# Part-time Faculty Performance Evaluation Spring 2013

The Office of Academic Human Resources has established guidelines for part-time faculty evaluation in accordance with the Adjuncts United Labor Agreement (Article IX). These evaluations will be the basis for determining merit increases for continuing instructors (Article IX). Performance evaluations **should be conducted for all AU unit members during each appointment period** in accordance with the guidelines described below.

Please keep in mind that "merit" increases for part-time faculty are supplementary to the "across the board increase" stipulated in the Labor Agreement (Article IX Compensation). Merit increases are meant to recognize meritorious performance.

The attached *Part-time Faculty Performance Evaluation Form* should be completed when all the evaluation-related activities have been completed for each part-time faculty member. The *Performance Evaluation Form* should be shared with the instructor and a scanned copy forwarded to Academic Human Resources.

### **Evaluation period:**

Because budget planning is conducted during spring semester each year, performance evaluation of part-time faculty will cover the previous **calendar year**—incorporating information from previous years in the case of instructors with multi-year appointments. For instructors on 1-year appointments, the part-time faculty performance evaluation will incorporate the previous spring and fall semesters. Evaluation of new instructors and those with one semester contracts should be completed when the instructor has completed two semesters. Additional evaluations can take place at the chair's discretion for purposes of professional development.

### **Evaluation components/activities:**

The department chair or other appropriate administrator is responsible for conducting the evaluation, based on the extent to which the:

- (1) instructor has met/is meeting the expectations as stated in the appointment letter,
- (2) the course syllabus or syllabi meets/meet departmental guidelines and expectations, and
- (3) the end of **course evaluation** ratings and comments conform to departmental expectations for the given course(s).

Note: Schools/Colleges are encouraged to identify a standard set of questions to be incorporated into all departmental course evaluation forms. These standard questions can assist Schools and Colleges in making comparative judgments for determining merit. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) provides an item bank of questions as well as other helpful

resources related to end of course evaluations at https://oira.syr.edu/Assessment/StudentRate/CreateForm.htm

#### **Classroom Observation**

A classroom observation should be included at least once during the probationary period (5 consecutive semesters or 4 years) and thereafter, during each appointment period to determine the extent to which the instructor's class planning and implementation are appropriate for the course and class focus/content/topic and how well the class meets departmental norms for classroom interaction.

For **on-line teaching**, a person knowledgeable about the content and format of the course should be identified to evaluate the course activities and implementation.

Part-time faculty who are **appointed in more than one department or school/college** should be evaluated by an appropriate administrator from each academic unit.

Note: Problems or concerns that come to the attention of the department or school/college may trigger an evaluation at any time during the faculty member's appointment.

To assist you in conducting these evaluation activities in a manner that supports faculty improvement, three documents are attached—in addition to the Performance Evaluation Form:

- (1) A *Syllabus Inventory* that identifies a number of important considerations for course syllabi. You may also have departmental/School-College guidelines for syllabi to which you can refer.
- (2) A **sample** Classroom Observation Report. Of course, another reporting/observing format may be preferred. You are encouraged to locate or design a report format that best suits the course content and instructional style typical for your department. The important point is that some written record should guide your conversation with the faculty member about the class following the observation and should reflect the types of act.
- (3) Considerations for Classroom Observations that identifies "good practice" in classroom observation and supports faculty improvement.

## Syllabus Inventory

Rather than a "checklist, the Syllabus Inventory provides prompts to consider when drafting or revising your course syllabi.

### **Basic Information**

- 1. For instructor and TA(s): name, title, office phone number(s), e-mail address, office location, office hours, instructions for leaving messages for instructor/TA.
- 2. Course by number, section, title, number of credit hours, semester and year, meeting days and times, room and building.
- 3. Required course materials or electronic access: texts, supplies, reserve materials at library, course reference lists and locations where they can be found, access to Blackboard or other web-based course site/support. How will you communicate any course changes or other information to students?
- 4. Prerequisite course(s), knowledge, and skills.

## **Course Description and Rationale**

- 1. Course description: What is the nature and structure of the course?
- 2. Course rationale: Why do people study in this academic area? What are the benefits and practical applications of this course for the student? How does this course fit into the student's overall course of study, curriculum, or general education requirements?
- 3. Conceptual framework: What are the framing questions, theories, concepts, and key terms in this course?
- 4. Course goals/expectations/outcomes: What knowledge, competencies, abilities, skills, characteristics, or qualities do you expect students to have at the end of the course?
- 5. Teaching philosophy: How do your beliefs about the purposes of education influence your expectations for the learning process?
- 6. Learning activities: Will the students be involved in group and individual work, discussions, case study, lectures, labs/studios, performances, community projects?
- 7. Course calendar: Planned topics, sequence and anticipated dates, particularly for exams, assignments, and key activities. Why have you arranged the course topics/activities in this order?

## **Course Requirements, Evaluation, Grading**

1. Course assignments: What is the type and purpose of each assignment/project, suggested/required format, research expected, and criteria for evaluation? How will written assignments be submitted: electronically, through Blackboard or other webbased site, or in paper copy?

- 2. Due dates: What are the deadlines for reading assignments, projects, papers, presentations or exams?
- 3. Evaluation: How will you assess student progress? Individual or group projects, activities, papers, presentations, exams?
- 4. Grading: What are the standards, weight, and criteria for each activity or assessment to be included in the final grade? If class participation/engagement is included in the grade, how is it defined?

### **Course Policies**

- 1. Attendance and class participation/engagement.
- 2. Missing and late assignments.
- Classroom civility and other behaviors: cell phones, text messaging, use of laptops, food/drinks in class, etc.
- 4. Withdrawal, drop, incomplete, pass/fail. See <u>SU Grading</u> in *Academic Rules and Regulations*, Section 6.0

Note: There is no University standard for conversion of numeric to alpha grades. You may want to consult with departmental colleagues before establishing your grade conversion metric.

5. Academic Integrity. Your syllabus should include a statement such as:

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort.

For more information, see Academic Integrity Office

6. Students with disabilities/special needs. Your syllabus should include the following statement:

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary.

For more information, see Office of Disability Services

# **Classroom Observation Report**

Instru	ctorDate
	rver(s)
# of s	tudents presentCourse Title/#
Proce	ess:
	Several days prior to the classroom visit, the instructor provides the observer(s) with a copy of the course syllabus including course objectives, content, and organization.
2.	The observer(s) contacts the instructor several days <b>in advance</b> of the visit to learn the instructor's plan for the class, including objectives and teaching methods to be used.
3.	Within several days <b>after</b> the visit, the observer(s) meets with the instructor to discuss observations and recommendations.
1.	Describe the instructor's content mastery, breadth, and depth.
2.	Describe the method(s) of instruction.
3.	Describe the organization of the class presentation/ activities
4.	Describe the mode and extent of student participation.
5.	Describe the instructor's manner and mode of response to student participation.
6.	What specific suggestions would you make to improve this instructor's teaching?

# SAMPLE

7.	Would you recommend this instructor to students you are advising or who you know are interested in the subject area?

8. Describe the instructor's response to your observational feedback.

#### Considerations for Classroom Observation

February 2012

### Key question: What is "good teaching"?

What are current notions about "good teaching"? This is a complicated and controversial question. Departmental/school-college values and expectations and disciplinary/content considerations shape understandings of "good teaching." One good guide: What do the departmental course evaluations "value" related to teaching?

There are many advantages to classroom observation/visit practices:

- Provide feedback and support for new colleagues
- Share teaching strategies and practices (reciprocal)
- Create/share values around teaching practice

#### Questions to consider:

### 1. Why are you doing classroom visits?

Classroom observation is a component of part-time faculty performance evaluation. As stated in the AU Labor Agreement, "the University reserves the right to evaluate bargaining unit members in order to promote and maintain academic standards and to assess qualifications, competence, and suitability for continued appointment" (Article VII). Feedback from the classroom observation will be factored into merit pay decisions.

#### 2. Who will be the observers?

An appropriate administrator as designated by the dean or department chair.

### 3. How will the observations be conducted?

At the discretion of the school/college and department.

### 4. What will observers "value"?

School/college and departmental expectations and standards will determine.

### Options for conducting observations:

Class observations for evaluative purposes typically result in a report or document that reflects the observer's experience in the class Options here include:

- 1. Observational narrative (what happened in the class: what the observer saw the teacher doing and what s/he saw the students doing) with no judgment statements
- 2. Observational narrative plus commentary—can be "evaluative" (strengths/weaknesses, etc.) or analytical or can pose questions.

3. Checklist or categories for observers to comment on—sounds like it would be helpful but unless you can agree on the "dimensions of good teaching," you may be limiting options for teachers and observers.

### **Good practice:**

The best way to support faculty improvement is to invest in a 3-part process:

**Pre-Observation meeting/communication:** The observer and faculty member agree on a time for the observation. This may be a specific class or a particular week. The faculty member being observed shares syllabus, plans for the class, and provides the observer with some context for the class to be observed. H/she also asks the observer to focus on things of particular interest to him/her. They agree on details such as where the observer will sit, how (or if) h/she will be introduced to the class, etc.

**Observation:** Observer makes notes during class paying attention to specific details to ground discussion and anything that will be written to record the observation. Observers should attend the full class period

**Post-Observation meeting:** As soon after class as possible, the observer and faculty observed meet to exchange impressions of the class. The observer is careful to pay attention to how the observer thought the class went—strengths and things h/she would have preferred to have happened differently. Observer provides a quick general impression of the class.

The observer prepares a report on the class that takes into account all of the above and is careful to cite strengths as well as any questions or suggestions for improvements.

Key considerations for observers:

Be supportive

Ask questions Provide a

balanced view Share

specific suggestions

Refer to other faculty, campus resources, or materials you've found helpful