

Proposed UAA Faculty Evaluation Guidelines

Key Points from Reviewers

Michael A. Driscoll, Provost

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Context

On March 28, 2010, after two years of effort characterized by deep thoughtfulness and broad participation and involvement, the *Task Force on the Evaluation of Faculty Work for Promotion, Tenure, Post-tenure Review and Hiring* forwarded its proposed Faculty Evaluation Guidelines (FEGs) to Provost Driscoll for consideration.¹ Provost Driscoll asked the UAA Faculty and academic administrators for comments on the FEGs.² At its May, 2010 meeting, the UAA Faculty Senate passed several motions³ providing an initial endorsement of the FEGs and specific suggestions for improvement, with the understanding that a revised version would be provided during the 2010-2011 academic year for final approval. Deans, Campus Directors, and other administrators likewise provided feedback.

This document summarizes the author's interpretation of the feedback received and indicates the changes made to the FEGs in response. The author is reviewing the revised FEGs with UAFT and UNAC leadership and providing them to the UAA Faculty and administrators for further review. It is hoped that the FEGs will be approved before the end of the 2010-2011 academic year and that the phased implementation described in the FEGs will begin thereafter.⁴

Summary of Feedback and Changes

Comments are noted as either having come from administrators, Faculty Senate, or both. Mention of specific changes to the FEGs are given by page and line number of the version dated January 25, 2011, which is provided with this summary. Feedback is not necessarily presented in the exact words of the individual or group providing input. Because there was significant overlap among comments received, the author has combined and synthesized individual comments.

Relationship between FEGs and Unit Guidelines

The need to better define how the UAA-wide FEGs will relate to and impact guidelines established by academic units (e.g., departments, schools, colleges) was mentioned by the Faculty Senate and has arisen in several other conversations.

¹ See <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academicaffairs/promotion-and-tenure-task-force/index.cfm>

² Prince William Sound Community College (PWSCC) is separately accredited and has its own representative faculty assembly, but its faculty are subject to UAA promotion and tenure policies. PWSCC faculty and administration were also consulted and supported the FEGs.

³ See <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/governance/facultysenate/upload/Faculty-Senate-FINAL-agenda-September-3.pdf>, pp. 6-7.

⁴ The author apologizes for the delay in providing this document to the UAA community. Circumstances beyond the scope of this work resulted in attention being necessarily diverted to other matters for a period of several months.

Additional text was added on page 1, lines 21-24 to explain the expected process for unit guidelines. A phrase was added to page 5, line 123 to indicate that unit guidelines must conform to University guidelines. A footnote was added to page 5, line 124 to refer readers to details later in the document. Text was changed and additional text added on p. 34, lines 1152-1161 to further specify the expectations of conforming unit guidelines.

Scholarship requires results; not just activity

The Faculty Senate and some administrators said that the FEGs needed to be clearer in indicating that demonstrating scholarship requires results and that activity is not enough. Results were defined in various ways, e.g., as products or artifacts that are disseminated or exhibited in some manner and subject to critical or peer review. The point was also made that the precise nature of the dissemination, products/artifacts, and review should be defined at the unit level within the broad guidance of the FEGs.

Changes in the document make use of the concepts of “outcomes” which result in “evidence” such as “products, artifacts, and creative works”. Text has been added on Page 8, lines 216-217, page 10 line 296, page 11, footnote to line 313, and page 14 lines 406-409. Modifications and additions have been made to the text on page 18, line 551 including a new footnote. These changes emphasize that scholarship should result in appropriate evidence and that the evidence is what is to be used to evaluate a faculty member’s work.

Scholarly teaching versus the scholarship of teaching

Some administrators said that the FEGs should more carefully differentiate the concepts of *scholarly teaching* and the *scholarship of teaching*. The national dialog has generally suggested that all teaching faculty should be scholarly teachers with a good understanding of the current state of their discipline, who apply pedagogical techniques of demonstrated effectiveness to advance students' understanding of that discipline. The scholarship of teaching is a scholarly activity that has impact beyond a faculty member's students, typically via dissemination of reviewed products or artifacts.

A footnote detailing the distinction has been added to page 11, line 323.

Community engagement emphasis

An administrator said that the importance of community engagement is overemphasized at the expense of other equally important topics. The administrator agreed with the Faculty Senate's view that community engagement (and interdisciplinary) work is a legitimate form of scholarship alongside more traditional forms. The concern was that community engagement was made more important by repeated mention throughout the FEGs.

A footnote has been added on page 9, line 247 to place community engagement in context with more traditional forms of faculty work. The section title on page 8, line 223 has been slightly reworded to emphasize that community engagement is not more important than other forms of scholarship.

Differentiation of Teaching, Research, and Service

The Faculty Senate asked for additional guidance to help distinguish among teaching, research, and/or service, while supporting the inclusion of activities that integrate all these components. The Faculty Senate also said that individual disciplines should have the final say in how teaching, research, and service are defined and evaluated. An administrator said that the FEGs do not say enough about opportunities for integrated activities.

Text has been added in a footnote to page 10, line 313 to highlight and expand the clear direction given in page 10, lines 303-316, that a single activity may produce results in multiple workload areas and that the nature of the results are the basis for evaluation.

The Scholarly Agenda

An administrator said that the Scholarly Agenda may be cumbersome and unnecessary, not seeing it as significantly different in function from the workload activity report and adding more paperwork to faculty evaluation.

A footnote steering readers to the detailed discussion of the scholarly agenda was added to page 9, line 272. Significant changes and additions were made to the discussion of the scholarly agenda on page 36, lines 1195-1203 and page 38, lines 1265-1269.

The core values are overly broad

An administrator said that the core values given in section 1 of the FEGs are too broad to provide guidance.

The values as stated in the FEGs are taken directly from *UAA 2017*⁵, so making changes here is not appropriate. A footnote has been added on page 4, line 97 to specifically cite the source.

The importance of active learning

An administrator said that the value and importance of active learning should be clearly mentioned in the FEGs.

I feel that the mention of active learning on page 13, line 365 is adequate in this regard. I am open to suggested changes should this concern be broadly shared.

Redundancy, Conciseness, and Organization

An administrator said that the FEGs as written were too redundant and that the document should be edited to be more concise and better organized.

I agree that improvements could be made in layout, readability, and navigation. I have made a start in this direction by adding a table of contents and will work with a layout editor to refine formatting once the text is finalized. I did not make specific changes to attempt to address the concern about redundancy and conciseness. Many concepts are repeated, but I believe this is intentional, providing layers of detail, starting with an overview and moving to more detailed definitions. I am open to other suggestions should the concern be widespread.

⁵ See http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/strategicplan/upload/StrategicPlan_12pg.pdf, p. 3