

approved by PSC  
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## STATEMENT OF EVALUATION STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

### PROGRAM IN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND DECISION MAKING UNIVERSITY OF PUGET SOUND

Drafted March 2016

Approved by the Professional Standards Committee, January 23, 2017

I. This document governs the evaluation of faculty in the Program in Environmental Policy and Decision Making (ENVR). This statement complements the provisions of the *Faculty Code* regarding faculty evaluation. It was drafted by Dan Sherman and Rachel DeMotts, with consultation from the EPDM Executive Committee (Peter Hodum, Peter Wimberger, Kena Fox-Dobbs, and Lea Fortmann), with the intention of implementing these criteria effective fall of 2017.

II. The mission of the Program in Environmental Policy and Decision Making is to educate undergraduate students in the processes by which individuals and groups make decisions affecting the environment. The term "environment" is considered critically with recognition of the often blurry and even indistinguishable boundary between natural and human-built or managed environments. Environmental issues for study thus range from those related to non-human species and habitats to those concerning social and human health problems associated with population density and industrialization. While environmental issues reflect certain empirical realities about the physical world and its limits, they also engage contests among competing human values and visions for the future. Environmental issues are strategically defined, managed, promoted and challenged by a complex and often conflicting array of social actors. Students in the ENVR program should 1) develop an understanding of the multiplicity of values, norms, interests, incentives, and scientific information that influence decisions on environmental issues, 2) learn to critically examine the social, political, and economic contexts for decisions on environmental issues, and 3) engage in interdisciplinary dialogue and apply systems thinking to address current and projected environmental issues. The ENVR faculty is committed to fostering an atmosphere of scholarly inquiry and discovery in order to prepare students for careers as well as for lives as active and responsible citizens. This includes a strong commitment to engaging fully with the complexities of current environmental challenges, including the realization that grappling with ambiguity and uncertainty is a foundational part of interdisciplinary, grounded environmental work. Faculty members of the Program affirm their commitment to excellence in teaching, to professional growth as scholars, and to engagement with the University and broader community. As part of that commitment, members of the faculty participate in periodic evaluations of our colleagues, following the standards, criteria, and procedures described below, in the *Faculty Code*, and in the document *Faculty Evaluation Criteria and Procedures*.

### III. Standards and Criteria

In general (except in the case of a tenure decision), the ENVR program will evaluate a faculty member having the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, or professor on the basis of his, her, or their teaching, professional growth, university service, advising, and potentially community service. But, in conformity with the *Faculty Code*, an evaluation for tenure will be made on the basis of teaching, professional growth, university service, and the needs of the ENVR program and the university. See Section V for the evaluation of instructors.

#### A. Teaching

The ENVR program's benchmarks for excellent teaching include:

1. that faculty members demonstrate expertise in one or more of the subjects usually associated with the undergraduate ENVR curriculum. Faculty should also have the range to teach course material outside their areas of expertise.

2. that faculty members communicate effectively with students, showing an ability to formulate and express ideas clearly, and an understanding of the difficulties students may have facing the ideas for the first time alongside a willingness to engage complexity and ambiguity in understanding complicated environmental problems.

3. that faculty set high standards for students and are effective in motivating students to meet those standards.

4. that faculty encourage students to assume responsibility for their own learning, in their day-to-day coursework, as well as in independent study and research.

5. that faculty are accessible to students.

6. and that faculty draw on a variety of learning and teaching techniques in their courses, such as lectures, discussions, applied projects, simulations, lab work, field work, various writing exercises, and a variety of presentation styles and formats.

These benchmarks provide goals for all teachers in the program. A faculty member completing a successful evaluation will normally demonstrate teaching effectiveness in terms of these benchmarks; but he or she need not be judged excellent against every single benchmark to be judged an excellent teacher.

Evidence to be considered in the evaluation of a colleague's teaching will include:

1. a personal statement of teaching philosophy and self-evaluation,

2. effectiveness in the classroom, as assessed through class visits,

3. student course evaluations,
4. course materials, including syllabi and assignments, and
5. effectiveness in informal teaching settings outside of the classroom, such as in collaboration with community partners, through outreach and workshop settings, and experiential learning. Evidence of such effectiveness may include program and event descriptions, participant feedback, letters from community partners, or other substantive examples of content and outcome of such programs.

## **B. Professional Growth**

The ENVR program values professional development as one means to maintain intellectual vitality. The program especially values professional growth that enhances teaching and/or improves the department, university, and community. The program expects members to remain current in their areas of expertise. This currency may come through participating in professional meetings, attending seminars, acquiring further training in relevant skills, or otherwise exhibiting their enduring commitment to bettering themselves and their scholarship. In keeping with the liberal arts orientation of the University and the interdisciplinary character of the EPDM program, the Department will expect a measure of both specialization and eclecticism of all members. In particular, we expect faculty members to be open to gaining familiarity with fields beyond their primary areas of training, to enable place-based, collaborative teaching that will enhance the foundational courses of the EPDM program.

The Department values research and publication in a variety of formats and contexts. While peer-reviewed publications are weighted most heavily in the assessment of professional growth, other kinds of publication are also valuable, including but not limited to non-peer reviewed books and book chapters as well as popular media. We will also consider other means of pursuing and sharing research, such as conference presentations and public talks. Each member will be assessed for quality, quantity, and impact of research.

1. Quality will be judged by colleagues' reading of published and unpublished works.
2. Quantity will be measured by number of conferences participated in, research-related travel undertaken, and publications.
3. Impact of research will also be assessed by a range of measures, which may include reviews and citations of works, incorporation of research into courses, presentations before university and broader academic audiences, or assessments by outside evaluators.



### **C. Service**

The ENVR program values contributions to the many communities its members serve. Competent participation in university and program governance is expected. The program encourages regular attendance and attentiveness at meetings, responsible accomplishment of tasks, and willingness to take initiative and otherwise lead. Extra-curricular and co-curricular efforts that enhance the intellectual climate and student engagement in environmental issues will also be rewarded. Participation in community groups or affairs related to professional expertise is also encouraged. Evaluatees will be responsible for mustering evidence of such service.

### **D. Advising**

The *Faculty Code* does not specify advising as a criterion for tenure, but the ENVR program nevertheless expects a strong record of advising at every evaluation except the first and second-year evaluations. The program regards advising as a major means for teaching students the value of foresight, reason, and responsibility. Advising is also an opportunity to prompt student reflection. The ENVR program expects advisors to offer advisees ample opportunities to meet with them, to monitor advisees' progress and respond promptly to problems, and to refer advisees who seek or need special help to the appropriate campus resource. However, if advisees are to learn values that advisors are supposed to teach, advisees must be encouraged to take as much responsibility for designing their own education as they can. Thus advisors must help students learn to do what the students cannot yet do; the program does not expect advisors to do for advisees what advisees can do for themselves.

## **IV. Procedures**

### **A. Responsibility of the individual being evaluated.**

The individual being evaluated shall prepare a file containing the following material:

1. A statement regarding his or her philosophy, professional objectives, and accomplishments.
2. Samples of course materials, such as syllabi and assignments.
3. Evidence of professional growth.
4. Student evaluations of all courses taught during the previous two semesters of teaching in promotion, 3-year, and 5-year evaluation cases, and during the previous 4 semesters in tenure cases.
5. Evidence of university service, student advising, and community service.

6. Any other information the faculty member believes will be useful to the program members and the Faculty Advancement Committee.

B. Responsibility of program colleagues in the evaluation process.

1. An evaluation committee shall be formed in conformity with the section of *Faculty Code* pertaining to evaluations in interdisciplinary programs. Its members may be drawn from: 1) members of the ENVR executive committee, 2) ENVR affiliated faculty, 3) other faculty contributing to the ENVR program. In cases involving tenure or promotion, the minimum size of the evaluation committee shall be four.
2. Members of the evaluation committee shall read the file prepared by the individual being evaluated.
3. Members of the evaluation committee should be involved in an ongoing process of class visits.
4. Each member of the evaluation committee shall write a letter evaluating the individual in light of the program needs and the criteria and standards stated in Section III. These letters must be delivered to the chair of the evaluation committee before any deliberative meeting of that committee takes place.
5. The evaluation committee shall meet without the candidate to formulate a program recommendation.
6. In addition to responsibilities enumerated in the Faculty Code, Chapter III, Section 4.b.(2), the chair of the evaluation committee shall inform the candidate of the results of the program deliberations and its recommendation to the Academic Dean and the Advancement Committee.

**V. Instructors**

Instructors are expected to meet the same high standards of teaching that are expected of assistant, associate, and full professors. However, the expectations for professional growth and University service are not the same. A level of study and professional involvement is expected, as required to maintain currency in areas related to the instructor's teaching responsibilities. Instructors are expected to serve the ENVR program by sharing equally in those duties related to the teaching program, such as design of courses, curriculum revision, and so on. Instructors are also expected to participate effectively in the University's advising program. With reference to university service and extracurricular activities, participation of instructors is welcomed but not expected. The procedures for evaluation of an instructor are the same as those described in Section IV.