boards and evaluation reams;
l. Participating in university outreach programs, and
m. Organizing/conducting workshops, symposia or lecture series.

B. Standards for Acceptable Performance for Faculty Members

In a given review year, a faculty member’s work may be assigned an evaluation designation of “marginal” or “poor” in any of the three areas of evaluation. At such a point, the faculty member will be offered remedial support in written and verbal form to improve performance. If the faculty member’s evaluation scores remain “marginal” or “poor” over a sustained period of three years in any of the areas of evaluation, then the faculty member’s appointment will be recommended for termination. Such a recommendation is made based on the collective consultation of the Director and Associate Director, together with the corresponding body in the faculty member’s primary/secondary unit. Decisions on promotion and tenure are outcomes of the evaluation process; it bears mentioning that a designation of “marginal” or “poor” in any areas of performance in the
promotion and tenure process may lead to College-level and University-level requests for further information from the Program.

C. Differential Allocation of Effort (DAE)

The Environmental Studies Program expects faculty to devote equal attention to teaching and research. When evaluating faculty performance, the department applies the weights of 40 percent for teaching, 40 percent for research, and 20 percent for service to the university, community, and profession. These weights are the same for tenured and non-tenured faculty, although the department recognizes that the specific contributions of faculty members to the department’s mission will differ depending on career stage.

Changes in the standards 40/40/20 allocation of effort for a set period of time can be initiated by the tenured faculty member or Director. These changes can be short- or long-term and must correspond to changes in work-load, not just evaluation criteria. Reasons for alterations can include short-term items such as funded research or longer term career-stage issues. Faculty members are not allowed to reduce their teaching or research to less than 10 percent on permanent DAE agreements within the Program, based on their budgeted FTE. Departmental needs take precedent over individual needs when making decisions to alter a faculty member’s allocation of effort; such redistribution must be consistent with the best interests of the unit. The most likely occasion for consideration of such changes is in discussion between the chair and the individual faculty member following annual performance evaluations, or sooner so that appropriate arrangements may be made at the unit level for the coverage of course offerings. Any individualized changes in faculty allocation of effort will be negotiated with the Chair and documented in the faculty member's personnel file.

For temporary DAE agreements (one academic year or less), the DAE is ultimately approved by the chair of the unit. For permanent DAE agreements (lasting one year or beyond), approval must also be sought from the appropriate contact dean in the College. All Differential Allocation of Efforts are reported annually to the College Dean's Office. For permanent DAEs, the supporting documentation is also provided to the College and the Provost's Offices. Agreements for long-term DAEs must be reviewed every three years.

For additional information, please see the University Policy on Differential Allocation of Effort (DAE)

III. Annual Evaluation System

A. Overview

1. Description of Structure/Timelines for Annual Evaluations

Each faculty member shall be evaluated annually by primary and secondary units in accordance with each unit’s approved procedures. At least once a year, the administrators of the primary and secondary units will discuss with the faculty member his/her duties and responsibilities for the coming year, and, where applicable, what progress he/she has made toward tenure or promotion and any changes in the assignment of differential allocation of effort.

All Program faculty members will be evaluated in the spring of every year by a Faculty Evaluation Committee. In December, the Committee shall call for each faculty member’s annual report. The Program seeks to reduce the effort required to file annual reports in cases of joint appointments. The Program, therefore, accepts submission of any form, such as the one used in the faculty member’s primary/secondary unit, as long as it contains the information outlined below. The target deadline for receipt of the report in the Program is January 31. Written reviews of faculty members will be submitted to them by the end of the second full week of March.
The Faculty Evaluation Committee will consist of two Executive Committee Members, one whose research and teaching is most aligned with the humanities/social sciences, and another whose research and teaching is most aligned with the natural sciences. At least one of the Faculty Evaluation Committee members must have a base-budgeted appointment in the Program. The Director will also review all files, attend the deliberations of the committee, receive the recommendations of the committee, and take the primary responsibility of summarizing the committee’s recommendations in written form to be shared with each faculty member. The following time-line is provided to allow for a given faculty member to provide feedback to be considered in the final performance assessment:

- **January 31**: Annual reports for all faculty members must be submitted to the Program office
- **February**: Faculty Evaluation Committee evaluates the annual reports
- **March 1**: The Faculty Evaluation Committee submits individual reports to the Director
- **Second week of March**: The Director sends a written summary evaluation letter to each faculty member, with an invitation to meet with the Director about the evaluation
- **Third and Fourth weeks of March**: The Director meets with individual faculty members to discuss their evaluations. Individuals then have ten days to appeal results of the evaluation in written form to the Director.
- **First half of April**: The Faculty Evaluation Committee and the Director consider and respond to all appeals.

**B. Portfolio or Annual Report Preparation**

*NOTE*: Faculty are responsible for annually maintaining their PRO record, which is also accessed by administration for reports such as the College snapshot of departmental productivity. PRO provides an annual activity report and faculty are advised to view and update their PRO reports before submission of the faculty member’s portfolio to the unit. In classifying your work as major and minor, please bear in mind the definitions in the unit’s *Promotion and Tenure Guidelines*.

Annual reports submitted to the Program cover the previous calendar year and must contain at minimum the following information:

- A current vita
- **Teaching/Advising**
  - List of all courses taught;
  - Number of students taught in each course, summary scores from teaching evaluation forms for each course, including copies of the evaluation forms for Program-listed courses (EVRN). Faculty should include a copy of the nine-graph output provided from the University’s “Student Survey of Teaching” when available. It is understood that a faculty member may use a survey instrument adopted by another unit that differs from the one adopted by the Program;
  - Peer-teaching evaluations conducted during the previous calendar year, and
  - Number of students advised in the Program.
- **Creative/scholarly work from the previous calendar year, including**
  - Full citations of major and minor publications and information on the quality of publication outlets;
  - List of conference presentations;
  - List of non-conference presentations (e.g., invited seminars at other universities, seminar presentations at KU, etc.), and
  - Full citation of grant submissions and grants awarded (investigator list, amount requested/awarded, agency, status of grant).
- **Service**
  - List of all service activities and level at which they are carried out the previous calendar year (for example Program, College, University and whether for the discipline or community)
The committee, if necessary, may request additional materials. Program faculty members may also submit additional information, such as written student comments, and a one-page narrative describing environmental work in research, teaching/advising, and service not captured by the particular form being used.

C. Portfolio or Annual Report Review and Evaluation

Environmental Studies faculty members demonstrate a wide diversity of approaches to the study of the environment, from the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences. The Faculty Evaluation Committee is thus charged with recognizing and valuing each faculty member’s contributions within the specific area in which they work. Thus, it is important to ensure that the committee be representative of the diversity of environmental studies as a whole. This is why the committee is comprised of one member whose work is most aligned with the natural sciences, and one whose work is most aligned with the social sciences/humanities.

Each committee member reviews each faculty member’s annual report and evaluates the performance of the faculty member in the three categories of evaluation: teaching/advising, creative/scholarly activity, and service. In the area of teaching/advising, variables used to assign an evaluation rating include principally, but not exclusively, the number and level of courses taught, number of students taught, scores from teaching evaluation forms, peer-teaching evaluations, and the number of students advised. For the area of creative/scholarly work, variables used to assign an evaluation rating include principally, but not exclusively, the number of major and minor publications and quality of publication outlets, conference presentations, and the number of grant submissions and grants awarded. In the area of service, variables used to assign an evaluation rating include principally, but not exclusively, the number of service activities, effort involved, and the breadth of types and levels of service activity (including the University, the community, and the discipline).

In each area, the faculty member’s work is assigned an evaluation rating of excellent, very good, good, marginal, or poor, defined as:

- “Excellent” means that the faculty member substantially exceeds expectations for their work.
- “Very Good” means the candidate exceeds expectations for their work.
- “Good” means the candidate meets expectations for their work.
- “Marginal” means the candidate falls below expectations for their work.
- “Poor” means the candidate falls significantly below expectations for their work.

D. Annual Evaluation Feedback Process

The Faculty Evaluation Committee presents the Director with its detailed comments and evaluative ratings of each faculty member. The Director then writes a summary evaluation based on this information and presents it in writing to each faculty member, including any personal observations. The summaries will include reference to performance in each area in relation to expectations, information on progress toward tenure and/or promotion, and suggested strategies for improvement. The summary will also inform faculty members of the opportunities to discuss the evaluation. The Director and the Faculty Evaluation Committee will review any objections to the evaluation by a faculty member, and a reassessment will be provided in written form to the individual faculty member. Summary evaluations for each faculty member will be retained in the personnel files of the Program office, including all related documentation of any conflict or disagreement with the Director, Associate Director, and Faculty Evaluation Committee’s evaluations.

E. Outcomes of the Annual Performance Evaluation

The annual evaluation process contributes in a number of ways to the development of the program. It helps identify areas where faculty must make improvements and where the Program itself needs to make adjustments to its operations, curriculum, and goals, among other areas, in order to facilitate the continued development of individuals associated with the Program. At the end of each evaluation period, the Director and Associate
Director will meet specifically to identify areas of Program development needing attention that arose during the evaluation process. These issues will be forwarded to a corresponding standing or ad hoc committee to take into consideration for action as each committee considers its agenda for the following year.

Merit salary decisions are also considered an outcome of the Faculty Performance Evaluation, and ultimately the decision of awarding merit rests with the Director. To avoid undue bias, the Director attends all evaluations and follows the faculty evaluation recommendations.

After receiving the summary evaluation, faculty members are invited to discuss the following issues with the Director: faculty member plans to ensure primary/secondary unit expectations are covered for the coming year(s), any needed adjustments in allocation of effort for tenured faculty members, any information on progress toward tenure and/or promotion, and any request for changes in percent appointment in the primary/secondary unit.

1. Procedures for developing performance improvement plans

If the chair ascertains that a faculty member's performance seems to be failing to meet academic responsibilities, the administrator and the faculty member shall develop a written plan of methods to improve the faculty member's performance. The plan may include appropriate provisions for faculty development, such as campus opportunities for faculty continued renewal and development, or for other appropriate interventions. The chairperson may call upon the University administration for assistance in constructing such a plan, including provision for additional resources, where needed. A faculty member may reject any plan recommended to aid performance levels, but the faculty member must understand that a sustained overall failure to meet academic responsibilities is a basis for dismissal.

2. Procedures for addressing failure to meet academic responsibilities

A lack of response in writing within ten days of faculty receipt of the summary evaluation is considered acceptance of the evaluation. If a faculty member does not agree with the evaluation, the faculty must submit in writing to the Director an appeal of the evaluation within ten days of faculty receipt of the summary evaluation. The Director will present the appeal to the Faculty Evaluation Committee who will review its evaluation based on the information presented in the appeal.

If a faculty member has been informed that his/her performance still fails to meet academic responsibilities, the faculty member may request a review by a faculty committee designated to hear such matters in the College. The review committee will issue a non-binding recommendation on the appropriateness of this conclusion to the unit administrator. The administrator may change the evaluation after receiving the committee's decision, or may choose not to do so. In any event, the report of the committee will become a permanent part of the faculty member's personnel file within the academic unit and shall be available to the faculty member.

Program Directors shall consult annually with the dean, and the dean shall consult annually with the Provost on the progress of any faculty member who fails within this category of failure to meet academic responsibilities.

3. Sustained failure to meet performance expectations

Based upon the judgment that there has been a sustained failure to meet academic responsibilities, the Dean may recommend to the Provost that a tenured faculty member be dismissed. In making this determination, the Dean shall consider the nature of the failure to meet academic responsibilities, the reason or reasons for this failure, the number of years that the faculty member has failed to meet academic responsibilities, the level of discernible improvement in the faculty member's performance
after being notified of any failure in performance, and the extent to which the faculty member has complied with the terms of any plan developed to improve the faculty member's performance. The Provost will review the case and, if the Provost agrees with the Dean's recommendation, the Provost will recommend to the Chancellor that the faculty member be dismissed. If the Chancellor agrees and recommends dismissal, this recommendation will go to the Faculty Rights Board.

Should any recommendation to dismiss be brought against a tenured faculty member based exclusively or in part on grounds of sustained failure to meet academic responsibilities, both the report(s) of the review committee(s), the annual written evaluation(s) of the unit administrator concerning the faculty member, any outside evaluations, and any germane written response by the faculty member to the charges shall be made available to the Faculty Rights Board.

F. Faculty Development Initiatives

The Program seeks to promote the following faculty activities/programs that assist in faculty development:

- Early Career Faculty members are assigned a senior faculty mentor upon entering the University. Assistant Professors should take advantage of the opportunity to meet regularly with their mentor to discuss challenges and ways to overcome them in meeting the expectations of joint appointments like those in the Program.
- New Faculty are also encouraged to take advantage of New Faculty activities organized by CLAS and the Office of the Provost, New Faculty Research Awards, College travel funds, involvement in University Research Centers (for example, Hall Center for the Humanities, Institute for Policy and Social Research), Big XII Fellowships, Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) fall summit, and CTE special programs during the academic year.
- Opportunities for development specifically for senior faculty include Research Development Funds, sabbatical leave, international fellowships such as Fulbright and International Faculty Exchanges, leave without pay, consulting, and Intra-University Fellowships.
- Research Intensive Semesters (RIS): CLAS offers all junior faculty members in good standing a reduced teaching responsibility at some point during the faculty member’s pretenure employment. Faculty members will be released from classroom teaching duties for up to one semester, depending upon the relevant departmental teaching expectations, and will be expected to concentrate on research intensive activities. Faculty members are eligible for a research intensive semester assignment up to and including the spring semester before their publication dossiers are sent out to external reviewers in June, with the latest possible Research Intensive Semester (RIS) assignment typically being the second semester of the fifth year. Faculty members in good standing who have stopped their tenure clock remain eligible for a RIS assignment. The actual decision of which year/semester the individual is assigned a research intensive semester will be made in consultation with the department chair. Note that paid leaves and fellowships do not take the place of a RIS. Once the unit director approves the RIS for the junior faculty member, the details concerning the RIS should be confirmed to the faculty member in writing and documented in their personnel file. The unit director also provides a copy of this authorization to the College Dean’s Office so that RIS data can be tracked. Faculty members who are granted a RIS are expected to continue to meet their usual duties regarding departmental advising and other service activities.

See Faculty Development Programs for information about additional faculty development opportunities.

IV. Appendices

Appendix A. Student Evaluation of Teaching
The Environmental Studies Program uses the University’s “Student Survey of Teaching” as the instrument for the student evaluation of teaching.

**APPROVED BY:**
Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor

**APPROVED ON:**
Tuesday, May 20, 2014

**EFFECTIVE ON:**
Tuesday, May 20, 2014

**REVIEW CYCLE:**
Every three years

**RELATED POLICIES:**
- Board of Regents requirements (II.C.8)
- Article 7 Section 4 of the Faculty Senate Rules and Regulations
- Faculty Evaluation Policy for tenure-track and tenured faculty
- Faculty Code of Rights

**REVIEW, APPROVAL & CHANGE HISTORY:**
09/25/2015: Added the following statement to Section III.B. Portfolio or Annual Report Preparation:

> NOTE: Faculty are responsible for annually maintaining their PRO record, which is also accessed by administration for reports such as the College snapshot of departmental productivity. PRO provides an annual activity report and faculty are advised to view and update their PRO reports before submission of the faculty member’s portfolio to the unit. In classifying your work as major and minor, please bear in mind the definitions in the unit’s Promotion and Tenure Guidelines.

05/20/2014: Approved by the Provost
05/05/2014: Approved by the Dean of the College
05/02/2014: Approved by faculty vote of the Environmental Studies Program