

Policy Title: Employee Performance Evaluation Procedures

Policy Type: Human Resources **New/revised:** Revised

Old Policy #: PPP-36

Approval level: Board of Trustees
 President
 Vice President
 Other (specify here)

Purpose: To assist personnel in professional development and university goal achievement.

Policy:

I. General

- a. East Tennessee State University has a firm commitment to performance evaluation of university personnel, whatever their category and level, through the medium of a formalized system. The primary purpose of such evaluation is to assist personnel in professional development and in achieving university goals.
- b. The procedures outlined in this policy apply to every regular full or part-time, non-faculty University employee. Faculty evaluation and the Periodic Review of Administrators policy are addressed under separate programs. Evaluations for Temporary, Adjunct, Graduate Assistants and Student Workers are not conducted using this Procedures Guide.
- c. The University performs, submits, files, and manages the performance evaluations outlined in this document using the electronic eValuations System.

II. Objectives

- a. The formal performance evaluation system is designed to:
 1. Maintain or improve each employee's job satisfaction and morale by letting him/her know that the supervisor is interested in his/her job progress and personal development.
 2. Serve as a systematic guide for supervisors in planning each employee's further training.
 3. Assure considered opinion of an employee's performance and focus maximum attention on achievement of assigned duties.
 4. Assist in determining and recording special talents, skills, and capabilities that might otherwise not be noticed or recognized.
 5. Assist in planning personnel moves and placements that will best utilize each employee's capabilities.
 6. Provide an opportunity for each employee to discuss job problems and interests with his/her supervisor.
 7. Assemble substantiating data for use as a guide, although not necessarily the sole governing factor, for such purposes as wage adjustments, promotions, disciplinary action, and termination.

II. Responsibility

- A. The Director of Human Resources has the overall responsibility for the administration of the Performance Evaluation Program and will ensure the fairness and efficiency of its execution by:
 - 1. Maintaining the electronic eValuations System, and ensuring timely and appropriate access to the system for all applicable employees and supervisors.
 - 2. Ensuring electronic eValuation forms are completed by a specified date.
 - 3. Reviewing electronic forms for completeness.
 - 4. Identifying discrepancies.
 - 5. Ensuring proper safeguard of the eValuations System.
- B. Immediate Supervisor (Evaluator) is the employee's "evaluator" and has the responsibility for:
 - 1. Continuously observing and evaluating an employee's job performance.
 - 2. Holding periodic counseling sessions with each employee to discuss job performance.
 - 3. Completing electronic eValuation forms as required.
- C. Second Level Supervisor: The Second Level Supervisor is the "Evaluator's" supervisor and has the responsibility for:
 - 1. Reviewing the eValuation forms for accuracy and objectivity.
 - 2. Investigating and resolving any disagreement(s) between the supervisor and the employee.
- D. Directors/Deans/Vice Presidents: Within their respective areas will:
 - 1. Ensure the proper and timely completion of eValuation forms.
 - 2. Ensure that any conflicts identified have been resolved in a fair and equitable manner in accordance with existing regulations.

III. Procedures

- A. Job Descriptions: Immediate supervisors must provide each employee under their supervision a copy of the employee's official job description. Job descriptions should be updated on a regular basis to avoid inaccuracies. Revisions to job descriptions must be reviewed with the current incumbent to ensure the employee's acknowledgement and understanding of the changes and current job expectations. To update job descriptions for clerical/support and administrative/professional positions, supervisors should utilize the eJobs system to make minor changes; or for major changes supervisors should complete a new Position Classification Questionnaire, and submit the form through the proper signatory chain to the Office of Human Resources.
- B. Counseling Sessions between immediate supervisors and employees will be scheduled periodically. During these sessions, an open dialogue should occur which allows the exchange of performance oriented information. The employee should be informed of how well or how badly he/she has performed to date. In the case of derogatory comments, the employee should be informed of the steps necessary to improve performance to the desired level. Counseling sessions should include, but not be limited to, the following: job responsibilities, performance of duties, and attendance. A memorandum for record will be prepared following each counseling session and maintained by the supervisor.
- C. Annual Performance Evaluations will be prepared during the month of March for each employee having been employed six months or longer. The evaluation period will annually cover March 1st through the end of February of the following year. eValuation forms will be completed and electronically submitted through appropriate channels to

the Office of Human Resources no later than March 31st of each year. Upon notification from the Office of Human Resources that the Annual Performance Evaluation period is open:

1. The Immediate Supervisor will:
 - i. Complete the electronic eValuation form as promptly as possible. The system will prompt you to complete all required fields.
 - ii. Discuss the eValuation with the employee emphasizing strong and weak points in job performance. Commend the employee for a job well done if applicable, and discuss specific corrective action if warranted. Recommendations should specifically state methods to correct weaknesses, and/or prepare the employee for future opportunities. Set mutual goals for the employee to reach before the next performance evaluation (Supervisors can utilize the eValuation Plan to record and maintain goals and objectives).
 - iii. The employee will electronically log-in to the eValuations system and add any written comments or a rebuttal if he/she desires. The employee will be prompted to return the evaluation to their supervisor for additional review/comments or they may "Acknowledge" the eValuation to move it forward to the Second Level Supervisor.
 - iv. Subsequent to the completion of this eValuation by the supervisor and review by the employee, revisions must be discussed by both parties. In addition, if changes in the form are made after the employee has electronically signed the form, the level of authority making the changes must notify the immediate supervisor and employee. The employee and supervisor can view changes directly in the eValuations System.
 - v. Forward the eValuation electronically through the appropriate approval chain. By submitting the eValuation while logged into your account in the System, you are providing your electronic signature.
 - vi. You do not need to retain a hard-copy of the evaluation form. The eValuations System serves as an archive for all evaluations, and may be accessed at any time by the supervisor and employee.
2. The Second Level Supervisor upon receipt will:
 - i. Review the eValuation form for objectivity and accuracy. If the employee has stated that he/she disagrees with the evaluation, the Reviewing Official will attempt to resolve these disagreements prior to forwarding the eValuation form. Comments as to conflict resolutions are required.
 - ii. Electronically forward the eValuation form to Human Resources. By submitting the eValuation while logged into your account in the System, you are providing your electronic signature.
 - iii. The Director/Dean/Vice President will account for all eValuation forms in his/her area of responsibility.
3. C. Upon Human Resources' receipt of the completed eValuation form, it will be reviewed for completeness and accuracy. Any unresolved problems will be brought to the attention of the next line of authority. The completed

forms are not filed in the employee's official personnel folder, but will remain permanently archived in the eValuations System.

IV. Probationary Evaluations

- A. New Employees serve a six-month Probationary Period of employment. In the first month of employment, the Office of Human Resources will send the new employee's supervisor an e-mail notification that a Probationary Evaluation has been generated in the eValuations system. Throughout the Probationary Period the supervisor and employee will receive email notifications from the system to complete the evaluation. The evaluation form must be electronically completed and submitted through the appropriate signatory chain to the Office of Human Resources before the completion of the six-month probationary period.
- B. All newly appointed full-time and part-time regular administrative/professional and support employees are placed under a probationary period of six (6) months of observable performance. During this period, an employee may be terminated without prior notice. A probationary period also applies to an employee who is promoted, transferred or demoted to another position and a new employment contract is required.
- C. Supervisors should make effective use of the initial probationary period with employees. This period is an important time when employees demonstrate abilities to satisfactorily perform assigned duties and responsibilities. Supervisors are encouraged to provide appropriate training, coaching and mentoring for their employees during the probationary period. Employees should receive a written job description and should understand the position requirements and the standards of conduct expected.
- D. Dismissal During the Initial Probationary Period: At any time during an initial probationary period, an employee may be terminated without cause or right of appeal. However, supervisors must provide sufficient documentation to justify dismissal for review/approval through their signatory chain, the appropriate vice president, and the Director of Human Resources. No regular employee shall be terminated without final approval from the Chief Operating Officer. Supervisors are encouraged to contact the Director of Human Resources to discuss employee performance issues during the probationary period.

V. Traits to be Evaluated - The following is a guide which can be used in evaluating an employee's overall performance:

- A. Possesses the knowledge and skills to carry out all aspects of the job.
- B. Demonstrates ability to plan, organize and prioritize work.
- C. Holds self-accountable for assigned responsibilities; sees tasks through to completion and in a timely manner.
- D. Communicates effectively with supervisors and others.
- E. Ability to work independently and with a team.
- F. Reliability (attendance, punctuality, meeting deadlines).
- G. Attends to details in a dependable, conscientious manner.
- H. Produces accurate, thorough and reliable results.
- I. Effectively manages multiple tasks and responsibilities.
- J. Demonstrates fairness toward all subordinates.
- K. Promotes training and development for all employees.
- L. Identifies performance expectations, gives timely feedback.
- M. Delegates authority through clearly stated objectives.

- N. Understands and adheres to institutional Affirmative Action Plan regarding Goals and timetables, grievances/discrimination complaints, disseminating plans to their employees and following university guidelines.
- VI. Pitfalls in Making Performance Appraisals
- A. The Isolated Incident - A rating should not be based on a few isolated performance incidents. When this is done, the rating is unfairly influenced by non-typical instances of favorable or unfavorable performances.
 - B. The "Halo" Effect - The "Halo" effect occurs when one factor influences ratings on all factors. Examples: An employee's work is of good quality; therefore, other ratings (such as those on promptness or work quantity) are higher than normal. Another employee is frequently absent, with the result that the ratings on other factors are usually low.
 - C. The "Cluster" Tendency - The tendency to consider everyone in the work group as above average, average, or below average. Some raters are considered "tough" because they normally "cluster" their people at a low level. Others are too lenient. "Clustering" overall ratings usually indicates that the rater has not sufficiently discriminated between high and low levels of performance.
 - D. Rating the Job and Not the Individual - Individuals in higher-rated jobs are often considered superior performers to those in lower-rated jobs. This normally means that confusion exists between the performance appraisal and how the job has been evaluated.
 - E. Length of Service Bias - There is a tendency to allow the period of an individual's employment to influence the rating. Normally, performance levels should be higher as an individual gains training and experience, but this is not always the case.
 - F. Personality Conflicts - Avoid judgments made purely on the basis of personality traits. Effective, efficient employees do not necessarily agree with everything a supervisor believes in or states.
- VII. Suggestions
- A. Consider the entire appraisal period. Try to enumerate high points and low points in performance, and then assign a rating that typifies the individual's normal performance. Do not attempt to assign a rating to a performance indicator and then create justification to support it. Be able to explain the reason for each rating.
 - B. Rate each indicator independently. When evaluating more than one person simultaneously, it may be helpful to rate all employees' performances on one indicator rather than one employee's performance on all factors. Use the summary evaluation to give substance to individual factors.
 - C. In a group of people in similar jobs, performance is likely to be spread over most performance categories. Review your own record as a rater. Check the tendency to be either "too tough" or "too lenient" in your appraisals.
 - D. Consider how an individual is performing in relation to what is expected. Rate the person's performance, not importance of the job.
 - E. Recognize that some people may never achieve top ratings, regardless of length of service. Watch closely the progress of newcomers and be ready to recognize superior performance if it is achieved.
- VIII. Summary - It is incumbent upon each employee, regardless of level or category, to perform in an exemplary manner reflecting those principles and disciplines upon which this institution was founded. Used constructively, this program of performance evaluation can prove to be a valuable tool regarding individual career advancement, and result in increased productivity throughout all areas of this institution.

6/9/2017 – approved by the Board of Trustees.