Department of: Liberal Studies

Year: 2014-15

1) Department Chair:

Signature

Date

2) Dean:

Signature

Date

3) Chair, UM Unit Standards Committee:

Signature

Date

4) Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs:

Signature

Date
Liberal Studies Program
Unit Standards and Procedures for Faculty Evaluation and Advancement

I. General Statement

The Unit Standards and Procedures of the Liberal Studies Program are intended to be consistent with those in the current Collective Bargaining Agreement. In the event of any omissions or inconsistencies, the terms of the CBA shall be applicable and prevail.

A faculty member should consult the current CBA for procedures governing the evaluation process, including appeals.

II. Student Evaluation Committee

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) is to provide evaluation of teaching performance based on evaluation forms filled out by students in the faculty member’s courses. That all levels of faculty evaluation—from FEC to Chair to Dean to Provost—build in the SEC report demonstrates its fundamental importance in the process. According to the CBA 10.220, “Each faculty member must have at least one course evaluated each semester they [sic] teach and provide the results to the Student Evaluation Committee.” The choice of which evaluation form to use in any given instance belongs to the faculty member. Some forms in regular use in the Liberal Studies Program are not machine-scored.

B. Composition

The Student Evaluation Committee shall consist of at least three (3) students, who are to be Liberal Studies majors. They shall be chosen by the Director in consultation with the faculty. The members of the SEC shall elect a chair, and a faculty observer shall be appointed to the SEC by the Director.

C. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the SEC to summarize by October 15 the student evaluations of the faculty under review. A faculty member who disagrees with the SEC report may append a dissent.

Note: As a rule adjunct (that is, nontenurable) faculty of the Liberal Studies Program will be reviewed on their teaching only.
III. Faculty Evaluation Committee

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Faculty Evaluation Committee is to provide peer evaluation and review.

B. Composition

All tenured and tenure-track members of the Liberal Studies Program with the exception of the Director shall serve on the FEC. The Director shall appoint a chair, subject to the approval of the FEC. In unusual circumstances (such as the absence by leave of one or more of the tenured or tenure-track members of the unit), the Director may ask a faculty member in a neighboring discipline, such as Philosophy, History, or English, to serve on the Liberal Studies FEC.

One student observer, with all rights except voting, shall be appointed by the FEC chair.

C. Responsibilities

The FEC shall be responsible for applying these Unit Standards to review the performance of Liberal Studies faculty members and to make a written recommendation, with justification, signed by the committee chair, which shall, where appropriate, specifically address 1) retention; 2) salary increase; 3) promotion; and/or 4) tenure.

The committee shall use the evidence from the Individual Performance Report (IPR) submitted by the faculty member (see section V below) as the basis of the evaluation. However, it may request and consider evidence from other sources as long as a) the evidence is relevant to the Unit Standards, and b) the faculty member to whom the evidence pertains is afforded full opportunity to review and respond to the evidence.

If requested, the FEC shall afford each evaluated faculty member an opportunity to address the committee in person regarding the evaluation within ten (10) working days of its receipt.

The recommendation of the FEC shall be forwarded to the Director of the Liberal Studies Program by November 15.

IV. Documentation


It is the responsibility of every faculty member of prepare his or her own performance report with full documentation according to standard format.
For tenured and tenure-track faculty, this documentation shall address all three areas of faculty responsibility: teaching, research, and service. For further specification, see below.

B. Performance Period

1. Promotions: all service in current rank or since the documentation was prepared for the last promotion.

2. Tenure: the entire probationary period, including credited prior service, as specified in the CBA.

3. Merit: the time since documentation was prepared for the last merit or promotion, whichever is shorter.

4. Normal and Less-than-Normal: the previous year, or in the case of associate and full professors, the time since the most recent evaluation.

V. General Criteria

A. Teaching

Good teaching is a major responsibility of all faculty and is essential to the mission of the Liberal Studies Program. Teaching performance, therefore, shall be carefully evaluated. The Liberal Studies Program recognizes that good/poor teaching is not necessarily synonymous with high/low ratings by student evaluators. Evaluation of teaching shall take into account the following factors among others: courses taught (including Capstone courses), the curricular level of such courses, the SEC report, student credit hours, advising as appropriate, review and correction of students’ writing, presentation of general lectures in connection with LSH 151 and 152 and/or guest lectures in other classes, and course syllabi. Contributions to general education, interdisciplinary activities, teaching awards, and new and/or creative course offerings shall also be considered. The Director shall observe the classroom teaching of all new members of the LS faculty in their first year and as necessary thereafter.

B. Scholarship

Scholarship in the form of research and publications and/or creative works is also a major responsibility of the Liberal Studies faculty. Evidence of achievement in scholarship falls into the following categories:
a. Books published or accepted for publication by reputable presses; peer-reviewed articles either published or accepted for publication;¹

b. Reviews;

c. Papers (especially invited or refereed ones) read at international, national, regional, or state meetings;

d. Honors, awards, fellowships, and grants resulting from international, national, regional, or state competition;

e. Speaking engagements of a professional nature resulting from the faculty member’s expertise;

f. Editorial functions of a professional nature, such as reviewing articles, textbooks, and/or book-length manuscripts and serving on editorial boards;

g. Reprinting of published work.

Scholarship in non-traditional formats (e.g., digital publication, video, film) may also be considered under the above categories as deemed appropriate by the FEC and Director.

C. Service

In addition to teaching and research, service to the profession, to the University, and to the public is essential in the Liberal Studies Program. Modes of service include participation in professional organizations at the national level, invited lectures at other universities, service on University committees, contributions to general education and interdisciplinary efforts, continuing education activities, seminars, and public service generally.

VI. Director’s Recommendation

A. On the basis of the FEC report, the IPR and any other pertinent evidence placed on the record, the Director shall prepare a recommendation for each faculty member subject to evaluation during any given year. The Director shall consult with each faculty member before making a final recommendation.

¹ Given the lag between acceptance and publication of scholarship, firm acceptance of submitted material by the editor of a reputable press, journal, review or magazine constitutes evidence of scholarship. Firm acceptance entails a written statement of the intent to publish a completed manuscript, subject only to copyediting or minor revision. A publisher’s advance payment does not constitute firm acceptance, nor does any expression of willingness to publish if contingent upon completion of the manuscript to the editor’s or publisher’s satisfaction.
The Director shall make a copy of this recommendation available to the faculty member and forward it to the Dean by December 15 (or as stipulated in the CBA). The faculty member shall be given the opportunity to respond in writing to this recommendation within ten (10) working days of its receipt.

B. If more than one member of the Liberal Studies faculty is recommended for Merit, the Director shall rank the candidates in accordance with CBA requirements.

VII. Promotion

1. To Associate Professor. Except in unusual circumstances, four (4) or more years of full-time service in rank as Assistant Professor are required prior to date of promotion. The character of the service in rank shall be such that there is clear demonstration of professional growth and an increasingly valuable contribution to the University. Professional growth must be demonstrated in terms of the aforementioned general criteria, especially with regard to teaching and scholarship; contribution to the University shall also be based upon the area of service. With regard to scholarship, two (2) or three (3) published articles in reputable refereed journals, or invited papers published by a reputable press, or a book or monograph will be expected.

2. To Professor. Except in unusual circumstances, five (5) or more years of full-time service in rank as Associate Professor are required prior to the date of promotion. The character of service in rank as Associate Professor shall be such that there is marked and sustained professional growth and an increasingly valuable contribution to the University. An active research agenda and publications are essential for promotion to Professor. Three (3) or four (4) additional published articles in reputable refereed journals, or invited papers published by reputable presses, or a second book or monograph will be expected.

VIII. Tenure

A. Conditions

A probationary appointee shall be eligible to apply for tenure after he or she has completed five (5) years of credit toward tenure, at least three (3) of which have been at the University of Montana. The applicant for tenure must have the required terminal degree and should hold the rank of Associate Professor, except that faculty may apply for tenure and promotion to associate professor simultaneously. See CBA 9.310.

B. Procedures and Documentation

It shall be the responsibility of the eligible faculty member to initiate the application for tenure, which shall include, besides the ordinary yearly documentation, a
full record of the probationary period and evidence that the applicant is achieving recognition in his or her field of competence beyond the University of Montana, as well as any other evidence the applicant deems relevant to his or her professional development, competence, or performance. See CBA 9.320.

Both the FEC and the Director will observe at least one of the faculty member’s classes during the period under consideration. A written report of these visitations will become a part of the faculty member’s annual review and will be available to that person.

The tenure application must include at least two letters of reference from professional sources, suggested by the applicant, outside the University of Montana. Under no circumstances should a referee be the applicant’s Ph.D. advisor or academic collaborator. The Director, not the applicant for tenure, shall solicit the letters of reference.

IX. Salary Determinations

A. Merit

Merit requires above normal performance in at least two of the three categories of responsibility (that is, teaching, research, service) or outstanding performance in one or more categories and normal in the remainder. Documentation shall cover the period since the last merit or promotion, whichever is shorter.

Teaching shall be considered Above Normal if one’s teaching contributions exceed the Normal standard—for example, if one receives excellent evaluations, contributes at a high level to General Education, introduces a new course or courses, and/or offers an interdisciplinary course or courses. Teaching shall be considered Outstanding if one’s teaching contributions far exceed the Normal standard—for example, if one teaches courses in different General Education categories, receives excellent evaluations, introduces new courses, offers interdisciplinary courses, and/or receives a teaching award (such as the Cox Award) or other special recognition.

Scholarship shall be considered Above Normal if one exceeds the Normal standard by publishing more frequently than is typical for one’s subfield or publishing in a prestigious venue. Scholarship shall be considered Outstanding if one far exceeds the Normal standard either by publishing at a markedly higher rate than is typical of one’s subfield, publishing projects of greater scope (e.g., a single-author book with a reputable press), or publishing in the most prestigious venues.

Service shall be considered Above Normal if one performs considerably more service than the norm (e.g., serving on demanding committees, serving as department chair, or undertaking a large amount of departmental service). Service shall be considered Outstanding if one displays model departmental, university and/or professional service. This ranking is reserved for exceptional levels of service (e.g., serving as department chair and on two committees concurrently) or exceptionally
valuable service (e.g., applying for external funding and then organizing a local
conference of great interest to students).

B. Normal

The performance of most faculty members will generally be evaluated as Normal.
They are expected to grow in value to the University and will receive a normal increment
to their salary. Documentation shall cover the period since the last evaluation.

C. Less-than-normal

Less-than-normal performance signifies either the absence of performance or poor
performance of assigned responsibilities within the scope of employment. It is
understood that absence of performance in any one or two of the three categories of
responsibility does not justify a less-than-normal recommendation if a) the quantity of
service in the remaining area is proportional to the FTE of the appointment and b) the
quality of that service reflects the focus of effort in the area or areas in which the
individual has been assigned.

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