

**WINTHROP UNIVERSITY
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

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A. General Information

The primary purpose of the performance evaluation is to increase the overall efficiency of the university's workforce by helping each employee to improve in job performance. The information gathered through the performance evaluation is also used to maintain a documented history of the employee's performance; to establish communication between the rating supervisor and employee; to provide information to the employee's rating supervisor and manager to use in making work-related decisions; to identify those employees who have potential for promotion; to identify training needs; to encourage continued growth and development of all employees; to provide documentation to support recommendations for salary increases, promotions, demotions, transfers and dismissals; to assist management in assigning work and delegating responsibility based on mutual understanding of the employee's skills and abilities; and to enhance other personnel administration components such as selection and classification.

B. Statement of Policy

The performance of each classified and unclassified (including staff) employee should be appraised at least once each year. Each employee will be appraised on his/her performance in meeting the defined standards established for the position, as described in Section F and Section H below.

C. Applicability

The provisions set forth below apply to both probationary employees and covered employees assigned to established classified and unclassified staff positions. A covered employee is a full-time or part-time employee occupying a part or all of a FTE position, who has completed the probationary period and has an overall rating higher than "Unsatisfactory" on the employee's performance evaluation, and who has grievance rights. If an employee does not receive an evaluation before the performance review date the employee shall receive a "Meets Performance Requirements" performance rating by default. This definition does not include employees in positions such as temporary, temporary grant, or time limited employees who do

not have grievance rights. Employees exempt from coverage under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act will also be given annual performance appraisals.

D. Procedure

1. Each employee's performance should be evaluated by the immediate rating supervisor. After completing the evaluation form, the rating supervisor should review and discuss the evaluation with the next higher level rating supervisor, hereinafter referred to as the reviewing officer, unless the immediate rating supervisor is the President. The reviewing officer may attach additional comments to the evaluation and in the attachment may take exception to any of the rating supervisor's evaluation points. If the reviewing officer and the rating supervisor cannot agree, the reviewing officer will make the final decision. The evaluation form must bear the signatures of both the rating supervisor and the reviewing officer.
2. After the evaluation has been signed by the reviewing officer, the immediate rating supervisor will review and discuss the evaluation with the employee. The employee will be asked to certify that the evaluation has been reviewed with him/her by signing the form in the space provided. If the employee refuses to sign the form, the rating supervisor will make a note of the refusal on the form and will also record the date of the conference.
3. It is the responsibility of the department head to ensure that the evaluations for all employees in the department are conducted in a timely manner and that each form is completed and returned to the Office of Human Resources, Employee Diversity and Wellness ("Human Resources") on or before the date indicated on the form. If an evaluation is not completed, reviewed, and signed by all parties by the review date, the employee shall receive a "Meets Performance Requirements" rating by default. Rating supervisors are required to follow the procedures herein to provide performance appraisals for direct reports.
4. All performance evaluations shall be maintained in the employee's official personnel file in Human Resources.

E. Planning Stage

Each employee shall have a planning stage conducted at the beginning of each rating period. The employee's job functions (which include job duties and success criteria), objectives, and performance characteristics for the next rating period will be discussed at this time. The rating supervisor and employee should participate in drafting the planning stage document. The reviewing officer and the rating supervisor should discuss the requirements for the coming year prior to the planning stage document. A rating supervisor may incorporate a team activity into the planning stage document. The team performance being evaluated could constitute a job function, an objective, or one criteria for a particular job function or objective. A rating supervisor may also link the employee's training plan to the planning stage document.

Whenever an employee's job duties change significantly, the planning document, appraisal document, and position description should be revised to reflect that change.

F. Job Functions

The rating supervisor and the employee shall determine the job functions to be evaluated (which include job duties and success criteria) by reviewing the employee's position description. If the position description is not current, or if there is no position description, one should be prepared and submitted to Human Resources for approval. In instances where the rating supervisor and employee cannot agree upon the job functions, the rating supervisor's decision shall be final. The statement outlining the job function should include descriptive information about the performance expectations (success criteria) of the rating supervisor. The descriptive statement should specify the expectations of the rating supervisor for the employee to meet performance requirements. Each job function shall be rated in the evaluation stage based on the five levels of performance. It is mandatory that all rating supervisors be evaluated on the timely completion of each employee's performance appraisal.

G. Objectives

Objectives shall be optional for all employees. An objective should be included when the employee is assigned a special, non-recurring project or assignment that is not included on the employee's position description. The statement outlining the objective(s) should also include descriptive information about the performance expectations (success criteria). The descriptive statement should specify the expectations of the rating supervisor for the employee to be successful. Each objective shall be rated in the evaluation stage based on the five levels of performance.

H. Performance Characteristics

Each performance characteristic shall be defined in the planning stage document and rated as "Satisfactory" (meets requirements) or "Unsatisfactory" (fails to meet requirements) on the evaluation stage document. The performance characteristics section shall be used as a communication tool to emphasize those performance characteristics that are important to the successful performance of the job functions and objectives included in the planning document. The performance characteristics section shall not be weighted in the determination of the overall performance rating. It shall be mandatory for all managers and rating supervisors to be rated on the performance characteristic of "promoting equal opportunity." (Promoting equal opportunity includes such areas as hiring, promotion, or placement; level of personal and organizational commitment to equal opportunity; progress toward achieving a fully integrated and representative work force; and contribution toward minority programs and other social/economic equal opportunity goals).

I. Annual Performance Evaluation

All employees will be given an annual appraisal no more than 90 calendar days prior to the universal review date (March 31). The universal review date marks the beginning of a new review period. If an employee does not receive an appraisal prior to the universal review date, the employee shall receive a "Meets Performance Requirements" rating by default. A covered employee may not be issued an overall "Unsatisfactory" appraisal at any time during the annual review period without following the "Performance Improvement Plan Process."

If a covered employee is on approved leave with or without pay for more than 30 consecutive workdays, the employee's performance review date may be advanced up to 90 days. A covered employee who receives a "Performance Improvement Plan" may have the performance review date advanced to coincide with the "Performance Improvement Plan" dates. Should the review date advance, the employee may require a short-year planning stage and short year review period in order to comply with Winthrop University's Universal Review Date.

There will be five levels of performance to rate each job function and objective and to rate overall performance:

- **Substantially Exceeds Performance Requirements – (Equates to “Exceptional Performance” in the State Employee Performance Management System.)** Work or performance that is considerably and consistently above the requirements of the job functions, success criteria, and performance characteristics.
- **Exceeds Performance Requirements - (Equates to “Successful Performance” in the State Employee Performance Management System.)** Work or performance that is above the requirements of the job functions, success criteria, and performance characteristics.
- **Meets Performance Requirements – (Equates to “Successful Performance” in the State Employee Performance Management System.)** Work or performance of job functions, success criteria, and performance characteristics that is routinely satisfactory.
- **Needs Improvement – (Equates to “Successful Performance” in the State Employee Performance Management System.)** Work or performance that requires improvement in certain areas while other job functions, success criteria, or performance characteristics may be satisfactory.
- **Unsatisfactory - (Equates to “Unsuccessful Performance” in the State Employee Performance Management System.)** Work or performance that fails to meet the requirements of the job functions, success criteria, or performance characteristics.

Performance characteristics should be directly related to the employee's job and may be selected by the rating supervisor and the employee. A suggested list of performance

characteristics is provided at the end of this document. Performance characteristics shall not be rated by the five levels of performance, but shall be given a rating of “satisfactory” (meets requirements) or “unsatisfactory” (fails to meet requirements).

As a portion of the review process, rating supervisors may request peer feedback for employees covered by this policy and determined to be part of the administration of a division or department. Prior approval, to include peer feedback in the review process, must be granted by the divisional Vice President (refer to the Peer Review Process, section J).

J. Peer Review Process

Rating supervisors may choose to request internal/external peer feedback for employees covered by this policy and determined to be part of the administration of a division or department. Prior approval to include peer feedback in the review process must be granted by the divisional Vice President. The rating supervisor may identify no less than 5 and no more than 10 internal/external peer reviews from which to request feedback on the employee’s performance for the rating period. Rating supervisors must apply the peer review process consistently among similarly situated employees in their area.

K. Establishing and Maintaining Review Dates

Winthrop University’s universal review date (March 31) is the date prior to which all covered classified and unclassified staff reviews are due, except those in probationary or trial status.

- Short Year Planning Stage - A performance planning stage document for a period of time less than twelve (12) months applies immediately following satisfactory completion of a probationary review or a trial period review.
- Short Year Review - A performance appraisal that evaluates performance for a period of time less than twelve (12) months. (See “Probationary Period” and “Trial Period” sections of this policy for additional information about the short year review.)

L. Ongoing Performance Management

A rating supervisor is encouraged to continue to provide performance feedback to employees throughout the review period. An unofficial mid-year review is encouraged to facilitate this communication between rating supervisors and employees. An unofficial mid-year review is recommended to assess progress and expectations to encourage ongoing communication between the rating supervisor and employee.

M. Probationary Period

1. Each new employee in probationary status shall be rated prior to the completion of twelve (12) months from the date following an original appointment. This twelve (12) month probationary period is a working test period which may be used to determine

whether or not the employee is performing satisfactorily in the position. An employee who receives an overall rating above “Unsatisfactory” prior to the end of the probationary period will obtain covered status as a State employee and permanent status in that class. The probationary period may not be extended. After satisfactory completion of the probationary period, an employee may receive a short year planning stage and a short year review in order to move the employee to the universal review date. A short year planning stage/review will occur between the time a newly hired employee completes their initial 12 month probationary period and the next universal review date (March 31st).

2. If a probationary employee does not receive a performance evaluation prior to the end of the twelve (12) month probationary period, the employee will receive a “Meets Performance Requirements” rating by default and obtain covered status as a State employee and permanent status in the classification. If an employee is not performing satisfactorily during the probationary period, the employee shall be terminated before becoming a covered employee. Until an employee has completed the probationary period and has a rating higher than “Unsatisfactory” on the employee’s performance evaluation, the employee has no grievance rights under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act; therefore, the University is not required to follow the “Performance Improvement Plan Process” to terminate a probationary employee.

N. Trial Period

1. Each covered employee who has been promoted, reclassified or demoted shall receive a performance evaluation prior to the completion of a six (6) month trial period in the new position. The performance review date marks the beginning of a new performance period. If an employee does not receive a performance evaluation prior to the six (6) month trial review date, the employee will receive a “Meets Performance Requirements” rating by default and obtain permanent status in the new classification.
2. Once an employee has completed a successful trial period and obtained permanent status in a class, the employee retains permanent status in the classification throughout the employee’s continuous service. The six (6) month trial period may be extended up to ninety (90) calendar days upon written notice to the employee prior to the end of the six (6) month trial period. The employee’s performance review date will be advanced for the time period such extension is in effect. **After** satisfactory completion of the trial period, the employee may require a short year planning stage and a short year review in order to move the employee back to the universal review date. The short year planning stage/review period runs from the end of the six months trial period to the next universal review date (March 31st).
3. The “Performance Improvement Plan Process” is not required to demote or reclassify downward an employee in trial status to the same class from which promoted, if the demotion or reclassification occurs within the trial period. The “Performance

Improvement Plan Process” is also not required to demote or reclassify downward an employee in trial status to a class in an equal or higher pay band from which promoted, if the demotion or reclassification occurs within the trial period. The employee in trial status may not grieve such demotion. The employee in trial status may not be terminated or demoted to a class in a lower pay band than that from which promoted for performance reasons without following the “Performance Improvement Plan Process.”

O. Performance Improvement Plan for Covered Employees (also known as the Substandard Performance Process)

1. A covered employee is entitled to adequate notice of substandard performance and the opportunity to improve the substandard performance before receiving an overall “Unsatisfactory” rating and being removed from the position. Rating supervisors should contact Human Resources for approval prior to beginning the Performance Improvement Plan Process. If during the performance period an employee is considered “Unsatisfactory” in any job function or objective which significantly impacts performance, the rating supervisor may provide the employee with a written “Performance Improvement Plan.” If during the performance period an employee’s overall performance is considered “Unsatisfactory” the rating supervisor will provide the employee with a written “Performance Improvement Plan.”
2. The “Performance Improvement Plan” will provide for an improvement period of no less than 30 days and no more than 120 days. The “Performance Improvement Plan” may be issued at any time during the review period. Ordinarily, the improvement period may not extend beyond the employee’s review date. However, the review date may be advanced to coincide with the “Performance Improvement Plan” dates. Should the review date advance and the employee receives a rating of “Needs Improvement” or higher on all essential job functions or objectives noted in the “Performance Improvement Plan,” the employee may require a short-year planning stage and short-year review in order to bring the employee back to the universal review date.
3. The rating supervisor and employee may participate in drafting a work improvement plan. The work improvement plan should include how to improve the deficiencies and other appropriate performance-related recommendations. In instances where the rating supervisor and employee cannot agree upon the content of the work improvement plan, the rating supervisor's decision will be final.
4. During the improvement period, the employee and the rating supervisor will have regularly scheduled meetings during which they will discuss the employee's progress. Documentation is required to verify that these counseling sessions were held. Copies of this documentation will be placed in the employee's official personnel file in Human Resources and given to the employee upon request.

5. If the employee receives an overall "Unsatisfactory" rating by the end of the improvement period, the employee will be removed from the position immediately (i.e., terminated, reassigned, demoted). If the employee's performance is rated as "Needs Improvement" or higher on all essential job functions/objectives which significantly impact performance as noted in the "Performance Improvement Plan" by the end of the improvement period, employment will continue.
6. Once a time frame for improving substandard performance has been given, the employee must receive a written evaluation prior to the end of the Improvement Period or the employee will receive a "Meets Performance Requirements" rating by default.
7. If an employee has been issued two "Performance Improvement Plans" within a 365-day period and performance drops to an unsatisfactory level on any essential job function/objective which significantly impacts performance for a third time within a 365-day period, the employee will be removed from the position upon the third recurrence of such unsatisfactory performance by issuing the "Unsatisfactory" rating. A "Performance Improvement Plan" is not required on the third occurrence.
8. The requirements of a "Performance Improvement Plan" are:
 - The notice must be in writing, addressed to the employee, labeled as a "Performance Improvement Plan," and signed by the employee (witnessed, if employee will not sign).
 - The notice must list the job function(s) and/or objective(s) included on the employee's planning document that are considered "unsatisfactory" with an explanation of the deficiencies for each job function and/or objective.
 - The notice must include the time period for improvement and the consequences if no improvement is noted (i.e., termination, demotion, reassignment).
 - The notice must include a plan for meetings to discuss employee's progress during the improvement period.
 - The notice should be approved by Human Resources.
 - A copy of the notice must be given to the employee and placed in the employee's official personnel file in Human Resources.

EPMS Performance Characteristics

Functional Qualities

Self-Management: Works with minimal supervision, manages own time effectively, maintains control over all current projects/responsibilities. Follows up on all relevant issues.

Technical Competence: Possesses necessary knowledge to effectively perform job and able to apply what he/she has learned about his/her job. Acquires new knowledge/skills/abilities as required by the job.

Quantity of Work: The extent to which the employee produces an acceptable amount of work in order to meet schedules and deadlines.

Quality of Work: The extent to which the employee neatly, thoroughly, and accurately completes job assignments according to established standards of quality. Continuously improves quality of work.

Problem Analysis: Able to identify problems and relevant issues and breaks problem into components. Sees relationships and alternative solutions and arrives at sound conclusions through a logical process.

Accuracy of Work: The degree to which the employee makes mistakes or errors that require corrections.

Time Management: Employee is prompt in reporting for work and effectively and efficiently uses his/her time to accomplish his/her job tasks.

Safety: Follows established safety practices and corrects unsafe work practices on the job.

Concentration: Able to put aside distractions and stays with a job until complete. Able to stick to assignments and get results in spite of difficulties.

Responsibility: Asks for work after completing assignments and does not make excuses but addresses problems squarely. Offers action plans to resolve problems and suppresses self-forgiving tendencies regarding so-called uncontrollable elements.

Personal Qualities

Judgment: Able to reason, compare, understand, and think rationally on the job. Makes quality work-related decisions based on sound conclusions/data. Able to separate facts from opinions.

Leadership: Employee can be relied upon to guide others to the accomplishment of objectives/responsibilities, to promote teamwork, and to resolve problems.

Initiative: Starts assignments without prompting and independently contributes ideas and projects. Sees and acts upon new opportunities. Thinks and acts independently and promptly addresses problems.

Dependability/Reliability: Employee can be relied upon to meet work schedules and fulfill job responsibilities and commitments. Meets deadlines and follows instructions.

Interpersonal Qualities

Customer Service: To effectively and efficiently meet the needs of those served by continually assessing performance based on customer feedback.

Listening Skills: Asks meaningful questions and listens closely and respectfully before offering comments.

Acceptance: Gains confidence of others and earns respect of subordinates, peers and superiors. Values diversity and respects opposing opinions.

Teamwork: Degree to which one works effectively and cooperatively with others and other departments in achieving organizational goals. Degree of responsiveness to organizational needs.

Adaptability: Employee can adapt to job or organizational changes. Readily accepts new responsibilities and assignments.

Communication Ability: Ability of employee to present accurate information to other employees, peers, and superiors.

For Managerial Supervisory Personnel Only

Goal Accomplishment: quality and quantity of accomplishment toward set goals; also consider responsiveness to organizational goals.

Conceptualization and Flexibility in Problem Resolution: ability to conceive potential problem situations and take positive action. Consider situations not normally part of routine duties.

Supervision/Leadership: quality of leadership in obtaining employee cooperation and influencing leadership behavior.

Planning and Delegation: ability to plan and coordinate activities, manage personal and employee time effectively, distribute workloads, and delegate responsibility and authority without loss of supervisory control.

Employee Development: provide guidance, counseling, and meaningful training and instruction in development of employee skills and potential.

Evaluation: timely completion of valid consistent evaluations of subordinates. Also consider attitude, preparedness, and approach to employee evaluation.

Commitment to Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity: consider sensitivity to special problems of minority employees or students, willingness to assist career advancement of minority employees, receptiveness to hiring qualified minority applicants, and attention to the outlined hiring procedures.