

LAS STANDARDS OF ACADEME FOR LECTURERS

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2015

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1. PHILOSOPHY

1. Philosophy

1.1 Overview

LAS subscribes to the philosophy that teaching should be the primary area of emphasis for lecturers, with service as an important but lower priority. Faculty will be recruited and evaluated based on this perspective. Scholarship is valued and encouraged, but is not required as part of a lecturer contract.

The academic evaluation and reward system in Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) has three purposes in relation to lecturers: (a) to provide clear guidance that aids faculty members in improving and adapting their teaching; (b) to determine eligibility for merit pay (when available); and (c) to certify high achievement.

1.2 Definitions of Concepts

The following section defines pertinent concepts.

Teaching: For annual reviews, teaching refers to the act of cultivating a rich learning environment, which includes sharing knowledge, nurturing critical inquiry, inspiring curiosity, and encouraging students to apply what they have learned. Teaching primarily reflects instruction-related activities that directly impact student learning. Because Nevada State College is a teaching institution, offering engaging and meaningful instruction is a highly valued activity. Section 2.0 provides a detailed description of the lines of evidence used within LAS to evaluate teaching.

Service: LAS defines service as a faculty member's professional responsibilities to Nevada State College and its external community. Although we value all forms of service (institutional, professional, and community/governmental), LAS places most emphasis on service at the institutional level. Section 3.0 provides a detailed description of the lines of evidence used within LAS to document accomplishment in service.

Scholarship: LAS defines scholarship as the process of exploring a relevant question or problem, synthesizing existing knowledge, developing new ideas, and sharing the results through discipline-appropriate outlets. LAS values scholarly efforts that represent the spectrum of orientation from basic to applied, including the scholarship of teaching. However, unlike tenure-track faculty, lecturer positions do not include a scholarship requirement. Accordingly, scholarship is not formally evaluated in annual evaluations, though any scholarly accomplishments will be noted by the department chair in the annual evaluation form; nor is scholarship used in merit pay calculations for lecturers.

1.3 Annual Review Plans

At each annual review, the faculty member and evaluator will develop an annual review plan for the following year. The annual review plan will include goals for the faculty member to achieve in teaching and service. At each annual review, the faculty member must provide a copy of the annual review plan agreed upon at the previous year's review and indicate their progress toward completion of each item.

1.4 Annual Review Portfolios

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Faculty will submit a portfolio of annual review materials each year; this portfolio will include an updated CV; syllabi; a narrative or table of no more than 10 pages summarizing accomplishments throughout the year; and no more than 15 pages of evidence chosen by the faculty member to illustrate those accomplishments. The page limit on evidence does not include any of the following:

- CV;
- Syllabi;
- Student evaluations;
- Student papers turned in to show an example of the instructor's feedback on an assignment;
- Items or evidence specifically requested by the department chair after receiving the annual review file.

1.5 Flexibility in Annual Review Ratings

LAS sets the rating guidelines for assessing teaching and service on annual reviews. Discipline-specific standards and constraints should be considered when evaluating the quality and quantity of faculty contributions, and evaluators may adjust the ratings requirements accordingly. *It is the responsibility of faculty members to justify flexibility in applying LAS ratings guidelines to their teaching or service contributions.*

1.6 Merit Pay Calculations for Lecturers

Full-time lecturers are eligible to be considered for merit awards in years when the state legislature appropriates funds for a merit pool. The [NSC Merit Pay Policy](#) delineates evaluation criteria for merit pay. Lecturers will be judged by the same criteria as tenure-track faculty in the areas of teaching and service. However, since lecturers occupy teaching positions that do not have a scholarship requirement, their teaching rating will be counted twice in calculating their total points for merit pay, once for their teaching rating and once as a substitute for a scholarship rating. The evaluation calculation will thus be: Final Evaluation Points = Rating in Teaching + Rating in Teaching + Rating in Service.

2. TEACHING

2. Teaching

2.1 Overview

According to the Nevada State College mission statement, “excellence in teaching leads to innovative, technology-rich learning opportunities that promote the acquisition of interdisciplinary knowledge and skills.” To support this mission, the lines of evidence for excellence in teaching provide some comparability in evaluation while recognizing the diverse ways in which faculty may demonstrate teaching excellence.

As part of their annual review materials, faculty members shall submit a teaching narrative that provides context for the review of the individual's teaching effectiveness. The narrative will be a reflection on important teaching activities, accomplishments, and challenges experienced in the year under review.

Material evaluated for annual reviews will include syllabi (including the standard elements discussed below), official student course evaluations (available to department chairs on the shared X drive), and evidence of student learning or accomplishment for each course taught. Faculty members should expect to provide additional evidence of teaching effectiveness as requested by their department chair during the review process.

Items submitted as evidence of teaching effectiveness should relate to the quality of the learning environment provided to students in courses at NSC. Other items that may be related to teaching, mentoring students toward making a conference presentation, or taking a leadership role in teaching workshops, should be submitted in the service category.

2.2 Required Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

The following are the minimum required lines of evidence:

- Syllabus for each course taught that incorporates the elements in the standard NSC template;
- Official student evaluations for each course taught;
- Final grade distributions for each course taught;
- Teaching observation(s) from the department chair;
- Teaching narrative of one to two pages.

Evaluators have copies of final grade distributions, student evaluations, and teaching observations on file. Faculty do not need to provide these items.

The faculty member may request that the department chair exclude course evaluations with extremely low response rates from consideration, though this accommodation is not guaranteed. The department chair may also use independent discretion to exclude them. If any evaluations are excluded, this should be noted in the annual review narrative.

2.3 Additional Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness

Additional evidence of teaching effectiveness may be provided by the faculty member. This evidence may include, but is not limited to:

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- Exams, assignments, projects, or other assessments developed by the instructor to measure student performance;
- Lectures, handouts, and other materials used to aid instruction;
- Peer observations of teaching conducted by the faculty member;
- Video or audio recordings of teaching;
- Descriptions of innovative teaching methods used;
- Grade distributions for assignments or exams;
- Mid-semester evaluations and descriptions of how they were used to adjust or improve a course;
- Descriptions of how diversity issues were incorporated into course content;
- Examples of feedback provided on papers, projects, exams, or other assignments;
- Evidence-based assessment of the effectiveness of an assignment, activity, or instructional technique used in a course;
- Video or audio recordings of student performance;
- Teaching awards;
- Other discipline-specific evidence of teaching effectiveness;
- Acceptance of an external teaching-related grant;
- Additional evidence as requested by the faculty member's department chair.

2.4 Activities Related to Teaching

As part of their teaching responsibilities, faculty members often participate in related activities that enrich the quality of education at Nevada State College. A description of these activities should be provided in the annual review materials. These activities may include, but are not limited to:

- New preparations or substantial revisions or improvements to a course;
- Fieldwork supervision as part of a course;
- Significant student mentoring that includes a teaching component and an assessment of student learning.

2.5 Rating Teaching in the Annual Review Process

When rating teaching, evaluators will consider the faculty member's progress toward meeting the goals in the annual review plan. The quality of contributions will be rated more highly than the quantity.

Due to the variability of the numerical ratings on student evaluations across courses and disciplines, the numerical thresholds in this section should be interpreted as guidelines and not absolute standards. Receiving numerical ratings above or below the thresholds does not guarantee that an instructor will receive the corresponding rating, as student evaluations are merely one measure among many used to determine the appropriate rating.

Unsatisfactory: Fails to meet expectations

An Unsatisfactory rating indicates one or more of the following conditions:

- Failure to produce evidence of a Satisfactory performance;

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- Failure to sufficiently improve in aspects of teaching identified in previous annual reviews as essential areas for improvement;
- Existence of major student complaints about one or more of the instructor's courses. If such complaints occur, the faculty member may provide a justification or explanation of the student complaints. This explanation will be considered by the department chair when determining whether an Unsatisfactory rating is appropriate.

Satisfactory: Meets expectations

At the Satisfactory level, faculty members are expected to be competent teachers, as evidenced by the creation of a classroom climate that respects students and welcomes diversity, the absence of major problems or student complaints related to an instructor's courses, and by quality contributions in all of the following areas:

- A well-developed syllabus with adequate expectations and rigor that includes a course description, course objectives, evaluation criteria/methods, a course schedule, and office hours;
- Availability to students outside of classroom hours;
- Content that is relevant to the course as evidenced by adequately rigorous readings, texts, and updated course materials that demonstrate a systematic effort by the instructor to convey course material;
- Student evaluations include written comments that are generally satisfactory and numerical ratings typically above 4.0 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being the highest (where faculty members do not meet these criteria, they may explain, in no more than 1 page, mitigating circumstances they believe led to unreasonably low scores);
- Major assignments, projects, exams, or other assessments developed by the instructor;
- Evidence of substantive feedback given to students regarding performance on major assignments or exams;
- Final grade distributions not significantly skewed in a persistent manner (faculty members may submit a rationale of no more than 1 page explaining cases in which grade distributions are skewed, which will be considered by the department chair);
- Compliance with institutional teaching-related policies and deadlines (e.g., FERPA, grade submission deadlines, provision of accommodations for students as requested by the RCSD).

Commendable: Exceeds expectations

Faculty members are expected to meet the following criteria:

- Meets Satisfactory performance standards;
- Evaluations with positive written comments and numerical ratings typically above 4.25 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being highest (where faculty members do not meet these criteria, they may explain, in no more than 1 page, mitigating circumstances they believe led to unreasonably low scores);
- Quality contributions in some of the following major areas of teaching effort or equivalent:
 - Development and use of innovative course materials, teaching and active-learning techniques, or technologies;
 - Adapting and improving teaching based on feedback from students, peers, and the department chair;
 - Grading assignments and providing effective feedback in a reasonable timeframe such that students are aware of their progress throughout the course;
 - Assessment of the effectiveness of teaching endeavors;

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- Meeting goals set in the annual review plan for the year or new goals that developed during the year;
- Application of appropriate rigor for the level of the course;
- Assessment of student learning;
- Supervision of an independent study or experiential learning activities that include assessment of student learning;
- Incorporating or significantly addressing diversity issues in courses or course materials.

Evaluators may also consider the following as evidence of teaching effectiveness:

- Receipt of a teaching award;
- Acceptance of external teaching-related grant.

Excellent: Exceeds expectations in a sustained manner

Faculty members are expected to meet the following criteria:

- Consistently meets and exceeds Commendable performance standards;
- Evaluations should have positive written comments and numerical ratings typically above 4.5 on a 5-point scale, with 5 being highest (where faculty members do not meet these criteria, they may explain, in no more than 1 page, mitigating circumstances they believe led to unreasonably low scores);
- High-quality contributions in some of the following major areas of teaching effort or equivalent:
 - Consistent integration of active learning strategies in the classroom;
 - Consistent use of highly-engaging and appropriate learning materials that are targeted toward the respective course and student learning outcomes;
 - Efforts to design and revise courses based on evidence from published literature on teaching effectiveness;
 - Earning external certification in teaching practices;
 - Effective integration of written work and use of evidence-based strategies that improve student writing skills;
 - Being highly attentive to classroom dynamics and working to ensure the participation of all students;
 - Consistent and well-researched innovation in pedagogy (e.g., technologies, teaching techniques) that is practically applied and successful most of the time.

3. SERVICE

3. Service

3.1 Overview

As a developing institution, NSC values the service contributions of its faculty. It is one of the many ways that faculty work together to fulfill our mission. Service encompasses three areas: (a) institutional, (b) service to the profession, and (c) service to the community. First and foremost, faculty are expected to demonstrate how they contribute significantly to meeting the needs of the institution, followed to a lesser degree by contributions to the profession and community or government agencies. Lecturers are expected to engage in service, though the amount required is lower than that expected of tenure-track faculty members.

When evaluating faculty contributions in service, both the quantity and quality of service are important considerations. Quantity in the absence of quality is insufficient to earn high ratings in service. As part of their annual review materials, faculty members shall submit a brief narrative description of their service activities. Faculty members are encouraged to submit relevant evidence (e.g., documents created, revisions or edits made) that reflects particular service contributions and may be asked to provide additional evidence of service contributions as requested by their department chair during the review process.

3.2 Evidence of Service

Lines of evidence for demonstrating accomplishments in service are listed below, but these are examples only and do not exhaust the range of possibilities. Additionally, the case may be made for any service contribution in one level that, due to a particular time commitment or other requirements, might be considered as qualifying for another level.

3.3 Institutional Service

Level A - Substantive involvement in a single meaningful event (e.g., college fair) or participation in an endeavor that requires a relatively low time commitment.

Examples of Level A Service Items:

- Leading a campus presentation;
- Serving on the Travel and Incentive Grant Committee or another committee with infrequent meetings;
- Actively recruiting at college fair events;
- Acting as a faculty advisor to a student organization;
- Presenting at a faculty development workshop;
- Serving as a Faculty Senate representative.

Level B – Substantive involvement in a meaningful endeavor that requires a moderate time commitment and/or reflects the faculty member's contribution to the accomplishment of an important institutional goal.

Examples of Level B Service Items:

- Holding office in Faculty Senate (vice chair, secretary, or parliamentarian);

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- Chairing a Faculty Senate committee, or actively serving on a Faculty Senate committee that holds regular meetings;
- Serving as a search committee member;
- Serving as a Curriculum Committee member;
- Serving as NFA president;
- Substantially developing or revising curricula or programs (e.g., redesigning a program or making substantial degree revisions);
- Providing individual mentorship to students that goes well beyond the advisory role expected of faculty.

Level C – Substantive involvement in or guidance of a meaningful endeavor that requires a significant time commitment, involves an important leadership role, and reflects the faculty member’s contribution to the accomplishment of an essential institutional goal.

Examples of Level C Service Items:

- Serving as Faculty Senate chair;
- Serving as a search committee chair;
- Serving as Curriculum Committee chair.

3.4 Community and Professional Service

Contributions to the profession or community that serve the mission of Nevada State College may be counted as service items if the evaluator determines that they *contribute to the mission or promote the objectives of NSC*. The examples below are not exhaustive.

Level A - Substantive involvement in a single meaningful event (e.g., participating as a speaker at a community event) or participation in an endeavor that requires a relatively low time commitment.

Examples of Level A Community and Professional Service Items:

- Serving as an officer in a local, state, regional, or national professional or learned society;
- Providing *pro bono* consultation to individuals or local, state, regional, national, or federal organizations;
- Contributing in a significant way to a committee for a governmental, academic, or community organization;
- Writing a grant for a community organization;
- Establishing partnerships with external organizations (e.g., creating student internship opportunities);
- Volunteering with a private or public organization that directly relates to the faculty member’s discipline, position, or skills.

Level B – Substantive involvement in a meaningful service endeavor in the community that requires a moderate time commitment.

Examples of Level B Community and Professional Service Items:

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- Participating in a significant humanitarian endeavor that directly relates to the faculty member's discipline, position, or skills;
- Playing a significant role in planning a conference.

Level C activities are typically reserved for internal service. However, a faculty member may argue that a particular external service activity goes beyond Level B and deserves a higher rating. For example, a faculty member who plans an entire national conference in Las Vegas that directly benefits the College may contend that the effort justifies Level C status.

3.5 Rating Service in the Annual Review Process

The following are selected, non-comprehensive examples of how service to the institution and community/profession might be evaluated for annual reviews. Evaluators should converse with evaluatees to determine the quality of service, considering the time and effort required and the substance of the contribution. The quantities indicated below are general guidelines, not fixed designations. The quantity required may vary based on the quality of the contribution. Failure to meet assigned service obligations may diminish a faculty member's annual review ratings, regardless of other service contributions.

While the emphasis is on institutional service, faculty members may propose including significant forms of academic leadership in service or service to the profession or community as part of the performance rating. Such service should be demonstrably related, directly or indirectly, to the mission of NSC or LAS or to the faculty member's discipline or department.

To acknowledge various service contributions, the three service levels equate to this point scale:

- 1 Level A activity = 1 point
- 1 Level B activity = 2 points
- 1 Level C activity = 4 points

To achieve a **Satisfactory** rating in service, a lecturer must earn 2-3 points.

To achieve a **Commendable** rating, a lecturer must earn 4-5 points.

To achieve an **Excellent** rating, the faculty member must earn 6 points or more, and at least one Level B or C item is generally required.

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Rating	Definition	Criteria	Examples
Unsatisfactory	Fails to meet expectations	0-1 points	1. One Level A activities = 1 point
Satisfactory	Meets expectations	2-3 points	1. Three Level A activities = 3 points 2. One Level B activity and 1 Level A activity = 3 points
Commendable	Exceeds expectations	4-5 points	1. One Level C activity = 4 points 2. Three Level A activities and one Level B activity = 5 points.
Excellent	Exceeds expectations in a sustained manner	6 points or more, generally including one Level B or C item	1. One Level B activity and four Level A activities = 6 points 2. One Level B activity and one Level C activity = 6 points

To receive a rating of Excellent, a Level B or C item is generally required. However, the evaluator may be flexible when considering this requirement in cases where a lecturer made high-quality contributions to six or more Level A items and did not have legitimate opportunities to complete Level B or C items.

APPROVALS

Approvals

Faculty vote concluded June 18, 2015. Standards were approved by 100% of eligible faculty. Eligible voters: all full-time lecturers on non-temporary contracts with appointments in LAS.

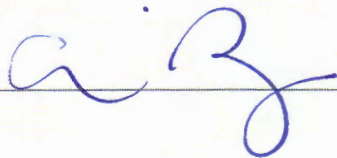
Approval Signatures



6/19/15

LAS Dean

Date



6/22/15

Provost

Date