

Performance Appraisals for Classified Employees

I. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL/SERVICES RATING?

A performance appraisal, or service rating, is a written evaluation of the performance of an employee over a specified time period which can be as short as several months or as long as one year.

Performance appraisals are designed to provide employees with a knowledge of their performance over time; to identify strengths and/or areas of concern in an employee's job performance; and to provide an opportunity for an employee and his/her supervisor to meet and clarify job expectations.

An important part of the evaluation process is the discussion of the performance appraisal with an employee. The performance appraisal interview should take place in private. It provides an opportunity for supervisors to give positive feedback to employees whose performance has been satisfactory, and to discuss problem areas with employees whose performance has been less than good. A "less than good" performance appraisal is not discipline in and of itself and should not be used as a punitive tool to correct specific violations of rules or incidents of misconduct. These should be dealt with at the time they occur by means of progressive discipline <http://lr.uconn.edu/dis.html#progressive>. It is imperative that supervisors point out an employee's area(s) of weakness, counsel him or her regarding ways to correct the problem, and give an employee a chance to improve before issuing a "less than good" performance appraisal. Filling out the rating form should be the culmination of a process that has been ongoing for several months, and the final outcome should come as no surprise to the employee.

II. WHEN ARE PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS/SERVICE RATINGS REQUIRED?

Performance appraisals are required at the following times:

1. Annually for all permanent employees, at least three months prior to an employee's anniversary increase date (See Part V.);
2. During an initial or promotional working test period (See Part VI.);
3. In order to amend a previously submitted "less than good" rating due to a marked improvement in an employee's performance and restore the anniversary increase;
4. At such other times it is determined that the quality of service of an employee should be recorded.

III. WHAT FORM SHOULD I USE?

There are four different performance appraisal forms currently in use for classified employees. These are statewide-negotiated documents that cannot be altered.

FORM NAME	PDF FORMAT	WORD FORMAT
Administrative/Clerical (NP-3)	PDF	WORD
Maintenance and Service (NP-2)	PDF	WORD
Connecticut Police and Fire Union (NP-5)	PDF	WORD

It is **essential** that you use the correct form for your bargaining unit employees. Evaluations filed on the wrong form will be returned to the department and must be revised.

IV. WHO FILLS OUT AND SIGNS THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS/SERVICE RATINGS?

An employee's immediate supervisor or whoever is most familiar with an employee's work, should complete the rating and sign where it says "Rated By." After the supervisor has completed the rating, he/she should forward it to the appropriate Dean, Director, or Department Head for review and signature on the line where it says "Reviewed By." The line entitled "Approved By" **should be left blank** for sign-off by the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations.

V. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS/SERVICE RATINGS

A. When to File

For employees hired after 7/1/77, anniversary increases are distributed in January. Therefore, annual performance appraisals for these employees must be given to the employee on October 1; therefore they must be received by the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations no later than **September 15** of each year.

B. Satisfactory or Better Performance

An overall satisfactory rating indicates that the employee has met or exceeded the standards set by the department for acceptable performance. When an employee's performance has been above average, comments on the rating form are encouraged. For all satisfactory ratings, in all bargaining units, completed ratings should be sent to the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations at U-5075 after having been signed by the supervisor and the Dean, Director, or Department Head. After the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations has signed the rating, it will be returned to the department. The supervisor should then conduct the performance appraisal interview and the employee should be asked to sign the rating to acknowledge that he/she has seen the form and has discussed it with his/her

supervisor. The employee should only be given the rating after all signatures are on it, thereby making it official. Employees should be reminded that their signature does not necessarily indicate approval or agreement with the rating, only that they have seen it. If an employee refuses to sign the rating, the employee's union steward is required to sign the same rating and be provided with a copy. If the union steward is unavailable, the supervisor should attach a note to the original copy, which will be filed in Personnel, indicating that the rating was discussed with the employee on that date but the employee refused to sign.

The department should then make two copies, one for the employee and one for the department files. The original copy of the rating should be forwarded to the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations, U-5075, for inclusion in the employee's official personnel file.

PLEASE NOTE:

SEVERAL CONTRACTS SPECIFY THAT: "NO SUPERVISOR SHALL MAKE COMMENTS WITHIN A SERVICE RATING WHERE SUCH COMMENTS ARE INCONSISTENT WITH THE RATING; HOWEVER, CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT SHALL NOT BE CONSIDERED INCONSISTENT WITH THE RATING." THIS IS GOOD SUPERVISION!

C. "Less Than Good" Performance

Before filing a "less than good" performance appraisal, supervisors should call the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations at ext. 5684 for guidance.

Supervisors should be able to answer "yes" to the following questions before filing a "less than good" rating:

1. Is the employee working within his/her job specification?
2. Have the University's and the department's rules, regulations and policies been explained to the employee? Is there documentation as to when and how?
3. Has the employee been given adequate training in order to perform his/her duties?
4. Have performance problems been pointed out to the employee and suggestions for improvement been made? Is there documentation to show dates of counseling sessions and progressive discipline? Has a letter of warning specifically referencing the possibility of a "less than good" rating been given to the employee?
5. Has the employee been given sufficient time and opportunity to improve his/her performance?
6. Is the rating an objective evaluation?

Once the supervisor is satisfied that the rating is a fair, accurate, and well-documented assessment of an employee's performance, the rating should be filled out. **SINCE PROCEDURES DIFFER IN THE VARIOUS BARGAINING UNITS, PLEASE REFER TO THE CHART BELOW FOR GUIDENCE IN ACTUALLY FILLING OUT AND ROUTING "LESS THAN GOOD" SERVICE RATINGS.** Documentation of warning, and suspension letters should be attached, as well as suggestions for improvement. If an employee refuses to sign a "less than good" service rating, a union representative should sign the rating to confirm the employee

has seen the rating. As a result of an arbitration ruling, it is no longer necessary to inform the employees of their right to Union representation at a performance appraisal interview to discuss a “less than good” rating.

D. Consequences of a "Less Than Good" Performance Appraisal

A LESS THAN GOOD performance appraisal may mean that an employee is not eligible for an anniversary increase, and in some bargaining units, promotion or transfer. The supervisor should make it known to the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations 486-5684 if an increase is to be denied for a LESS THAN GOOD rating. An UNSATISFACTORY rating may result in the denial of an increase. Two consecutive Unsatisfactory ratings, filed within two years of each other, may be cause for dismissal.

E. Attendance

Attendance is an important element in the overall performance of an employee and should be taken into account when conducting an annual performance appraisal. Attendance ratings should be based on (1) the number of days and occasions used on the Sick Leave Usage Table attached to the University's Sick Leave Policy <http://policy.uconn.edu/?p=115> .

(2) an employee's tardiness record, and (3) any unauthorized leave. In reviewing an employee's record to determine whether the employee is excessively using sick leave, the following factors should be considered: (1) number of days taken, and number of occasions, (2) pattern of usage, (3) the employee's past record, (4) the reasons for sick leave use, and (5) extenuating circumstances. An employee's good attendance should be acknowledged on the rating. For employees whose attendance needs improvement, copies of counseling letters and/or medical certificate requirements and warnings should be attached to the rating.

The Administrative/Clerical and the Maintenance & Service rating form have a category for attendance on the front. On the other rating forms, attendance should be added as a category under "Comments" and should be considered a bona fide category when making out the overall rating. In other words, if an employee is "Unsatisfactory" in attendance, this one unsatisfactory category is enough to give the employee an overall "Unsatisfactory" rating.

In addition, in the Administrative/Clerical (NP-3) contract, there is a recent change in the definition of an occasion of sick leave. An occasion of sick leave is defined as any one continuous period of unscheduled absence for the same reason.

Failure to consider attendance on the service rating during an annual performance appraisal makes it difficult to discipline an employee in the future for attendance problems that have been allowed to go unchecked.

PROCEDURES FOR FILING "LESS THAN GOOD" RATINGS

BARGAINING UNIT	WHAT IS A "LESS THAN GOOD" RATING?	ROUTING PROCEDURES
NP-2 Maintenance & Service	One UNSATISFACTORY category or two categories of FAIR constitute a LESS THAN GOOD RATING (Reference Article 9)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervisor signs 2. Dean, Director, or Dept. Head signs 3. Rating is sent to the Office of Faculty & Staff Labor Relations for approval 4. Rating is returned to dept. 5. Supervisor and employee meet to discuss and employee signs rating 6. Dept. copies for own file, employee, and sends original to the Office of Faculty & Staff Labor Relations, U-5075
NP-3 Administrative/Clerical	One UNSATISFACTORY category or two categories of FAIR constitute a LESS THAN GOOD rating. Two FAIRS on page one MUST be marked overall FAIR on page two (see form.) One UNSATISFACTORY category on the front MUST be marked overall UNSATISFACTORY on page 2. When an employee is rated unsatisfactory in any category, the rating supervisor " shall " state the reason and suggestions for improvement. (Reference Article 10)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Supervisor signs 2. Dean, Director, or Dept. Head signs 3. Supervisor must discuss rating at informal meeting with employee. DO NOT HAVE THE EMPLOYEE SIGN YET 4. Rating sent to the Office of Faculty & Staff Labor Relations for approval 5. Rating returned to dept. and employee signs rating 6. Dept. makes copies for own file, employee and sends original to the Office of Faculty & Staff Labor Relations, U-5075
P-4 Engineering, Scientific, & Technical (Reference Article 9)	One UNSATISFACTORY category or two categories of FAIR constitute an overall UNSATISFACTORY RATING. Two categories	Same as NP-2

	marked FAIR on the front MUST be marked UNSATISFACTORY on page two.	
NP-5 Connecticut Police and Fire Union	Same as NP-2 (Reference Article 9)	Same as NP-2

VI. EVALUATIONS DURING INITIAL OR PROMOTIONAL WORKING TEST PERIOD

A. Initial Working Test Period

Each employee in the classified service who is appointed to a permanent position is required to serve an initial six (6) month working test period. Permanent status is acquired only upon successful completion of the probationary or working test period.

For employees whose performance during the working test period has been satisfactory, a performance appraisal should be filled out not less than two (2) weeks prior to the end of the probationary period. Employees who reach the end of their six (6) month initial working test period and have not been evaluated will pass the probationary period by default and will become permanent. Therefore, it is crucial that supervisors deal with performance problems during the working test period as soon as possible. Ideally, supervisors should counsel probationary employees at the first sign of problems in performance or attendance and document this in their own files. If the employee's performance does not improve, **he/she can be dismissed at any time during the working test period.**

DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE WORKING TEST PERIOD TO EVALUATE EMPLOYEES WHOSE PERFORMANCE HAS BEEN LESS THAN GOOD.

A performance appraisal indicating unsatisfactory performance during the working test period should be prepared and sent to the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations for approval. It will be returned and should then be discussed with the employee and he/she should be asked to sign it to indicate receipt. The employee should be advised that failure to achieve a satisfactory level of performance leads to termination. The employee's department head should contact the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations for assistance in preparing a letter of termination based on the model in the Progressive Discipline Manual.

B. Promotional Working Test Period

The working test period for an employee who has been promoted within the same bargaining unit is four (4) months. For employees who successfully complete their promotional working test period, a service rating should be filed at the end of the four (4) month period. For employees whose performance has been less than good, failure of a promotional working test period has varying implications, depending on the bargaining unit. SUPERVISORS SHOULD CALL THE OFFICE OF FACULTY AND STAFF LABOR RELATIONS AT EXT. 5684 FOR GUIDANCE AS SOON AS IT BECOMES EVIDENT THAT AN EMPLOYEE CANNOT PERFORM SUCCESSFULLY AT THE HIGHER LEVEL.

REMEMBER: DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE **END** OF THE WORKING TEST PERIOD TO EVALUATE PROMOTIONAL EMPLOYEES, OR THEY MAY PASS THE PROMOTIONAL WORKING TEST PERIOD BY DEFAULT.

C. Working Test Period Extensions

In some cases, it may be desirable to extend the initial or promotional working test period in order to give an employee additional opportunity to show ability to perform the work. Normally, such extensions do not exceed three months, but in some cases, a six (6) month extension may be granted. Requests to extend the working test period must be made to the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations AT LEAST FOUR (4) WEEKS PRIOR TO THE END OF THE WORKING TEST PERIOD.