



COLLEGE OF NATURAL SCIENCE

Faculty Development Policy

Tenured and tenure track faculty members in the College of Natural Science are expected to strive for excellence in all their teaching, research and leadership/service roles and should continuously seek ways to enhance their capabilities, performance and contributions regardless of tenure status, rank or service time. In parallel, the University, College, Departments and Programs have a responsibility to effectively foster and support excellence and evaluate faculty performance in all these areas of responsibility.

This document describes the College policies for faculty development and evaluation. Each unit with tenure track faculty positions should have a parallel set of policies. These policies should be compatible with the College policies described here and the University policies described in the Faculty Handbook (<http://www.hr.msu.edu/documents/facacadhandbooks/facultyhandbook/index.htm>).

The most important components of the College and unit faculty development policies are effective mentoring programs for faculty members at all career stages and especially in the early years, effective written annual performance reviews, identification of performance problems at an early stage, proactive unit and individual implementation of steps for improvement and, when necessary, effective unit implementation of University policies for post-tenure review and disciplinary action. The College criteria for reappointment, promotion and tenure, the expectations for teaching evaluation and work load policies are available on the College website.

Early identification of potential performance problems in a faculty member's career is critical. Discussions of these should take place between the chair or director and the faculty member during the annual review process and throughout the year as needed.

Performance substantially below the College's standards needs to be addressed by the College, unit and individual. Each year, the dean and relevant chair(s) or director(s) will confidentially review the record of all faculty members whom the chair or director identifies as having difficulties in teaching or other student engagement, who have not published a refereed research paper in the past two

years, who have not been P.I. or co-P.I. on a major external research grant for two years or who have received below average salary increases for three consecutive years. This review will take into consideration the faculty member's assignment in the areas of teaching, research, and leadership/service. For faculty members who lose external funding, departments or programs should respond quickly and independently of this process to assist in recovering this funding.

In those cases where this review identifies substantial performance problems, the unit should initiate a discussion with the faculty member with the objective of developing a plan for career rejuvenation. In this plan, the unit should offer the faculty member a meaningful development opportunity with the explicit goal of improving performance to the expected standards and metrics. In turn, the faculty member should engage in a proactive and effective effort to meet the objectives of the plan. The components of this plan need to be customized to individual circumstances and may include change in the distribution of research, teaching and leadership/service responsibilities.

As for annual performance and merit salary reviews, the unit faculty advisory committee or other responsible faculty body should normally be involved in the process.

Substantial evidence for improved performance should occur within two years, and the outcomes of the faculty member's efforts in this regard should be documented in the annual performance reviews. These will be confidentially discussed annually by the chair(s) or director(s) and the dean. Faculty members who do not improve their performance to meet the relevant standards and criteria will become candidates for special performance review under the processes described in the University's post-tenure review policies and procedures described in the University Faculty Handbook.

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