

Biology Instructional Office Annual Evaluations

updated for 2023

The CNS Dean's office mandates yearly performance reviews of each faculty member. Results of these evaluations will be used for evaluating appointments, for determining merit pay increases, and for promotion decisions.

Each Fall, the performance of BIO Faculty during the previous Fall and Spring will be evaluated by the BIO Faculty Evaluation Committee (BFEC) which includes the Associate Chairs for Education of the Biology Departments and several members of BIO Executive Committee B. The BIO Director chairs the annual meeting. Information used for the evaluations will be Classroom Observation Reports, Teaching Reflections, CIS Scores, and Faculty Annual Reports (FARs), including a DEI statement.

As the committee will base their evaluations only on the documents listed above (not on other knowledge that individual committee members might have), it is of extreme importance that each BIO Faculty member reports their activities fully on their FAR. The FAR should, at the very least, contain a list of all Teaching, Professional Development, Service, and Research Activities for the preceding year. If there are details, for example, about specific teaching innovations, they should be listed in the FAR, in the Teaching Reflections, or both. **Note that faculty appointed to teach in BIO need to submit a FAR only if their total appointment as faculty is at least 50%.** Faculty whose appointments as instructors are <50% can document their relevant activities by sending a memo to the BIO office.

Faculty are not expected to have their teaching reviewed in a course the first time they teach it.

Each BIO Faculty member will be categorized as: Meets Expectations, Exceeds Expectations, Does Not Meet Expectations, or Unsatisfactory.

Note: *A rating of Meets Expectations means that the individual is doing their job very well!*

Categories of BIO faculty

- **Full-time or part-time instructors with no other UT appointments.** These individuals should be evaluated by the criteria described in the next section.
- **Part-time instructors with faculty titles.** These individuals should be evaluated by the criteria described in the next section. On their FARs, teaching-related activities that constitute "additional contributions to the academic enterprise" as opposed to parts of their job descriptions should be delineated clearly. These individuals will be evaluated additionally by their supervisors in their non-teaching jobs, and their final rating will reflect both evaluations. These individuals may go up for promotion in BIO.
- **Part-time instructors without faculty titles.** These individuals (e.g. research associates, museum curators, etc.) will be evaluated mainly by their other employer. Our job is to ensure that their teaching is excellent. These individuals will not go up for promotion in BIO, and their salaries are not determined by BIO. We will evaluate only the teaching of these people.

Evaluation Criteria

The following guidelines will be used for evaluations. These are only general guidelines, as individual circumstances will be considered. For example, individual peer reviewers can have different ideas about what constitutes good teaching. Importantly, the committee will consider that CIS scores are inherently

flawed, and that CIS scores are useful measurements of teaching effectiveness only in the case of extremely high or extremely low scores.

In addition, the committee expects peer evaluations (and CIS scores) to improve as the faculty member becomes a more experienced instructor.

Note: The intention is to reward individuals who experiment with teaching innovation and have appropriately high expectations of the students.

Most instructors will receive a rating of "Meets Expectations".

• **Meets Expectations:** All BIO Faculty are expected to be excellent instructors. BIO Faculty are expected to improve and update their knowledge of the subject matter they are teaching, and to innovate their teaching methods continually. To meet expectations, BIO faculty should have positive classroom observation reports (at least one per year for Assistant Professors of Instruction); excellent CIS scores (scores above 3); when applicable, indication from the course coordinator that the appropriate curriculum is being taught; thoughtful teaching reflections written each semester documenting class improvements. In addition, full-time BIO faculty are expected to make other meaningful contributions to the academic enterprise. These contributions could include, for example, service on departmental, college, or university committees, involvements in student organizations, research, or creation of shared teaching materials.

Exceptional instructors will receive a rating of "Exceeds Expectations".

• **Exceeds Expectations:** To exceed expectations, BIO faculty should have extraordinary classroom observation reports; outstanding CIS scores (scores above 4); when applicable, indication from the course coordinator that the appropriate curriculum is being taught; teaching reflections that document outstanding class improvements written each semester. In addition, leadership in Departmental or University service, particularly in activities that promote teaching excellence and innovation, and/or evidence of a serious and ongoing commitment to research (funding and publication) should exist.

Note: The bar is higher for Associate Professors of Instruction to obtain a rating of Exceeds Expectations than it is for Assistant Professors of Instruction or Lecturers. The reason is that Associate Professors of Instruction are expected to continue to do those activities – Service and/or Research - that enabled their first promotion. Exceeding expectations requires that an Associate Professor of Instruction demonstrate an upward trajectory (relative to their activity when in Assistant rank) of additional contributions to the academic enterprise.

Activities that could contribute to exceeding expectations

- Innovate one's teaching methods and course materials in exciting ways.
- Find out what's happening at the Sanger Learning Center (SLC) and attend CNS Office of Education Excellence (OEE) workshops. In one's teaching, use SLC and/or OEE programs to improve undergraduates learning outcomes and/or develop a new program with the SLC to help students in one's field of expertise.
- Attend national meetings about teaching and share new skills, knowledge, and insights with colleagues.
- Obtain grant funding for a course innovation project.
- Be appointed as a Provost's Teaching Fellow.
- Do outreach activities in the Austin Community relating to science teaching.
- Volunteer with various student organizations or honors groups to be on steering/recruitment committees, mentor students, hear presentations, etc.

- Write a textbook or other teaching materials used widely within and/or outside UT.
- Author compelling course materials that colleagues teaching the same course use.
- Obtain research funding / publish original research.

• **Does Not Meet Expectations:** Faculty will not meet expectations if one or more of the following occurs: weak classroom observation reports; a pattern of student comments indicating poor practices; poor CIS scores (scores below 3); when applicable, indication from the course coordinator that the appropriate curriculum is *not* being taught; failure to document course improvements. Faculty members who receive this rating may not have their contracts renewed. Alternatively, a remediation plan for anyone receiving an evaluation of “Does Not Meet Expectations” will be devised and in place by February.

• **Unsatisfactory:** This rating is for those who fail to meet expectations in a way that reflects disregard of previous advice or other efforts to provide correction or assistance, or involves professional misconduct, dereliction of duty, or incompetence. Faculty members who receive this rating will not have their contracts renewed.

Each BIO faculty member will be notified of their evaluation results by email in January. During the Spring semester, each BIO Faculty member will have the opportunity to meet with the BIO Director and the Associate Chair of their affiliated Department to discuss their review and future.

Evaluation Process

Evaluations are performed each November by the BFEC. The BFEC will consist of the Associate Chairs for Undergraduate Education of MBS, IB, and NEU, and at least five additional members of Executive Committee B, recruited by the Director each year. The BIO Director chairs the meeting but does not perform evaluations. Faculty review only those equal to or beneath themselves in rank.

The BIO Director will organize a meeting of the BFEC in November. Prior to the meeting, all the materials of each BIO faculty member (FARs, CIS, Classroom Observations, Teaching Reflections) will be made available for review by each member of the BFEC. Each BIO Faculty file will be reviewed thoroughly by at least three members of the BFEC, each of whom will assign a category to the individual before the meeting. In cases where all three assessments are not the same (or if another committee member questions the category assigned to an individual), that individual’s case will be discussed during the meeting.

By the end of the meeting, each BIO Faculty member will have been assigned one of the four ratings. (The files of the Senior BIO Faculty on the BFEC will be reviewed by the Associate Chairs at the end of the meeting.)

During Annual Review, the BFEC also makes recommendations for BIO, CNS, and University teaching awards.