

**Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology**  
**Faculty Evaluation Plan**  
**Approved by the Faculty on 12 May 2009**

**Introduction**

The Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (EEB) thoroughly reviews and evaluates the performances of tenured and tenure-track faculty members annually for decisions regarding tenure, promotion, and merit salary increases. Expectations described in this document are based on a standard 40-40-20 academic appointment (with numbers indicating percent effort in teaching, research, and service, respectively); joint appointments with other academic units (e.g., Biodiversity Institute, Kansas Biological Survey, Environmental Studies Program) require appropriate modifications in expectations relative to their Full-Time Equivalency (FTE).

**Statement of Performance Expectations**

**1. Unit Expectations:**

**a. Teaching (40%):** The teaching expectations of faculty holding a 1.0 FTE appointment in EEB are those of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, which normally is considered to be two 3-credit courses per year or the equivalent. Faculty members with joint appointments in EEB and other units (e.g., Kansas Biological Survey or the Biodiversity Institute) may have different responsibilities relative to those with full-time department appointments. All faculty members with a regular appointment are expected to advise graduate students, undergraduate students, and/or postdoctoral associates (i.e., provide guidance in developing and implementing research and promote career planning as appropriate), and teach both graduate and undergraduate courses.

**b. Research (40%):** Expectations for research include producing refereed scholarly publications, giving presentations at national and international professional meetings/conferences, and making application for extramural funding by submitting grant proposals to appropriate funding agencies. The number of publications considered appropriate varies across subdisciplines in EEB, as does the level of funding necessary to meet research goals within different subdisciplines.

**c. Service (20%):** Faculty members in EEB are expected to participate cooperatively in the administrative and other duties of the Department, as well as to serve periodically on College and University standing and *ad hoc* committees. They also should be involved in professional societies and provide peer reviews of scholarly papers and grant proposals.

**2. Standards for Acceptable Performance for Tenured Faculty:** Faculty in EEB are evaluated annually in accordance with the "Standards" for teaching/advising, research and service, extensively defined in the department's criteria for promotion and tenure. (See Appendix B.) The following criteria comprise, individually or collectively, indicators of an unacceptable level of performance.

**Unacceptable performance in teaching:**

(1) Persistent refusal (during a 1-year period) to teach classes that are appropriate to the faculty member's area of expertise and required to fulfill the needs of the graduate or undergraduate curriculum. Refusal should not be confused with the inability to teach for health or other relevant reasons.

(2) A pattern of unsatisfactory teaching, advising, and/or mentoring evidenced by negative peer reviews, and/or negative comments from students. Negative reviews are indicated by a number of factors, including persistent faculty or student complaints, and/or student evaluations that are significantly lower than the average for the particular class taught. Refusal to participate actively in appropriate development activities to improve his/her performance also may be taken into consideration.

**Unacceptable performance in research:** The lack of scholarly productivity evidenced by (1) failure to publish refereed papers at the rate of at least one peer-reviewed paper each year, averaged during a 3-year period, coupled with a lack of evidence that a larger work is in progress; or (2) protracted lack of

extramural funding to provide support for individual research program and support for graduate student, postdoctoral, and undergraduate research.

**Unacceptable performance in service:** Persistent refusal (during a 1-year period) to serve on committees at the departmental level coupled with a lack of service at other levels (e.g., College, University, Professional Society). Refusal to serve on certain committees might be reasonable, given specific circumstances, but refusal to serve on any committee is considered unreasonable.

**3. Differential Allocation of Effort (DAE):** The Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology expects faculty to devote equal attention to teaching and research. When evaluating faculty performance, the department applies the weights of 40% for teaching, 40% for research, and 20% 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.

Requests for post-tenure changes in the standard 40-40-20 allocation of effort for a set period of time can be initiated by the faculty member or department chair. These changes can be short- or long-term and must correspond to changes in workload, not just evaluation criteria. Changes may be made to accommodate new research agendas or longer-term, career-stage issues. Full-time faculty members are not allowed to reduce their teaching or research to less than 5% on long-term DAE agreements. Departmental needs take precedence 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 long-term DAE agreements (lasting more than one academic year), approval also must be sought from the appropriate contact dean in the College. All DAEs are reported annually to the College Dean's Office. For long-term DAEs, the supporting documentation is also provided to the College and the Provost's Offices.

## **Annual Evaluation System**

**1. Overview** Early in the spring semester, the Chair requests that all faculty members complete the annual Faculty Information Form that provides an annual report of their professional activities during the previous calendar year. The form is submitted electronically by the end of February when it is reviewed by the Annual Evaluation Committee, which considers each faculty member's performance in teaching, research, and service. The evaluation focuses on accomplishments during the current year, and also considers performance during the two previous years to balance activities and account for long-term projects. The committee develops recommendations to the Chair concerning the evaluation of each faculty member relative to departmental colleagues usually by the end of March. The Chair, based on the recommendations of and in consultation with this committee, prepares a narrative discussion in the form of a letter to each faculty member to summarize his/her performance. These letters are distributed in early April and faculty members are invited to discuss the observations and recommendations with the Chair, allowing sufficient time for discussion of the evaluation prior to the timelines established for merit salary recommendations.

## **2. Portfolio or Annual Report Preparation:**

### **Activities That May Be Considered in the Evaluation of Teaching in EEB:**

The conduct of courses is the central feature of our teaching responsibilities. However, teaching is not limited to formal class performance and a broader menu of teaching activities provides additional ways to demonstrate quality in teaching. Evidence that a faculty member could provide may include but is not limited to:

- **Formal teaching of courses**
  - Course materials (syllabus, readings, resources, grading standards, etc.)
  - Ratings and/or written comments from students
  - Peer evaluation of classroom performance
  - Samples of student work demonstrating student learning
  - List of courses taught
  - Explanation of special service (e.g., large lecture courses)
  - Receiving or being nominated for teaching awards
- **Preparation for courses**
  - Examples of innovation in teaching (e.g., teaching practices, technology)
  - Seminars attended or conducted on teaching
  - Awards or nominations for activities related to improving teaching
- **Teaching outside the classroom**
  - Observations and comments by students & colleagues
  - External funding related to teaching, reviewer feedback on proposals
  - Lists of those mentored and supervised
  - Undergraduate advising
- **Contributions to the scholarship of teaching**
  - Conference programs from presentations
  - Service on Department or University teaching committees
  - Presentations at KU Summit or the Center for Teaching Excellence
  - Guest presentations in classes
  - Articles, books, or other materials
  - Grant proposals, reviewer feedback on proposals

#### **Activities That May Be Considered in the Evaluation of Research in EEB:**

Information used to judge research productivity includes, but is not limited to:

- Refereed journal publications and quality of journal
- Electronic publication in recognized and peer-reviewed electronic media
- Books and monographs
- Notes, review articles, and shorter communications in appropriate journals
- Invited review papers
- Chapters of books, edited books, or proceedings
- Minor publications in technical journals
- Published book reviews, letters to the editor, instructional videos, manuals, articles in trade journals and society magazines, etc.
- Lectures, presentations, and posters presented at professional meetings
- Invited presentations at other institutions
- Application for grants (intramural and extramural)
- Grants received (extramural and intramural)
- Reviewer feedback on proposals
- Patents/technology transfer
- Development of computer software and research-related web sites

#### **Activities That May Be Considered in the Evaluation of Service in EEB**

Information used to judge service performance includes, but is not limited to:

- **Service to profession**
  - Holding office or committee memberships in professional societies
  - Serving as editor of professional journals
  - Serving as reviewer of papers, proposals, and textbook manuscripts
  - Editing conference proceedings
  - Organizing conferences in professional societies
- **Service to Department, College, or University**
  - Serving on review panels of funding agencies
  - Serving as session chair at professional conferences
  - Evaluating dossiers of colleagues for promotion
  - Serving on evaluation teams and professional panels

- Counseling undergraduate students on class scheduling
- Providing consultant services to graduate students other than your own
- Serving as advisor or sponsor of student activities or organizations
- Serving in special appointments such as administrative positions
- **Service to the community and state**
  - Participating in University outreach programs
  - Conducting workshops
  - Giving public lectures
  - K-12 science education activities
  - Consulting
  - Serving on local, regional, or state boards

### **3. Annual Report Review and Evaluation:**

#### **Evaluation of Teaching in EEB:**

Contributions of a faculty member to the teaching mission of EEB are judged on the basis of a number of teaching-related activities. Because measurement of teaching success can vary from year to year and may depend upon the nature of a particular course, judgments are based on performance during the most recent 3-year period, with an emphasis on the year of evaluation. Each category of teaching activity focuses on different elements of preparing students and thus requires different measures. Students and peers provide perspectives appropriate to their ability to comment and evaluate.

- **Evaluating the conduct of courses should focus on**
  - Clarity of course goals
  - Relevance and appropriateness of course content
  - Effectiveness of instruction in lecture, labs, discussion, and other activities
  - Appropriate relationship with students in which the instructor is available, challenges students, and supports their learning
  - Measures of student learning
  - Presentation of courses serving the mission of the unit or University
- **Evaluating course preparation should focus on**
  - Appropriate preparation of new courses or efforts to improve instruction
  - Continuing efforts to improve teaching
- **Evaluating teaching activities in addition to formal courses should focus on**
  - Coordinating courses within a program, or developing a new course
  - Supporting teaching at the unit level by developing new materials for general use; creating infrastructure for labs or field work; seeking grant support for teaching; recruiting students
  - Mentoring and supervising GTAs/GRAs
  - Working with student groups
  - Mentoring new faculty members in their role as a teacher
  - Mentoring students or directing research projects
- **Evaluating contributions related to the scholarship of teaching should focus on**
  - Teaching related presentations at KU or elsewhere
  - Attending or organizing teaching institutes
  - Serving as a guest teacher at other institutions, for outside associations, or in the community
  - Developing course materials, such as textbooks or websites
  - Applying for and receiving grants in support of teaching
  - Publishing scholarly articles related to teaching
  - Participating in outreach to local schools (K–12) or other forum

#### **Evaluation of Research in EEB:**

Contributions of a faculty member to the research mission of EEB are judged principally on the maintenance of a program of productive research, as evidenced by scholarly publications, communication

of current research at appropriate professional meetings, and supportive funding. The assessment of a faculty member's success in achieving satisfactory performance in research is multifaceted and to some

degree will be governed by the percentage of the appointment in other academic units (e.g., Kansas Biological Survey, Biodiversity Institute). Because research productivity sometimes varies considerably among years, the evaluation will include the 3 most recent years, with an emphasis on the year of evaluation. Members of the Annual Evaluation Committee will develop recommendations to the Chair based evidence of performance that may include but not be limited to the following:

- **Quality and quantity of publications in peer reviewed journals**
  - Evaluation of quality may include consideration of the “impact” and the regional, national, or international distribution of the journal
  - Number of publications varies with established subdisciplinary norms
- **Publication of major book projects may require years of preparation and thus are given special recognition**
- **Quality and quantity of other publications may be evaluated based on**
  - Proceedings from regional, national, or international meetings
  - Publication of book reviews, letters, notes, etc. in major or minor journals
  - Book chapters from local, national, or international presses
- **Presentation of lectures, presentations, or posters evaluated based on the nature of the meetings; regional, national, or international**
- **Proposals for intramural or extramural grants evaluated on competitiveness of granting agency, duration of support, comments from reviewers, prestige of award (e.g., career award, recognition award), receipt of funding**

#### **Evaluation of Service in EEB:**

Service contributions of a faculty member are judged principally on activities that provide service to the Department, University, local community, state and federal governments, and to professional and scholarly societies. These measures can vary from year to year, and judgments are based on performance during the past 3 years with an emphasis on the year of evaluation. The evaluation should include discussion of quality. It is recognized that faculty members do not have control over their appointment to all committees and that the Department, College, and University bear some responsibility for assuring that faculty members are regularly appointed to serve on committees. Faculty members are expected to exhibit a level of service activities commensurate with their academic rank and with their assigned duties.

Evaluation of service contributions may include but not be limited to the following:

- **Service to KU**
  - Time commitment involved
  - Committee membership
  - Election to office
  - Nature of the service (e.g., member or chair; committee or task force)
  - Duration of the appointment (e.g., week, month, semester, year)
- **Service to profession**
  - Committee service
  - Elected office
  - Time commitment associated with reviewing and/or editing
  - Nature of the meeting organized (e.g., regional, national, international), and size of the meeting
  - Nature of review panel (e.g., state, federal, international)
  - Nature of the institution involved in conducting reviews or external evaluations
- **Service to community**
  - Time commitment
  - Level of service (e.g., state, region, national, international)
  - Level of responsibility
  - Nature of involvement (e.g., application of professional knowledge, expertise)

#### **4. Annual Evaluation Feedback Process:**

The Annual Evaluation Committee develops recommendations to the Chair concerning the evaluation of each faculty member relative to departmental colleagues. The Chair, based on the recommendations of and in consultation with this committee, prepares a narrative discussion in the form of a letter to each faculty member. This letter (1) summarizes the faculty member's accomplishments in each performance area in relation to the expectations; (2) provides information on progress toward tenure or promotion and/or tenure reviews; and (3) suggests strategies for improvement or renewal, as appropriate. The written summary informs the faculty member of the opportunity to discuss the observations and recommendations of the written evaluation with the Chair. A copy of the written evaluation is maintained in the faculty member's personnel file.

#### **5. Conflict Resolution/Review Process (in the case of disagreement concerning the evaluation):**

Faculty members who wish to dispute the observations and recommendations contained in their annual evaluation letter may discuss their concerns with the Chair. Should the faculty member not find resolution at the unit level appeal, the faculty member has the right to appeal this evaluation through appropriate administrative channels in the event disagreement should arise in the course of the evaluation. 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 chairperson. The chairperson 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 department and shall be available to the faculty member.

#### **6. Outcomes of the Annual Performance Evaluation**

The annual performance evaluation is part of the evidence that may be used to highlight the achievement of department and individual goals, consider faculty differential allocation of effort, personnel decisions (including promotion and tenure, non-reappointment, etc.), and merit salary decisions.

If a faculty member fails to meet minimum performance in any of the three areas, the Chair is responsible for initiating a dialogue with the faculty member to address the problem and prepare an intervention plan. (See **Standards for Acceptable Performance for Tenured Faculty** above.) Under the University's post-tenure review policy, 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, such as counseling, medical leave, or a change in teaching assignments. 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.

The department chair shall consult annually with the Dean, and the Dean shall consult annually with the Provost, on the progress of any faculty member who falls within the category of overall failure to meet minimum academic responsibilities.

Based upon the judgment that there has been a sustained overall failure to meet academic responsibilities during a two-year period to make progress following the development of an intervention plan, a 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 for a hearing as specified in the *Handbook for Faculty and Other Unclassified Staff* (See C.2.f)

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 Committee in the dismissal proceedings.

### **Faculty Development Initiatives**

**Pre-tenure mentoring:** Each year all Assistant Professors in EEB are assigned a different Associate or Full Professor faculty mentor. The two meet during the semester to discuss research and professional progress, and the mentor also reviews teaching materials and attends one or more of the pre-tenure faculty member's lectures. In addition, all first year EEB faculty members are paired with an early career colleague (who is post Progress Toward Tenure) to help navigate the adjustment to the KU and EEB environment. Workshops for early career faculty members are offered during the year by experienced faculty colleagues on critical aspects of the academic and research environment. Experiences from grant review panels and insights on the management of personnel hired by faculty members are discussed. Opportunities are also provided for early career faculty members to gather for "self-mentoring" workshops, to share experiences and advice with each other for managing the pre-tenure years.

**Research Intensive Semesters (RIS):** CLAS offers all early career faculty members in good standing a reduced-teaching responsibility at some point during the faculty member's pre-tenure employment. Faculty members will be released from classroom teaching duties for *up to* two courses, 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 RIS assignment typically being the second semester of the 5<sup>th</sup> 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 RIS will be made in consultation with the department chairperson. Note that paid leaves and fellowships do not take the place of a RIS. Once the unit director approves the RIS for the early career 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.

**Post-tenure opportunities:** For tenured faculty, there is a strong measure of collegiality within the faculty which translates into a continuous dialogue relating to collaborative research and teaching opportunities, co-advised graduate and undergraduate students, and interactions with other academic units through the many and varied joint appointments in the Department. Faculty members are encouraged to apply for sabbatical leaves whenever possible to revitalize research programs or to change research directions, and to attend the university programs on teaching effectiveness provided by the Center for Teaching Excellence. Faculty members also are encouraged to seek help from peers in grant-proposal writing and revision by colleagues and other available sources. Funds are made available to all faculty members for professional development through attending workshops, or visiting federal or other funding agencies.

Each member of the Ecology & Evolutionary Biology faculty has a unique set of talents to bring to the teaching, research, and service components of the Department and University. Because the mission of the Department is multifaceted, the development of the collective talents of the entire faculty must be coordinated to improve quality in teaching, research, and service.

**Peer review:** All faculty members in EEB are encouraged to engage in peer review of teaching. To guide this opportunity for reflection and professional growth, the Department developed a set of

recommendations. This guide is not a recipe for conducting or reporting on peer review of teaching, rather it is designed to prompt peer reviewers to think about the possible components of the review process and the possible reporting of review outcomes.

### **1. Quality of intellectual content**

*The instructor can provide an annotated syllabus for a course, highlighting the decisions made in including material and choosing which particular aspects of the field will be included, excluded, or emphasized.*

The reviewer should consider:

- Is the material in this course appropriate for the topic, appropriate for the curriculum and institution?
- Is the content related to current issues and developments in the field?
- Is there intellectual coherence to the course content?
- Are the intellectual goals for students well articulated and congruent with the course content and mission?

### **2. Quality of teaching practices**

*The instructor can provide a brief account of an overall plan for use of the students' time both in and outside of class. Some of this is found in the syllabus and some would be in the annotations to the syllabus.*

The reviewer should consider:

- Is the contact time with students well organized and planned, and if so, are the plans carried out?
- How much of the time are students actively engaged in the material?
- Are there opportunities (in or out of class) for students to practice the skills embedded in the course goals?
- Are there any particularly creative or effective uses of contact time that could improve student understanding?
- Are there any course structures or procedures that contribute especially to the likely achievement of understanding by students?

### **3. Quality of student understanding**

*The instructor may provide samples of assignments the students use to demonstrate their understanding of some of the key goals articulated in the first part of the review. For each assignment chosen for review, there could also be graded student work, complete with the feedback provided (if any). A recommendation is to provide two A papers (or equivalent category of judgment), two B papers, and two C papers, along with the distribution of performance for the entire class.*

The reviewer should consider:

- Is the performance asked of students appropriate for the course goals, level of course, and the institution?
- Does the performance requested include challenging levels of conceptual understanding and critical evaluation of the material appropriate to the level of the course and of the students?
- Are students being asked to demonstrate competence in the stated course goals? If not, is it possible to identify why?
- Are the forms of evaluation and assessment appropriate to the stated goals of the course?
- Are they particularly creative or do they provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding using intellectual skills typical of the field?
- Is the weighting of course assignments in grade calculation coordinated with the relative importance of the course goals?

### **4. Summarizing the evidence of reflective consideration and development**

The reviewer should consider:

- Has this faculty member made a sincere effort to insure that students achieve the goals for the course?
- Has the faculty member identified any meaningful relationship between what (s)he teaches and how students perform?
- Is there evidence that the faculty member has changed teaching practices based on past teaching experiences?
- Is there evidence of insightful analysis of teaching practice that resulted from consideration of student performance?