

Faculty Handbook 2024-2025

SECTION 3

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

3.01 Faculty Development

Teaching is the primary responsibility of faculty. Thus, remaining current in one's discipline is an important University expectation and is a key responsibility of each faculty member. Activities leading to this objective include general professional reading, leaves of absence designed to improve one's general professional competence, travel associated with research or creative efforts, and participation in professional conferences.

The University provides faculty members the opportunity to continue their professional development through such means as sabbatical leaves and financial support for research, participation in professional organizations, and travel to professional meetings. Individual faculty members are expected to take the initiative in promoting their own growth as teachers, as scholars, and, especially in professional and occupational fields, as practitioners. (Refer to [Policy 02:225](#).)

3.02 Evaluation of Full-Time Faculty

3.02.1 Departmental Faculty

The professional performance of each faculty member is evaluated on the basis of objective and subjective information about the quality and the quantity of work. Evaluation should result in appropriate professional development for individuals and should help faculty members better know their professional strengths and weaknesses. Systematic faculty evaluations provide a basis for determining retention, tenure and promotion, and, where appropriate, salary increases.

Faculty evaluations assess professional performance in three areas important to the University's mission and goals: teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service/professional obligations. In accord with the tradition of the University of Montevallo and its mission, teaching is considered a faculty member's most important professional activity. This implies that the other professional activities, research/creative endeavor and/or service/professional obligation, will contribute to an improved educational experience for students, principally in the form of distinguished teaching.

Every effort should be made to give full consideration in the evaluation to those activities that best reflect the interests, expertise, and assigned duties of the faculty member for that particular year. While the importance of teaching is a constant, it is recognized that faculty members may, in a given year, perform more strongly in one of the two other areas--research and service. The faculty evaluation should consider the quality as well as the quantity of work performed. Individual faculty members, Chairs,

and Deans will make collective reasoned judgments about the quality and quantity of a faculty member's work.

The following guidelines are provided for evaluation of faculty:

Teaching. In accord with the mission and tradition of the University of Montevallo, teaching is a faculty member's most important professional activity. Other professional activities will contribute either directly or indirectly to an improved educational experience for students.

Effective teaching directly and indirectly contributes to students' acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they should acquire from a course or from any other academic project or program. Good teaching is characterized by: (1) clear organization and thorough preparation, (2) meaningful and high levels of engagement of students, (3) effective delivery, (4) fair and equitable treatment of students, and (5) accessibility to students.

Although not to be used as a final checklist, the following shall be considered indicators of good teaching: (1) organization and preparation: prepares and distributes a complete syllabus, changes syllabus requirements or calendar rarely, states objectives and defines expectations clearly, arrives to class promptly and with all necessary materials/equipment, uses class time purposefully and effectively, uses technology to manage and deliver instruction, misses class rarely, organizes course content logically or with some perceivable structure; (2) engagement: maintains students' attention, generates students' interest in subject matter, promotes and achieves student participation, uses currency and relevancy to motivate, promotes critical thinking, motivates by example, inspires students to want to learn more about the subject matter, uses questions/interaction to facilitate learning and to assess understanding; (3) delivery: communicates clearly and effectively, questions effectively, demonstrates high levels of enthusiasm/energy, paces instruction for understanding, uses a variety of teaching methods/styles, uses ample and varied examples, explains concepts clearly, gives clear directions, demonstrates concepts or models skills when appropriate; (4) fairness: assigns appropriate workload, aligns assessments with instruction, uses fair and impartial grading procedures, responds respectfully to student questions and viewpoints, seems genuinely interested in helping students understand and master content/skills, provides prompt and meaningful feedback on performance, returns student work in a timely fashion, is consistent in the application of rules and policies; (5) accessibility: maintains reasonable and regular office hours, is approachable and willing to discuss course content and assignments with students outside of class, takes student calls, responds to student e-mails/inquiries.

Course evaluations, aligned with these constructs, shall be completed on every course every term. Departments will have the option of adding other items to the evaluation form.

Collaboration between and among faculty and students in teaching is valued and encouraged as well.

Although these indicators have a high correlation with teaching effectiveness on a variety of measures of student learning and success, teaching is influenced by a

number of contexts (e.g., teaching style, content differences, instructional setting differences, class size differences, faculty situational factors) which shall be acknowledged in discussions with faculty about teaching effectiveness.

Research/Creative Endeavor. Research and creative endeavors enhance the mission and vision of the University, and they contribute either directly or indirectly to an improved educational experience for students. Through these activities faculty members have the opportunity to model active and continuous learning for students, making it possible for students to gain a clearer and more intimate view of how a discipline works and how those who practice a discipline use and create knowledge.

While all research and creative activities are relevant and important to a faculty member's work, external peer review and/or public presentation are essential for documenting growth and performance in this area. Examples include but are not limited to professional or creative publications, performances, presentations, or other products. Differences between and among disciplines impact the form and style of research and creative endeavors.

The University recognizes the value of basic, applied, and pedagogical research and creative activity. Collaboration between and among faculty and students in research and creative activities is valued and encouraged.

Service and Professional Obligation. Service may include both on-campus and off-campus activities intended in some way to add value to the community by the investment of a faculty member's time, energy, expertise, or other personal and professional resources. Professional obligations include those responsibilities intended to achieve the effective functioning of the University, and they may be directed to the department, college, institution, profession, and/or the larger community where a faculty member may serve officially or unofficially as a liaison between the University and external entities. The most obvious examples of professional obligations include student advising, committee responsibilities, faculty and student mentoring, the exercise of leadership for the good of the institution, and involvement in professional organizations. Differences between and among disciplines may impact the form and style of service activity.

In the context of service and professionalism—and to advance the institution and its work—the University values and expects: (1) collaboration with others; (2) civility and respect in interactions with others; (3) ethically- and legally-sound behavior; and (4) overt commitment to its mission and its students.

3.02.2 Library Faculty

The following guidelines are provided for evaluation of Library faculty:

Professional responsibilities. Library faculty contribute directly to students' acquisition of knowledge, skills, and dispositions by teaching in the Library's information literacy program and working with students individually during reference transactions. All members of the Library faculty are expected to teach and to provide reference services to students, faculty, and other Library patrons.

Each librarian's professional responsibilities include activities that contribute indirectly to student learning. Among these are development of the Library's print and electronic collections and the creation of print and online resources that aid students in finding the information they need.

In addition, each librarian carries additional responsibilities that contribute to the smooth operation and administration of the Library. These include supervision of student and/or support staff and management of some aspect of the Library's operations (reference, interlibrary loan, technical services, electronic resources, archives).

Effective library service is characterized by (1) teaching and public service that embodies the constructs set for all University faculty (organization and preparation, engagement, delivery, fairness, and accessibility); (2) engagement with the departmental faculty in the development of the library's collections and services. This includes, but is not limited to, monitoring the department's use of its library allocation, informing faculty of new publications and resources in the field, development of research guides and finding aids in the field, and promoting library use among the faculty; (3) identifying and implementing innovative information technologies that improve library services; and (4) effective management of the operational unit, including effective supervision of staff, responsible use of library resources, participation in library planning, and project management.

Research/creative endeavor includes scholarly, scientific, or artistic endeavors. Such activity will represent a substantial investment of time, and it must be noted that librarians have less flexible schedules, not only each day, but throughout the academic year than do teaching faculty. Librarians are, however, expected to do research to improve individual effectiveness and overall quality of library service. Some examples of research/creativity are publications, conference presentations, development of innovative techniques or programs, and substantial redesign or development of programs. Because scholarship and creativity are processes that often take more than one year to complete, work in progress should be considered as research or creativity.

Service/professional obligation includes on-campus and off-campus activities. On-campus service includes activities whose principal purpose is the efficient and effective functioning of the University. Committee responsibilities are the most obvious examples of such activities, but all activities potentially beneficial to the UM community, including student advising, also will be considered service. Off-campus service refers to those activities in which a librarian, officially or unofficially, serves as liaison between UM and some external organization, or shares his or her expertise with those outside the University. Such activities will aim to affirm UM's commitment to the larger communities of which it is a part. Such activities include participation in scholarly and professional organizations, professional consulting, delivering lectures and workshops to off-campus groups, and representing UM at professional activities involving groups outside the University.

3.03 Procedures for Evaluation of Full-Time Faculty

Faculty will receive formal evaluation on the departmental or college level each calendar year. Objective and subjective information will be gathered at appropriate times

throughout the year, principally by the faculty member, and presented in a prescribed format to the Chair or (where appropriate, the Dean or Library Director) at an annual evaluation conference, early in the spring semester, for the preceding calendar year's activities.

Each faculty member will be evaluated in teaching, research/creative endeavor, and service/professional obligation annually.

Because 60% to 75% of the final evaluation is based on teaching, the actual percentage will be determined by the faculty member in concert with the Department Chair (or where appropriate, the Dean or Library Director). Service/professional obligation and research/creative endeavor will comprise from 25% to 40% of the final evaluation. Combined with the percentages assigned to teaching, the total will equal 100%. When the faculty member and Chair cannot agree on the distribution of effort, the Dean will make the final determination of percentages, consistent with the procedures for faculty evaluation described herein.

Each faculty member will complete annually a Faculty Evaluation Form and submit it to the Chair or (where appropriate the Dean or Library Director) for evaluation covering the preceding calendar year from January 1 to December 31. On this form the faculty member will describe and document contributions under each selected activity: teaching or professional responsibility, research/creative endeavor and service/professional obligation. Along with self-descriptive responses, the faculty member will also submit any pertinent evaluation statements or data which might help in the assessment of the quality of the work. The faculty member should receive a narrative description prepared by the Chair or Dean or Library Director with a corresponding rating for each area of evaluation—teaching or professional responsibility, research/creative endeavor, and service/obligation. The Chair's or Dean's or Library Director's narrative should describe the faculty member's strengths and weaknesses and, where appropriate, provide suggestions for improvement.

The annual evaluation of faculty shall include documentation of a discussion between the Department Chair (or where appropriate the Dean or Library Director) and the faculty member regarding progress toward tenure and/or promotion.

After the Chair, or where appropriate the Dean or Library Director, has reviewed data for evaluation, the faculty member and the Chair or Dean or Library Director will confer about the evaluation and attempt to reach an agreement about the evaluation. The Chair or Dean or Library Director will provide the faculty member with a copy of the evaluation. The Chair will then submit the evaluation and any supporting data to the Dean, who will review and arrive at a final evaluation. Faculty members with irreconcilable differences with the Chair or the Dean or Library Director about evaluations may attach a written dissent, which will be sent to the Dean or the Provost/Sr. VPAA with the Chair's and Dean's assessments. If the Dean or the Provost/Sr. VPAA disagrees with the Chair's or Dean's or Library Director's evaluation or recommendations, he or she shall promptly inform the faculty member involved, in writing, of the modification and the supporting rationale for it. The faculty member who does not concur with the alteration of the recommendation or evaluation may present his or her case to the Dean and Provost/Sr. VPAA.

3.04 Guidelines for Evaluation for Full-Time Faculty

A faculty member's performance in each of the three categories of evaluation (Teaching, Research/Creative Endeavor, and Service/Professional Obligation) shall be evaluated as Exceeds Expectations, Meets Expectations, or Does Not Meet Expectations.

Teaching. The evaluation of teaching effectiveness shall include supporting evidence beyond results of student completed course evaluations, such as course materials, letters of support from former students, professional development activities undertaken for the improvement of teaching performance, peer review, new courses developed, etc. Evidence included should address any contexts which have had a major impact on teaching style and/or student learning outcomes. Peer review shall be a component of the annual review of teaching effectiveness, in a format decided by the department. Peer/chair observation shall be an essential aspect of the evaluation of teaching in the annual performance review. Observation shall address three of the five constructs: organization/preparation, delivery, and engagement. Results of evaluations and peer reviews shall be confidential; shall be completed in a timely manner with a copy of all documentation provided to the faculty member who was reviewed; and shall provide the faculty member who was reviewed with an opportunity for written response that will become part of the evaluation/peer review documentation.

Exceeds Expectations. Beyond normal expectations, is highly imaginative, completely dependable, considered by students to be among "the best" in command of subject matter, integrates scholarship in courses, collaborative with students on research projects, demanding yet humane and personally supportive, and exceptionally engaging.

Meets Expectations. Fulfills all duties as expected, is well organized and prepared for instruction, actively engages students in classroom instruction, delivers instruction and conducts classes competently, is fair, is accessible to students, is current in the discipline, cooperates in teaching improvement efforts, and is recognized as a "good" teacher.

Does Not Meet Expectations. Willfully or inadvertently neglects duties, does not meet classes, does not thoroughly plan or prepare, refuses to accept teaching assignments judged to be in the best interest of students and the University, receives consistently poor reviews by students and colleagues, is not accessible to students, does not maintain currency in course content, does not engage in teaching improvement efforts, and/or shows no interest in improvement.

Research/Creative Endeavor.

Exceeds Expectations. Achieves professional respect beyond the departmental standard and the campus through regular publication, exhibition, performance, presentation, and other dissemination of scholarship.

Meets Expectations. Meets the departmental standard; demonstrates interest and enthusiasm in scholarship by establishing and following a systematic plan; creates and submits for external review manuscripts, performances, exhibitions, presentations, or

other products; maintains currency in the discipline; succeeds with the professional dissemination of research/creative works beyond the campus.

Does Not Meet Expectations. Demonstrates little or no activity in scholarship; exerts little to no effort to remain current in the discipline; exhibits little to no progress toward meeting the departmental/program standard; and/or shows little to no interest in improvement.

Service/Professional Obligation.

Exceeds Expectations. Exceeds the departmental standard; demonstrates sustained record of community service; achieves recognition for service on- and off-campus; demonstrates strong commitment to the University through a variety of committee activities, and/or recognized leadership roles.

Meets Expectations. Provides regular and meaningful service to the community and the profession; meets professional obligations to the department, the college, the University, and/or the profession; exhibits collaboration with others, civility and respect in interactions with others, ethically- and legally-sound behavior, and overt commitment to the University's mission and students.

Does Not Meet Expectations. Provides little to no service to the community, on- or off-campus; does not meet professional obligations to the department, the college, the University, or the profession; and/or shows little to no interest in improvement.

3.05 Evaluation of Department Chairs (See Section 1.04 of this Handbook.)

Department Chairs serve in the special role of both Department Chair and faculty member. In their position as faculty, they are evaluated using procedures detailed above; in their role as Chair, they also are evaluated through the University's administrative assessment procedure by their respective deans.

Evaluation of Chairs is based on the following assigned duties:

Personnel Management and Evaluation:

- Appoint and charge faculty search committees in consultation with the dean and consistent with Faculty Search Guidelines. Monitor search process to ensure adherence to Guidelines.
- Promote faculty diversity by taking proactive steps to ensure a diverse pool of qualified applicants.
- Provide orientation for new faculty. Assign new faculty mentors and oversee effectiveness of mentoring.
- Provide orientation for new adjunct faculty. Encourage attendance of adjunct faculty at department meetings as appropriate and participation of adjunct faculty in Faculty Convocation and other professional development opportunities sponsored by the University.
- Mediate conflict between faculty members, between faculty and staff, and between faculty and students.

- Assign faculty teaching duties in an equitable manner with a regard to effectively meeting the needs of degree-seeking students.
- Oversee efficient and professional office operations.
- Encourage and recognize excellent performance on the part of faculty, staff, and students.
- Conduct annual performance reviews of all faculty (including adjuncts) and all staff (including part-time). Communicate expectations; provide constructive written feedback; help faculty and staff set appropriate goals for the coming year.
- Make timely and appropriately justified recommendations for tenure, promotion and termination of faculty to the dean, in adherence to University policy.
- Process Personnel Action Forms in a timely manner, and maintain sufficient departmental personnel records to document and support supervision of faculty and staff.
- Ensure open, timely and effective communication and opportunities for discussion within the department. Relay faculty and staff concerns on department, college or University matters to the Dean and other University administrators, as appropriate.

Planning and Assessment:

- Provide leadership for periodic curriculum review and revision by the faculty.
- Monitor statistics on program and course enrollment, grade distributions, DFW rates, graduation rates, etc. and use them as appropriate to guide development of curriculum and support services.
- Plan course rotation, course schedules, teaching assignments and space allocation for effective and efficient operations. Work with other colleges and programs to ensure adequate course offerings to support all undergraduate and graduate programs, coordinating scheduling of courses with other units when possible to avoid conflicts.
- Review course syllabi to ensure consistency with department, college, and University guidelines.
- In consultation with department faculty and the college dean, develop the department's annual unit plan and request for resources. Lead the department in developing long-range plans that are consistent with results of outcomes assessment and with the strategic goals of the University.
- Lead faculty in conducting outcomes assessment. In the area of student learning, this includes identifying appropriate outcomes, measuring the extent to which those outcomes are attained, and using the results to make improvements in degree programs and support services. Prepare the department's annual assessment report.

- Oversee the timely development of periodic program review or program accreditation reports and provide support for campus visits by external reviewer(s).

Legal and Fiscal Management:

- Manage facilities to ensure a safe, clean work environment for students, faculty, and staff.
- Manage department budget. Adjust expenditures (including those from Foundation accounts) to address emerging needs and priorities. Follow established budget and procurement procedures.
- Become knowledgeable about, communicate, and adhere to legal guidelines in higher education, including FERPA, EEO, ADA, copyright, etc. Monitor adherence by department faculty and staff.
- Oversee procurement, inventory and maintenance of department materials, supplies, and equipment, consistent with University policy.

Professional Leadership:

- Interpret and apply academic policies and requirements fairly and consistently in addressing student concerns and requests for exceptions.
- Work collaboratively with faculty, staff, and administrators across the University.
- Participate in and provide support for student recruitment and new student orientation.
- Model effective instruction by teaching two courses (typically 6 credit hours) each semester.
- Engage in ongoing professional development
- Set an example of ethical, professional, collegial conduct for faculty, staff, and students.

Continuation in the role of Department Chair will be based on performance and faculty support.

- **Annually:** Faculty are urged to provide *anonymous* feedback regarding Department Chair performance through the administrative evaluation system.
 - Deans review annual evaluations and provide a *summary of the data* to the Department Chair.
 - As part of the annual evaluation process, Chairs should work with faculty to develop short-term and long-term goals for the department. Progress toward department goals should be presented to the Dean at the annual Chair evaluation.
- **Fourth-Year Review:** Every fourth year of consecutive service, concurrently with the regular Chair evaluation process, the Dean will meet with department faculty to discuss the department's vision and progress toward long-term goals. The Dean will make a determination if the goals of the department are being met and if the Department Chair's continuation of service is beneficial for the department.

The Dean will provide a report of the fourth-year review to the Provost/Sr. VPAA and the University President. The report shall include the anonymous, comprehensive, and un-redacted annual evaluation feedback from the departmental faculty, a summary of the responses during meetings with faculty, and a review of progress towards the departmental vision and goals. *A summary of the report, without specific comments or identifying information, will be given to the Chair.

*As always, faculty are not restricted to a “one-time” opportunity to report an action or situation that they, in good faith, believe to be unethical or harmful. Such reports should be immediately made to the Dean of the college, the Provost, or to the Director of HR.

3.06 Research Assistance, Grants, and Contracts

The University regularly budgets funds for expenses related to faculty research. Faculty members are encouraged to continue their studies and research and to secure external grants and resources wherever practical. Guidelines and requirements regarding preparation and submission of external grants and contracts may be found under "Policies" on the University's web site. Information and assistance are available from the Office of Advancement and External Affairs. (Refer to [Policy 03:050](#).)

3.07 Sabbatical Leave Policy

Faculty sabbatical leaves are intended to develop and strengthen the University of Montevallo's academic programs and to provide faculty with opportunities for professional development, scholarly pursuits, and professional and intellectual renewal. Applicants must be tenured and must be in the 7th year (or more) of continuous full-time service since their appointment at UM or since the end of their last sabbatical year. (Refer to [Policy 04:110](#).)

3.08 Travel

Requests for authorization of travel should be sent to the appropriate Director, Chair, Dean, or the Provost/Sr. VPAA for approval prior to the proposed travel. Travel not approved in advance will not be reimbursed. Expenses incurred for travel in connection with authorized University business will be reimbursed according to applicable policy. (Refer to [Policy 03:040](#).)