

UCCS Department of Geography & Environmental Studies
Criteria for IRC Annual Merit Evaluation – Approved by GES Faculty, April 2, 2022

Annual Merit Evaluation

The following document is intended to guide Instructors as they prepare their self-evaluations, and Chairs as they evaluate the work of the Instructors in the GES department. It is the job of each Instructor, Senior Instructor, or Principal Instructor to submit a self-evaluation annually to the Chair of the Department as per [APS 5008](#). The self-evaluation is an opportunity for faculty members to share their accomplishments over the previous academic year, provide information on future goals, and foster communication. Following the submission of the self-evaluation, it is the job of the Chair to discuss their evaluation with the faculty member before the evaluation is submitted to the Dean's Instructor Review Committee (DIRC). During the evaluation review, the Chair should help the IRC faculty member to assess their progress toward promotion and make recommendations about how to facilitate that process.

Annual Merit Evaluations will include:

- A **Numeric Rating** from 1 to 5 in **Teaching** and **Service**.
- A brief **Narrative** describing key activities and practices relating to teaching, service, accomplishments, areas of focus and or improvement over the past academic year.
- **Goals** for the upcoming academic year which may be adjusted on an ongoing basis as situations arise.

The Annual Merit Evaluation process is guided by this document and the GES Department By-Laws. All processes must adhere to any relevant guidelines or procedures at the college, campus, and system level.

Numeric Ratings

Numeric ratings for **Teaching** are to be assigned using the following criteria.

3-Meeting Expectations

To assign a rating of **Meeting Expectations**, Instructors of any rank are expected to meet the conditions of their Contract. This includes teaching the approved number of credit hours, adequately preparing and teaching scheduled courses, evaluating students in a timely manner, holding regularly scheduled office hours, providing timely communications in response to students, and adhering to university rules and policies. Anything beyond this, would constitute Exceeding Expectations or Outstanding teaching.

In order to assign numeric ratings above and beyond **Meeting Expectations**, Instructors of any rank must perform additional practices above their contractual obligations for their teaching assessment (See **Appendix A** for list of practices).

4-Exceeding Expectations

To assign a rating of **Exceeding Expectations**, Instructors must Meet Expectations and demonstrate the application of at least **1** of the Practices listed in Appendix A.

5-Outstanding

To assign a rating of **Outstanding**, Instructors must Meet Expectations and demonstrate the application of at least **3** of the Practices listed in Appendix A.

Numeric ratings for **Service** are to be assigned using the following criteria.

3-Meeting Expectations

To assign a rating of **Meeting Expectations**, Instructors of any rank are expected to meet the conditions of their Contract and participate in departmental meetings (the Chair should not schedule meetings that conflict with teaching schedules to ensure each member of the faculty has the opportunity to attend). Anything beyond this, would constitute Exceeding Expectations or Outstanding service.

In order to assign a rating above and beyond **Meeting Expectations**, Instructors of any rank must perform additional Practices above contractual obligations and attending Department Meetings, for their service assessment (See **Appendix B** for list of additional practices).

4-Exceeding Expectations

To assign a rating of **Exceeding Expectations**, Instructors must Meet Expectations and clearly demonstrate the application of at least **1** of the Practices listed in Appendix B.

5-Outstanding

To assign a rating of **Outstanding**, Instructors must Meet Expectations and clearly demonstrate the application of at least **3** of the Practices listed in Appendix B.

Annual Merit Evaluation Remediation

A Chair's final Annual Performance Review for the current academic year that yields a score below a 3, Meeting Expectations, in either Teaching or Service, will require a plan of remedial action agreed upon and signed by both the faculty member and the Chair, with a follow-up meeting midway through the following year to assess progress and actions taken to date.

Additional departmental faculty, in the form of a Personnel Committee, and the LAS Dean's Office, may be involved in the remediation process as agreed upon by the Chair and the relevant Instructor (see [APS 5008](#) for additional details). In cases of a disputed score and where an agreement cannot be reached, the faculty member can pursue a grievance per LAS policy.

Appendix A: Teaching Practices

The following list contains examples of teaching practices Instructors may demonstrate their contract to show, and achieve, **Exceeding Expectations** or **Outstanding** teaching ratings in their annual merit reviews. If an Instructor uses any of these practices more than once, they should receive credit for each application to make their case for their merit rating. Additional practices may be added to this list. Practices include, but are not limited to:

- Incorporation of high-impact teaching practices, including inquiry-based learning, community-based or service learning, out-of-classroom or hands-on learning experiences for students
- Creation of new course or extensive revision of an existing course, such as offering a course in a new format (e.g. online, remote, hybrid, HiFlex), revising a course for use with OER resources or an improved textbook (explanation of the improvements required in the personal statement), or revision/replacement/updates of greater than 50% of the assignments for a course
- Improvements of courses for accessibility or EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity), such as creation of or incorporation of OER resources, revision of course materials to meet Universal Design standards, etc.
- Supervision of independent study, teaching assistantship, honors thesis or internship
- Participation in professional development for teaching, EDI, accessibility, or subject matter related to courses
- Accomplishments or awards in pedagogy of teaching and learning
- Participation in interdisciplinary teaching opportunities or teaching contribution to other departments, programs, or institutions, in addition to UCCS GES Department (i.e., working with other academic units on or beyond the campus to develop new programs, curricula, or pedagogical approaches)
- Teaching additional sections or courses to provide expanded opportunities for student coursework and/or student progress toward completion.
- Teaching improvement activities (e.g. seeking mentorship; demonstrating use of student or peer feedback to modify courses in positive ways, solicits an evaluation from a colleague)
- Above-average FCQ scores for questions pertaining to teaching and learning effectiveness, when compared to the university, college, and/or department
- Dominantly positive comments on FCQs
- Other items demonstrating excellence in teaching, as justified in the personal statement
- Recognition by the Chair of outstanding teaching practices
- Organizing, presenting, or participating in workshops, conferences, or training addressing best practices for inclusive or other teaching pedagogy
- Applying for and/or receiving teaching enhancement or teaching development grants

- Student supervision in professional experience activities, internships, and/or individualized research supervision (e.g., Undergraduate Research Academy, RAship)
- Evidence that demonstrates impact of teaching/mentoring on student learning or accomplishment, such as students succeeding in subsequent courses and/or in the pursuit of graduate education and/or in careers
- Teaching a writing intensive course, lab-based, or field course
- Evidence of taking risks in teaching activities. This may include, but is not limited to, integration of materials in courses that deal with controversial or sensitive topics, using alternative classroom pedagogies, utilizing inclusive grading schemes, using innovative teaching technologies, etc.
- Recognition for meeting established criteria for course excellence (e.g., quality matters, accessibility)
- Engaging in public scholarship, including, but not limited to, hits and positive commentary on social media, blogs and instructional videos on YouTube; invitations to participate in documentaries, podcasts, newspaper and radio interviews and other media formats where we teach through scholarship
- Providing effective role modeling and mentoring based on teaching experience at any educational level (e.g., new faculty, graduate students). For example, providing peer teaching support, working with teaching assistants, opening up one's classroom for observation of teaching techniques, providing pedagogical materials such as syllabi and activities to peers, providing evidence of effectiveness based on student assessments of mentoring/advising, etc.
- Facilitating student participation in conferences and presenting their work in professional settings
- Teaching activities in a community setting to lay audiences including schools

Appendix B: Service Practices

The following list contains examples of additional service practices Instructors may demonstrate to show, and achieve, **Exceeding Expectations** or **Outstanding** service ratings in their annual merit reviews. If an Instructor uses any of these practices more than once, they should receive credit for each application to make their case for their merit rating. Additional practices may be added to this list. Practices include, but are not limited to:

- Active participation on committees or other service opportunities beyond the department, whether at the College, University, or System level, within the discipline, or as an academic within the community
- Active contributions to shared governance
- Active performance of additional duties within the department such as serving on subcommittees, hiring committees, department communications
- Active participation in student mentoring
- Active participation in faculty mentoring
- Guest lecturing for other faculty, courses, departments, or the public

- Active participation in student clubs or activities
- Participate in interdisciplinary teaching opportunities
- Integration of students into research opportunities
- Publication or review of professional manuscripts
- Participation in the Majors and Minors Fair and/or other similar university-wide events (i.e., Mountain Lion Experience Day)
- Contributions to marketing, recruitment, and retention initiatives for the department, college, or university
- EDI Training or OER Training
- Participation in creation or implementation of a professional development event
- Maintenance of departmental data, for example: enrollment or market data related to the entire department, GIS certificate, Geology Minor, Sustainability Minor, etc.
- Recognition by the Chair of outstanding service practices
- Serving as a Director of any GES minor program
- Editorial activities for professional journals (e.g., editor, guest editor of special edition, associate editor)
- Service award or other outstanding accomplishments in service
- Structured mentoring of peers or colleagues
- Specific contribution to DEI efforts, such as involvement in departmental, college, or campus committees or Task Forces
- Volunteering regularly for a community organization within our community
- Board member on local, state, regional, or national organization (governmental or NGO)
- Providing a published media interview (print, podcast, web, TV, film, etc.)
- Pro bono consultation in an ongoing capacity
- Writing letters of recommendation or support for colleagues, internally or externally
- Nominating colleagues or students for awards, fellowships, etc.