FACULTY EVALUATION MODEL[1] AT VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION

Valdosta State University wants its faculty members to succeed and to be productive members of the VSU community; therefore, the university and its colleges, departments, and divisions continuously use a series of evaluation processes that are intended to be both summative and formative. They should not only provide an accurate picture of the faculty member's performance in teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service, but they should also assist faculty members in defining and meeting their own professional goals in these areas.

Faculty members at Valdosta State University are evaluated both by themselves and others numerous times over the course of their careers:

(1) Every semester, students are given the opportunity to express their opinions about classroom instruction through the **Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI).**
(2) Each year, faculty members evaluate themselves through an **Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan** to which their department/unit head adds an **Annual Evaluation.**
(3) Each year, faculty members are evaluated according to individual departmental standards for the award of **merit pay**.
(4) During their third year of full-time service at VSU, tenure-track faculty members are also evaluated by departmental committees as well as their department/unit heads when they participate in a **Pre-Tenure Review**.
(5) Beginning in their fourth year of full-time university service (if hired as an Assistant Professor or the fifth year if hired as an Associate Professor), tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply for **Promotion**, and they are eligible to apply for **Tenure** in their fifth year. In both these processes, faculty must show the results of their earlier evaluation processes to departmental colleagues, department/unit head, the appropriate dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
(6) Every five years after the award of tenure (unless interrupted by another personnel action such as promotion), faculty members participate in a **Post-Tenure Review.** During this review, they are evaluated by their departmental colleagues and their department/unit heads.

The Faculty Evaluation Model at Valdosta State University seeks to provide the following:

[1] "Model" indicates that colleges and units will modify elements of the evaluative procedure (e.g. arrangement of professional categories or addition of questions to the SOI, etc.) to facilitate planning, program evaluation by external accrediting bodies, or other disciplinary requirements.

(a) the most helpful process for faculty members to ensure that they will have clear guidance about their performance goals and accomplishments in the areas of teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service. This guidance should help faculty work in productive ways to achieve positive evaluations.

(b) the most helpful product for faculty members, department/unit heads, and deans as they make decisions about the allocation of resources as well as for promotion, tenure, and merit pay increases.

(c) the most efficient process for faculty members, department/unit heads, and deans so they will not need to do unnecessary and repetitive work.

(d) the most uniform process/product possible within the context of the many different disciplines within the university so that all faculty members, department/unit heads, and deans may be assured of equitable evaluation.

(1) STUDENT OPINION OF INSTRUCTION (SOI)

The main goal of Student Opinion of Instruction is to help faculty improve courses and instruction; moreover, the SOI is used in the annual evaluation of faculty. Therefore, faculty will administer student evaluations for each course* they teach during the fall and spring semesters, and the summer sessions. All SOIs must include both quantitative and qualitative sections and be completed by the last teaching day of the semester or summer session. Results from these evaluations will be returned to the faculty member in a timely manner. Fall semester student evaluations will be returned by midterm of the following spring semester. Spring semester evaluations will be returned by midterm of the following summer session II. Summer session evaluations will be returned by midterm of the following fall semester. All academic units are expected to follow this policy and exceptions should be reported to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

*Possible exceptions must be approved by the department head and might include student teaching, practicum courses, thesis courses, directed studies, internships, or other courses with low enrollments (<5) where the anonymity could be compromised.

See

Appendix A	**Guidelines for Interpreting Student Opinion of Instruction SOI)**
Appendix B	**Student Opinion of Instruction Form**

(2) THE ANNUAL FACULTY ACTIVITY REPORT, ACTION PLAN AND ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Board of Regents' Policy regarding Annual Faculty Evaluations is quoted below.

> Each institution shall establish definite and stated criteria, consistent with the Regents' Policies and the statutes of the institution against which the performance of each faculty member will be evaluated. The evaluation shall occur at least annually and shall follow stated procedures as prescribed by each institution (Board of Regents' Policy Manual, section 803.07).
>
> The guidelines pertaining to the above were developed by the Chancellor's Office. They read in part:
>
> The purpose of the new faculty evaluation policy is twofold. The primary purpose is to aid the faculty member in improving and developing his or her performance as a member of the academic community and to ensure the faculty member's understanding of the relationship between his or her performance and the expectations of the institutions. Secondly, the faculty evaluation should assist the institution in its review of the faculty member for continued employment, promotion, tenure and merit salary increases. The institution may wish to develop different procedures for each category of review. However, the faculty member must clearly understand the criteria and procedures to be used in the evaluation process for continued employment, promotion, tenure, and merit salary increases.
>
> The faculty has a right to comment in writing on any aspect of the annual evaluation.
>
> The faculty shall sign and receive a final copy of their annual evaluation (Memoranda from the Chancellor to Presidents, June 22, 1981 and December 15, 1986).

At Valdosta State University, the Annual Faculty Activity Report, Action Plan, and Annual Evaluation document plays a number of important roles:

- for faculty members, it helps them report their activities over the past year as well as evaluate their performance in teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service;
- for department/unit heads, it allows them to assess the progress of faculty members for their next personnel action or merit determination and to provide guidance and assistance to help faculty members reach departmental expectations and goals;
- for deans, directors, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs, it not only provides documentation for personnel processes but also for strategic planning and development.

This document is also a critical component of the promotion and tenure process for faculty, it is the primary source of information for the university annual report, and it serves as a means to evaluate individual units' progress toward meeting strategic goals. Individual programs and departments should develop policies that address specific components of the report such as allocation of loads for service or special assignments. It is important that professional growth and productivity activities be discussed in departments, divisions, and colleges so that listings of activities are clearly and consistently reported across the unit.

Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan (FAR)

Faculty members are responsible for accurately reporting all activities—in teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service in which they have been involved over the preceding calendar year. They should then view

these activities in light of whatever personnel action they will next undergo—pre-tenure review, application for promotion and/or tenure, or post-tenure review—and set goals for the upcoming year in all three areas. This planning process will aid not only faculty members in meeting their own professional goals, but it will also help them realize these goals in conjunction with university, college, and departmental goals. Department/unit heads will be able to see what resources will be needed to help faculty members realize those goals.

Annual Evaluation

After the faculty member has completed the Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan, the faculty member's department/unit head will complete an Annual Evaluation. This document should evaluate the faculty member's performance in the areas of teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service. It should also include recommendations if activity in any given area is determined to need improvement. Attention should be given in cases where a faculty member has any form of load adjustment related to their duties within the department. The department/unit head should address the faculty member's planning and goals for the following year and determine if they are aligned with departmental, college, and university goals, and if they are prioritized in a manner that facilitates appropriate levels of activity that may lead to tenure and promotion.

Faculty Activity Reports and supporting documentation will be housed in the department/unit of the faculty member. Copies of the Annual Evaluation document will be forwarded to the appropriate dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Schedule for Annual Faculty Activity Report, Action Plan, and Annual Evaluation

First semester of employment:	*New faculty members meet with department/unit heads to discuss the Faculty Evaluation Model and departmental expectations.
Beginning of fall semester:	*Any faculty member who received unsatisfactory ratings on any section of their annual evaluation shall meet with the department head on or before September 15 of the Fall semester to discuss progress since the evaluation.
End of fall semester:	*All faculty members complete and submit faculty activity report and action plan.
February:	*Department/unit heads meet with all faculty members to go over annual evaluations and action plans.

See Appendix C Faculty Activity Report, Action Plan, and Annual Evaluation

(3) MERIT PAY

The Board of Regents each year receives an appropriation from the General Assembly for all phases of its operations. Expenditures for operation of the University System, including salaries, are therefore necessarily contingent upon legislative appropriations. While compensation could be reduced as a consequence of actions of the governor or General Assembly, it is the stated intent of the Board "to maintain current salary commitments in so far as possible to every employee and the Board will exert its composite influence and best efforts to that end." (Board of Regents' Policy Manual, Section 803.l40l).

Salary increases for full-time teaching faculty are awarded on the basis of merit. Merit ratings should be based on departmental evaluation procedures established in accordance with university policies and represent a consensus arrived at by the department/unit head, dean, and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Criteria for the determination of merit increases will include teaching ability, completion of significant professional development activities (including the attainment of additional academic degrees,) promotion in rank, seniority, research productivity, academic achievements and publications, academic honors and recognitions, relevant professional achievements and recognitions, and non-teaching services to the institution

Department/unit heads and deans of the colleges are responsible to convey in writing at the beginning of each academic year the method of evaluation of the criteria for merit that are specified in the preceding paragraph which will be utilized in determining merit pay increases. Faculty should be apprised of their success in meeting these evaluative requirements throughout the year and as part of the annual evaluation for which merit will be determined. If upon merit evaluation, the faculty member is not satisfied with the evaluation, the faculty member may appeal the decision through the normal appeal process for faculty.

(4) PRE-TENURE REVIEW

Preamble

Two of the significant milestones of any professor’s career involve the awarding of tenure and promotion in rank. Tenure resides with each institution and is not guaranteed; one normally must be employed in a tenure track position for at least five years of consecutive service before a tenure decision is considered. In order to be tenurable, faculty must meet the criteria set forth in the university’s statutes and the Board of Regents' policies. The decision to grant tenure to a member of the faculty involves an extensive commitment of the institution’s resources. Both the institution and the affected faculty member should maintain close contact with the individual’s progress towards tenure. Each college or unit will hold an annual meeting to review the goals and needs of the institution in relation to tenure.

Process

Upon accepting a faculty appointment, new faculty should be provided with the guidelines for tenure followed by their college and department/unit. While insuring one's tenurability is primarily the responsibility of the individual, all tenured members of a department/unit have a professional obligation to help guide untenured faculty through their probationary period. The pre-tenure review process is one of the formal mechanisms through which untenured faculty gain positive and corrective feedback about their performance and how it relates to their tenure progress. This pre-tenure review process will employ the college and department/unit's established criteria for tenure, emphasizing excellence in teaching.

Annually, faculty are evaluated by their department/unit heads. One component of such evaluations should address the head's perception of the untenured individual's progress towards tenure. It is important to note that satisfactory progress towards tenure is never a guarantee of tenure because the needs of the institution do change, and even positive recommendations may not be supported at higher levels. Evaluations by the department/unit's head, while extremely important in all personnel decisions, are only one source of information that is considered in the tenure process. Accordingly, untenured faculty should also receive timely feedback from the tenured members of the department/unit to judge more accurately progress towards tenure. While the tenured members of department/units could also provide untenured faculty with written comments about their progress on an annual basis, all probationary faculty will have a pre-tenure review in the third year of the probationary period or, in cases with prior years services, at the mid-point of the remaining probationary period. By September 15 of each year, candidates for pre-tenure review are notified of their review and are asked to prepare materials for submission no later than November 1.

To accomplish this, the tenured members of the department/unit, or a committee representing the tenured faculty in the department/unit that consists of at least three faculty who are elected by the department/unit's tenured faculty must meet and discuss each candidate's progress towards tenure and promotion. In the case where a department/unit does not have at least three tenured faculty, the pre-tenure materials will be reviewed by a committee of at least three tenured faculty who are acceptable to both the individual faculty member and the appropriate dean/director or Vice President for Academic Affairs. The candidate should submit to the committee a draft copy of the current promotion and tenure document for that college/division with the appropriate supporting materials.

Using the college/division and department/unit's criteria, the committee will provide the candidate with a written report identifying areas of strength and areas where additional attention is warranted. Within two weeks of the delivery of the written report to the untenured faculty member, the committee or candidate can request a meeting to discuss and clarify the report.

The committee's report and the optional follow-up meeting should be completed before the end of April of the academic year in which the pre-tenure review is mandated.

The committee’s report will be submitted to the faculty member and the head of the department/unit. A copy of the report should be included in the faculty member’s personnel file.

If the faculty member feels that the report of the committee is unfair, the faculty member can follow the University’s established appeals process.

(5) PROMOTION AND TENURE

Promotion
Promotions in rank are based on merit and are not automatic. The Board of Regents has fixed certain minimum criteria for promotion from one rank to another; these criteria include superior teaching, outstanding service to the institution, academic achievement, and professional growth and development. In at least two of these four areas, the faculty member's accomplishment should be noteworthy, with the greatest emphasis on teaching. Regents policies also state that there should be appropriate involvement of faculty in making recommendations for promotion. Each department/unit should have written procedures for making recommendations for promotion, and these procedures should be available to all faculty members.

At Valdosta State University, the terminal degree or its equivalent is normally required for promotion to associate or full professor. Strong justification should be provided in support of any recommendation for promotion to the ranks of associate or full professor without the terminal degree. In addition, length of service is considered for promotion: three years as instructor, four years as assistant professor, and five years as associate professor. Consideration is also taken of the number of promotions available to the university and the number of faculty members in each rank. Promotions are considered once each year at the April meeting of the Board of Regents.

Applications for promotion are initiated at the department level, with the applicant providing the relevant documentation. Appeal is through the deans to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the President, and the Board of Regents.

Criteria for Promotion are delineated in the Board of Regents' Policy Manual, Section 803.08.

Tenure
Tenure resides at the institutional level and is not guaranteed. Only assistant professors, associate professors, and professors are eligible for tenure. Faculty members with adjunct appointments will not acquire tenure, nor does tenure apply to honorific appointments.

Tenure may be awarded, upon recommendation by the President and approval by the Board of Regents, after completion of a probationary period of at least five years of full-time service, defined as a one-hundred percent workload basis for two out of every three consecutive academic terms, at the rank of assistant professor or higher. The five-year period must be continuous, with the exception of a maximum of two years' interruption

because of a leave of absence or approved part-time service. However, no probationary credit may be given for such interrupted service. A maximum of three years' credit toward the minimum probationary period may be allowed for service in tenure-track positions at other institutions or for full-time service at the rank of instructor or lecturer at the same institution. Such credit for prior service is to be defined in writing by the President and approved by the Board of Regents at the time of the initial appointment at the rank of assistant professor or higher.

Credit toward the award of tenure and/or promotion may be earned while in a temporary status at this institution. However, only full-time permanent faculty members are eligible for the award of tenure. Credit should be negotiated before the first tenure-track faculty status contract.

The maximum time that may be served at the rank of assistant professor or above without the award of tenure is seven years. The maximum time that may be served in any combination of full-time instructional appointments without the award of tenure is ten years. The maximum period of time that may be served at the rank of full-time instructor is seven years. Tenure or probationary credit towards tenure is lost upon resignation from an institution. However, in the event the individual is again employed as a candidate for tenure, probationary credit for the prior service may be awarded in the same manner as the service at another institution.

Tenure is discussed in the Board of Regents' Policy Manual, Sections 803.07 and 803.0901.

Availability of Promotion and Tenure Evaluation Forms
Each college within the university provides its own promotion and tenure evaluation forms. Copies are available in the respective dean’s offices.

(6) POST-TENURE REVIEW

Preamble
Tenure protects academic freedom; it is granted only after a rigorous review of an individual’s teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service. The tenured faculty member becomes a leader of the university community by providing direction, expertise, and stability to the university’s academic programs. Tenured faculty members must maintain a level of professional competence that serves as a model for all faculty members and for members of the professional community. According to Board of Regents' policy, this competence must be evaluated periodically throughout each faculty member’s career.

Goals
Routine evaluation of tenured faculty is a system of recognition, reward, and enhancement of faculty performance. In every aspect of post-tenure review, the principles of academic freedom and due process must be protected.

Goal 1: Expand and strengthen established evaluation procedures
Valdosta State University (VSU) already evaluates the performance of all faculty members through an established annual review process. This process is designed to guide faculty in maintaining a high level of professional competence and to recognize and reward faculty for outstanding achievement. The annual evaluations will serve as the guide for the post-tenure review, and each annual evaluation should end with a statement that clearly specifies if the previous year's performance was satisfactory, needs improvement, or unsatisfactory.

The post-tenure review process should not place an onerous burden on faculty to document their continuing competence, which is why the primary documentation submitted by faculty are the five most recent annual evaluations and a current curriculum vitae. Generally, faculty with three or more satisfactory annual evaluations with at least two of these within the three years prior to the review will be considered as candidates for reward and recognition by the department/unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee. Faculty who have two or more unsatisfactory annual evaluations with at least one of these within the three years prior to the review will be considered as candidates for remediation. Faculty whose annual evaluations are between these extremes will be provided with information concerning their areas of strength as well as those areas which they should consider for continued development.

The post-tenure review will be conducted by each department/unit's Promotion and Tenure Committee. The deadline for submission of material will be consistent with those established for VSU promotion and tenure. This review should begin five years after the most recent promotion or personnel action (tenure) and continue at five year intervals unless interrupted by a promotion, impending candidacy for promotion within a year, or approved leave of absence. A statement will be added to each annual contract stating the anticipated year for post-tenure review. Tenured faculty who hold administrative positions above department head will be reviewed five years after returning to a full-time teaching appointment. The review process for department heads will be the same as for faculty except the report from the review committee will be submitted the dean of that college.

The post-tenure review should address accomplishments in teaching, in advising and serving students, in research/scholarly/creative activity, and in service. While a candidate should not be expected to prepare additional materials solely for the purpose of the post-tenure review, faculty should provide performance documentation as follows:
(1) a current curriculum vitae and copies of annual evaluations for the years under consideration;
(2) measures of teaching effectiveness including, but not limited to, written student ratings and/or peer evaluations;
(3) a self-assessment; and
(4) other documentation faculty may choose to present.

Goal 2: Recognize and reward outstanding professional accomplishments

Post-tenure review should help tenured faculty members improve their performance. One important means of achieving this objective is formally to recognize and adequately reward outstanding faculty accomplishments. The University will develop a reward structure that recognizes faculty excellence, supports distinguished faculty work, attracts and retains outstanding faculty, and enhances the academic reputation of VSU. Such a reward program should include, among other measures, the following:
(1) increased visibility for faculty achievements in teaching, scholarship, and service;
(2) substantial merit-pay increases that are in addition to those awarded through the annual evaluation process; and
(3) continuation, expansion, and support of course reassignment policy and an enhancement of the leave of absence program for the development of faculty scholarship, other creative professional activities, and teaching.

Goal 3: Detect and remediate sub-standard professional performance
If, as a result of the review process, the need for faculty development is recommended, the Promotion and Tenure Committee will provide a written summary of its findings and any recommendations to the department/unit head. Department/unit heads should add their own comments, confer with the faculty member, and present the findings. Both the department/unit head and the faculty member must sign the report indicating the results had been presented and discussed. If a development plan is proposed, recommendations from the Promotion and Tenure Committee will be forwarded to the department/unit head for additional suggestions.

This development plan must accomplish the following:
(a) define specific goals or outcomes;
(b) outline activities to be undertaken to achieve these goals or outcomes;
(c) contain a schedule; and
(d) define the criteria by which the faculty member's progress will be monitored.
The department/unit head will be responsible for forwarding the faculty member's development plan resulting from post-tenure review to the appropriate administrator at least one level above the faculty member's unit and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The department/unit head and administrative officer are responsible for arranging appropriate support for the approved plan, if required. This process will be integrated into the timetable for personnel decisions and merit pay decisions established by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The development plan will be signed by the members of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, the department/unit head, and the faculty member. A copy of this signed plan will be provided to the faculty member, committee members, the department/unit head, and the appropriate dean. As part of the annual evaluation, the department/unit head will meet with the faculty member engaged in enhancement work to review progress according to the plan. The outcome of this review will be included in the annual evaluation. If, in a period of time not to exceed three years, the department/unit head and Promotion and Tenure Committee agree the faculty member has been successful, they will report this to the department/unit head, dean, and the Vice President for Academic

Affairs. A faculty member who successfully completes the development plan will be reviewed 5 years from the date of the original review.

For a faculty member who fails to achieve the improvements identified in the development plan within the agreed-upon timetable as evidenced by the department/unit head's evaluation, both the faculty member and head will be asked to submit a written explanation to the Promotion and Tenure Committee. The faculty member's account should explain why the faculty member has been unable to meet the terms of the development plan. The Promotion and Tenure committee may respond to these written explanations in one of three ways. The Promotion and Tenure Committee:
(1) may agree with the faculty member's evaluation that performance has improved;
(2) may agree with the faculty member's explanation for why the performance goal(s) have not been met; in this case, the committee will work with the faculty member to revise the development plan; or
(3) disagree with the faculty member's explanation; in this case it will prepare a report of the entire post-tenure review process specific to the case, and forward it to the faculty member, the department/unit head, and the dean with the recommendation that appropriate sanctions be implemented.

Regardless of the committee's recommendation, the faculty member can follow the appeals process established by the Board of Regents. If the administration decides to initiate sanctions or dismissal procedures because of an unsatisfactory performance on the part of the faculty member, it will adhere to the University and Board of Regents guidelines for dismissal for cause.

Establishing Standards of Performance
Each department/unit will periodically review and maintain its statement of expectations for satisfactory performance applicable to all faculty members (tenured and non-tenured). Departmental/unit statements will address expectations for the areas of teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service. These must be as specific as possible, without arbitrarily precluding the diverse contributions that individual faculty members might make to the university community. Individual differences in teaching, scholarship, and service are valued. After approval by the members of the department/unit, the statement will be submitted to the dean for review.

The dean of each unit will certify in writing that department/unit expectations are in keeping with the established mission of the college, that they meet minimum standards, and that expectations are equitable throughout the college. These expectations will be provided to all new faculty. Questions concerning these policies and procedures will be answered at annual meetings open to all faculty of the college.

Conclusion
This post-tenure review provides an opportunity to assess faculty development goals and achievements and provides assistance to faculty in ensuring continuous intellectual and professional growth. The post-tenure review is distinguished from the annual review in

that it requires faculty and administrators to assess achievements and goals over a longer term. It also merges the faculty and administration into a unit dedicated to expanding and strengthening the overall quality of education at VSU by encouraging highly motivated and professionally active tenured faculty.

APPENDIX A

Guidelines for Interpreting Student Opinion of Instruction (SOI)

Note: The following recommendations are taken from the University of North Dakota website, with only slight modifications.
http://www.und.edu/dept/oid/evaluation_literature.htm

Student course ratings have many uses, particularly if viewed over time and across courses. Student ratings provide information that instructors can use to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement in their teaching. Furthermore, departments and teaching units can use student ratings in the aggregate to assess the overall performance of multi-course and multi-instructor units, as well as to evaluate individual instructors for personnel reasons, such as decisions regarding retention, promotion, tenure and merit pay.

The recommendations listed below can provide helpful guidelines for the use of student course ratings in personnel decisions.

1. Student ratings must be used in concert with other data that relate to the quality of a faculty member's teaching, rather than as a sole indicator of teaching quality. Other sources such as peer reviews of classroom sessions, peer reviews of curricular materials, and faculty self-reflection should be assessed in addition to student evaluations to gain a true sense of the teaching skills and performance of a faculty member. Consideration of these other sources of evidence is especially important because student ratings alone do not provide sufficient evidence of the extent of student learning in a course.

2. Evaluations from more than a single section should be used in making any decision about teaching quality. Research has shown that ratings from at least five courses are necessary to assure adequate reliability. The validity of the ratings for measuring teaching quality is increased as a greater variety of course formats is represented in the data upon which decisions are based. Trends in ratings across years may also be important in assessing teaching.

3. Overall ratings of teaching effectiveness are most appropriate to use in personnel decisions. Overall ratings of the teacher and the course tend to correlate more closely with student achievement scores than do other items. More specific items should be used by the faculty member for review of specific skills and areas for improvement.

4. Small differences in individual evaluations should not be used as a basis for differential decisions. Because student ratings yield numerical averages, there is a temptation to overestimate the precision of the averages that are presented. Small differences in ratings may not be meaningful. It is better to deal with much broader classifications, such as

Excellent/Good/Acceptable/Unacceptable or Significantly Exceeds Expectations/Meets Expectations/Falls Short of Expectations/Falls Significantly Short of Expectations.

5. Interpretations of student ratings averages should be guided by awareness that students tend to rate faculty at or near the high end of the scale. It is therefore not appropriate to use the median (or 50th percentile) as a presumed dividing line between strong and weak teachers. More appropriate would be to assume that the majority of teachers are strong. It is also appropriate, when evaluating average ratings of individual instructors, to consider relevant comparisons (see Recommendation 6) and specific characteristics of courses taught (see Recommendation 7).

6. Comparative data should be used with caution. Department-wide comparison data might be reported on the summary report. However, for comparisons to be useful, the normative group should be based on more than a narrow population of instructors. Smaller departments may not want to rely on departmental norms but use norms calculated for a number of similar departments.

7. Course characteristics should be considered when interpreting results. For example, large lecture courses typically receive lower ratings than smaller courses, new courses being taught for the first time receive lower ratings than well-established courses, introductory courses for non-majors receive lower ratings than higher division courses for majors. Adjustments for course type should be made in order to have a fairer sense of the faculty member's teaching skills. One way to adjust for course types is by choosing similar courses for normative comparisons.

8. Faculty members should be given an opportunity to respond to evaluation results. Faculty should have an opportunity to discuss the objectives of the course, how the teaching methods were used to meet those objectives, and how circumstances in the course might have affected evaluations. Furthermore, other evaluation information gained from a given course (see Recommendation 1) can aid with the interpretation of ratings results. (At VSU, faculty members are given the chance to respond in their annual Faculty Activity Report).

9. Administration of course ratings should be scheduled to maximize the number of respondents. Generally, evaluations will have greater validity when higher proportions of the enrolled students complete evaluation forms. Ratings may not be an accurate reflection of the entire class when smaller proportions of students respond. This problem can be particularly acute in small classes. It is recommended that at least two-thirds of enrolled students must be included in the results to have any confidence in the results. As

proportions decrease, particularly in small classes, there is greater opportunity for the rating of one or a few students to disproportionately affect the results.

For References, see http://www.und.edu/dept/oid/evaluation_literature.htm

Thinking about Teaching Evaluations http://www.oberlin.edu/cot/pdweval.htm

Patty deWinstanley, Associate Professor of Psychology (Oberlin), prepared the following based on her reading of the extensive literature on teaching evaluations. She focused predominantly on three literature reviews: [1] Cashin, W. E. (1995). Student Ratings of Teaching: The Research Revisited. Center for Faculty Evaluation and Development, Idea Paper no.32; [2] Aleamoni, L.M. (1999). Student rating myths versus research facts from 1924 to 1988. Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 13(2), 153-166. (Provided to COT in Spring, 2000); and [3] Pratt, D. D. (1997). Reconceptualizing the evaluation of teaching in higher education. Higher Education, 34, 23-44.

1. Students can make reliable and valid judgments about an instructor and certain aspects of instruction.

A. Reliability

Just as you would throw away a bathroom scale that gave you a different measure of your weight every time that you stepped on it, an evaluation form with low reliability also should be thrown away. Fortunately, under best case scenarios, student evaluation forms have been shown to be reliable.

Reliability refers to the consistency, stability, and replicability of a measurement.

The consistency of student evaluations refers to the extent that students within the same class give similar ratings on a given question. Good consistency is achievable with class sizes greater than 30. Class sizes of 10 or fewer students will probably not produce adequate consistency.

The stability of student evaluations refers to the agreement among raters over time. Student evaluations tend to be fairly stable. Thus, one can expect to see good agreement between ratings at the end of the semester and ratings given by those same students years after graduation. Some institutions spend a lot of time and effort surveying graduates about teaching effectiveness for tenure decisions. The literature suggests that little if any new information is obtained because of the high stability levels of student evaluations.

The replicability of student evaluations refers to the extent that the same instructor is rated the same for the same course over a number of semesters and for all his or her courses. Replicability is high for both the same course over a number of semesters and for different courses taught by the same instructor.

Cashin (1995) provides the following guidelines for assuring that acceptable levels of reliability are achieved for student evaluations when making personnel decisions.

1. Reliability will be achieved only to the extent that the surveys are well designed, thus forms should be developed in consultation with someone knowledgeable about educational measurement.

2. Reliability will be achieved when using "ratings from a variety of courses, for two or more courses from every term for at least two years, totaling at least five courses." If there are less than 15-20 students in any class, data from additional classes are recommended.

Aleamoni (1999) echoes Cashin's suggestions and further emphasizes the importance of consultation in the construction of the evaluation forms: "It should be noted, however, that wherever student rating forms are not carefully constructed with the aid of professionals, as in the case of most student- and faculty- generated forms, the reliabilities may be so low as to negate completely the evaluation effect and its results".

B. Validity

Although you might not throw away a scale that always reported your weight at ten pounds lighter than every other scale that you have stepped on, you would know that the scale isn't a valid measure of your weight. A scale can be highly reliable (always giving you the same weight) but not valid (the weight is really ten pounds under your actual weight). Student evaluations can also be reliable (in the ways mentioned), but not valid. That is, student evaluations might not measure "effective teaching."

Validity refers to the extent that student evaluations measure what we want them to measure, that is, good teaching. There are several studies reported in the literature indicating that student evaluations can be valid measures of some aspects of teaching effectiveness. To illustrate, student ratings have been found to correlate with final exam performance, instructor's self-ratings, ratings of colleagues, and ratings of administrators. In addition, numerical ratings tend to correlate well with student comments on open-end questions.

2. Some variables that are unrelated to teaching effectiveness do correlate with student evaluations. In addition, some variables that have been purported to correlate with student ratings do not.

When considering student evaluations as part of a personnel evaluation, the variables that are unrelated to teaching effectiveness but do correlate with student evaluations should be taken into consideration. The variables listed below as correlating with student evaluations are the ones for which a consistent pattern based on many studies has been obtained.

A. Elective courses are rated higher than required courses.

B. More advanced students give higher ratings than less advanced students.

C. Grades are weakly correlated with student ratings: Higher grades are associated with somewhat higher ratings.

D. Humanities courses receive higher ratings than social science courses, and social science courses receive higher ratings than science courses.

The variables listed below are the ones that many people believe are correlated with student ratings, but for which inconsistent results have been found.

A. Size of the class (although, keep in mind the issue of reliability when class size falls below 15).

B. Gender of the student

C. Gender of the instructor

D. An interaction between gender of the student and gender of the instructor

E. Time of day that the course is offered.

F. Whether students are majors or non-majors.

G. Rank of instructor

Information regarding the type of variables that have an impact on student evaluations must be kept in mind when comparing evaluations from different courses. At the very least, department heads and deans should be aware of the impact of variables on student evaluations that we do not think are important to teaching effectiveness. Furthermore, the information provided to the persons making personnel decisions must be periodically updated. The research on student evaluations is very active. More researchers are beginning to investigate the interactions of several variables on student evaluations. To insure appropriate interpretations of the evaluations, up-to-date information must be provided.

3. Student evaluations are multidimensional. Contrary to some people's perceptions, student evaluations are not simply measuring popularity. Most researchers show that at least six dimensions, or factors, are commonly found in student rating forms. Below is a list of the factors. Any student evaluation form must have a few questions dedicated to assessing each of the six factors.

A. Course Organization

B. Clarity, communication skills

C. Teacher/student interaction, or rapport

D. Course difficulty, workload

E. Grading and examinations

F. Student self-rated learning

All authors of the review articles cautioned that a single overall (or general) measure of teaching effectiveness is inadequate because single items are not reliable or valid. Futhermore, single items, such as in general how would you rate this teacher's effectiveness, tend to correlate with many more of the factors that are unrelated to teaching effectiveness (i.e., gender, class size, etc.)

4. All authors of the review articles state that student evaluations must be used in conjunction with other methods of evaluating teaching. Pratt (1997) lists six principles for evaluating teachers in a broader approach that includes student evaluations as only one aspect of teaching evaluations.

The six principles are as follows:

A. Evaluation should acknowledge and respect diversity in actions, intentions, and beliefs.

B. Evaluation should involve multiple and credible sources of data.

C. Evaluation should assess substantive, as well as technical, aspects of teaching.

D. Evaluations should consider planning, implementation, and results of teaching.

E. Evaluation should contribute to the improvement of teaching.

F. Evaluation should be done in consultation with key individuals responsible for taking data and recommendations forward within an institution.

Understanding Quantitative Data in the Student Opinion of Instruction

Common Statistical Terms—What they mean and how to use them
http://cstl.syr.edu/cstl2/Home/Teaching%20Support/Teaching%20at%20SU/Student%20Ratings/12A400.htm

N—The letter "N" represents the sample size (number of students who responded to the course evaluation overall or to a particular item).

Mean—The mean score represents the numerical average for a set of responses. The following points assume a scale in which a low score is assigned to negative responses (i.e., poor) and a high score to positive responses (i.e., excellent).

Generally, the higher the mean score, the better the evaluation.

On a 5-point scale, items with mean scores above 4.0 generally reflect teaching aspects that are particularly effective.

Standard Deviation—The standard deviation represents the distribution of the responses around the mean. It indicates the degree of consistency among student responses. The standard deviation is often abbreviated in data tables as *s*, *sd*, *SD*, *std*, or *StD*.

The standard deviation in conjunction with the mean provides a better understanding of your data. Begin by adding the standard deviation to the mean. Next subtract the standard deviation from the mean. The range between the two calculated values represents where approximately 2/3 of your students' responses fall. For example, if the mean score is 3.3 with a std of 0.4, then 2/3 of the students' responses lie between 2.9 (3.3 - 0.4) and 3.7 (3.3 + 0.4).

The standard deviation represents the degree of similarity among the students' responses. A small standard deviation (as in the example above) reflects a high degree of consensus among the students. Since there is a small numerical range (2.9 - 3.7) in which 2/3 of the ratings fall, the response pattern among your students is very consistent.

A large standard deviation indicates that there was considerable disagreement among the students' responses. For example, if the mean score is 3.3 with a std of 1.0, then 2/3 of the students' responses lie between 2.3 and 4.3. This indicates a wide disparity among the responses to this item, with the mean simply representing a numerical average of the responses and not a consensus rating by the class.

More on Standard Deviation & Mean
http://www.brevard.edu/fyc/fya/CuseoLink.htm

The standard deviation for individual items is an index of agreement or disagreement among student raters. Perfect agreement yields a standard deviation of 0. Deviations of less than 1.0 indicate relatively good agreement in a 5-point scale. Deviations of 1.2 and higher indicate that the mean may not be a good measure of student agreement. This situation may occur when opinion in a class is strongly divided between very high and very low ratings or, possibly, is evenly dispersed across the entire response scale, resulting in a mean that does not represent a "typical" student opinion in any meaningful sense. A mean of 3.0 or 3.5 [on a 5-point scale] cannot be construed to represent "average" performance in the sense of middle-range performance when the mean is simply an artifact of strong disagreement among students.

UNDERSTANDING WRITTEN COMMENTS IN THE STUDENT OPINION OF INSTRUCTION (SOI)

Individual written comments should be interpreted only in the context of all written comments and student ratings; an individual comment should not be considered meaningful unless it is supported by other written comments or by the ratings. Any analysis of comments should seek patterns rather than focusing on isolated statements.
http://www.radford.edu/~mayleswo/sef/Principles.html
http://www.uni.edu/vpaa/GuidelinesforStudentEvaluation.pdf

Appendix B
Student Opinion on Instruction (SOI)

As you answer the questions below, be aware that successful learning requires effort by both instructor and students.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Course assignments were clearly explained in the syllabus or other handouts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. Course policies (for example, attendance, late papers) were clearly explained in the syllabus or other handouts.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. The instructor was well prepared for class.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. The instructor made effective use of class time to cover course content.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Course assignments were returned in a timely manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. The instructor explained grading criteria (for example, grammar, content) clearly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. The instructor was willing to discuss course-related issues either in person or by email / telephone.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. The instructor responded to student questions on course material in a professional manner.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. This course increased my knowledge of the topic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. This course helped me further develop my academic skills (for example, reading, writing, speaking, critical analysis, performance, artistic abilities, etc.).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

1. WHAT WERE THE BEST FEATURES ABOUT THIS COURSE?

2. WHAT ARE YOUR INSTRUCTOR'S STRENGTHS?

3. WHAT SUGGESTIONS WOULD YOU GIVE YOUR INSTRUCTOR FOR IMPROVING THE COURSE?

Appendix C

Annual Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan

Faculty Member: _____

Department/Division: _____

Year: _____

The Annual Faculty Activity Report, Action Plan, and Annual Evaluation document plays an important role for faculty, departments, and the units within the university as part of strategic planning and development. This document is also a critical component of the promotion and tenure process for faculty; it serves as the primary source of information for the university annual report and as a means to evaluate individual units' progress toward meeting strategic goals. Individual programs and departments should develop policies that address specific components of the report such as allocation of loads for service or special assignments. It is important that research and scholarly activities be discussed in departments and colleges so that listings of activities are clearly and consistently reported across the unit.

Faculty members completing this form should make every effort clearly to address all of the areas within this document that relate to the individual's responsibilities at the university. Activities should be listed only once within the report; do not include the same activity in two different categories. (Parttime Faculty complete only Section A).

The role definitions in this document are adapted from Raoul A. Arreola's *Developing a Comprehensive Faculty Evaluation System*. Bolton, MA: Anker, 1995.

A. TEACHING AND INSTRUCTION

Teaching and instruction are defined as those activities associated with the design and delivery of instructional events to students. For purposes of evaluation, the instructional model will include the following: **classroom performance**, **materials preparation and relevancy**, and **record keeping and instructional management.**

1. Courses Taught:

	COURSE NUMBER	NEW PREPARATION*	ENROLLMENT	AVERAGE SOI
Spring				
Summer				
Fall				

* New Preparation is defined as a course taught for the first time or a course which has not been taught for a period of three years.

2. Evaluate what you have learned about your teaching effectiveness through reading your Student Opinions of Instruction (SOI).

3. Briefly cite any innovative or experimental teaching approaches used and the associated results. Modifications in course content, introduction of technology are also appropriate to mention here. Point out any modifications made to courses based on evaluations of your instruction, SOIs, and/or peer reviews, and/or department head evaluation.

4. Guided independent study, internships, or other teaching responsibilities:

Name of Student	Description of Activity

5. Awards or special recognitions earned in this area.

Please be prepared to include materials supporting your report if requested. Newly developed course materials should be included in departmental files.

GOALS

Planning is an important part of the evaluation process. When completing this section include specific goals and objectives, remembering that goals should be broad and flexible and recognizing that they may be subject to change. Relate your goals to past Faculty Activity Reports; Department Head Evaluations; Departmental, College, and University Goals; and Strategic Plans. Some plans may need specific timelines or may need to be set within the context of other actions taking place within a department. These details should be included in this report.

A. Review and list your goals for last year in teaching and instruction and indicate progress made.

GOAL	ACTION	COMPLETED OR IN-PROGESS

B. List goals for next year.

B. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND PRODUCTIVITY

Professional growth and productivity is defined as improving the competence of faculty members to better fulfill the role and responsibilities of their position within the institution, professional achievement or contribution to the teaching/learning process, or education profession in the faculty member's area of expertise.

1. Publications, Performances, Exhibitions, and/or Creative Research:

Please list publications, performances, exhibitions, and/or creative research (attach a copy of each publication and use a standard bibliography form, including page reference and date. For artistic or creative activity, include appropriate citations, references, or documentation).

2. Research/Scholarship and/or Artistic Work in Progress:

3. Appearance on professional programs:

Professional Association	Nature of Contribution	Date

4. Other research completed during the current year and not reported above.

5. Applications for university and external funding/funding received

Title	Funding Agency	Amount Requested/Received

6. Memberships and offices held in professional associations:

Professional Association	Office Held /Member

7. Meetings of professional associations attended:

Professional Association	Location	Important Sessions Attended

8. Professional Training Sessions/Workshops attended

Professional Development Activity	Date	Topics Covered

9. Paid consultancies, workshops, professional development activities provided.

10. Awards or special recognitions earned in this area.

Please be prepared to include materials supporting your report if requested. Make sure that appropriate final reports for research projects have been submitted.

GOALS

Planning is an important part of the evaluation process. When completing this section include specific goals and objective, remembering that goals should be broad and flexible and recognizing that they may be subject to change. Relate your goals to past Faculty Activity Reports; Department Head Evaluations; Departmental, College, and University Goals; and Strategic Plans. Some plans may need specific timelines or may need to be set within the context of other actions taking place within a department. These details should be included in this report.

A. Review and list your goals for last year in professional growth and productivity and indicate progress made.

GOAL	ACTION	COMPLETED OR IN-PROGESS

B. List goals for next year.

C. COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

College service is defined as service rendered by a faculty member in support of the division, department, college, or university. Community service is defined as the application of a faculty member's recognized area of expertise, in the community, without pay. The acceptance of pay constitutes consulting and, as such, is considered under Professional Growth and Productivity. For purposes of evaluation, service to the college or community does not include any functions defined and included elsewhere.

1. Advising:

a. Estimated Number of Advisees _____

Undergraduate _____

Graduate _____

b. List any positive innovations used in advising.

2. Departmental, Division/College, University, and University-System Committees:

Committee	Nature of Service (Chair, Member)	Level (System, University, College, Department)

3. Advisor to Student Organizations.

4. Membership/Leadership/Participation in community organizations/activities

Community organization or activity	Role

5. Unpaid consultancies, workshops, professional development activities provided.

6. Awards or special recognitions earned in this area.

- ***Please be prepared to include materials supporting your report if requested. Letters of support or appreciation, reports, information from conferences shared or utilized by your department would be appropriate support material for evidence in this area.***

GOALS

Planning is an important part of the evaluation process. When completing this section include specific goals and objectives, remembering that goals should be broad and flexible and recognizing that they may be subject to change. Relate your goals to past Faculty Activity Reports; Department Head Evaluations; Departmental, College, and University Goals; and Strategic Plans. Some plans may need specific timelines or may need to be set within the context of other actions taking place within a department. These details should be included in this report.

A. Review and list your goals for last year in college and community service and indicate progress made.

GOAL	ACTION	COMPLETED OR IN-PROGESS

B. List goals for next year.

Valdosta State University
Annual Faculty Evaluation
(Calendar Year _____)

Date of Evaluation:_____

I. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

College/Division:

Department:

Name:

Highest Degree Earned: Year:

Appointment Year: Appointment Rank:

Present Rank:

Year First Promotion: Year Second Promotion:

Total Years at VSU: Years in Present Rank:

Next Scheduled Personnel Action:

Eligibility Date:

FACULTY ANNUAL EVALUATION

After reading the faculty member's Faculty Activity Report and Action Plan, department/unit heads will complete this annual evaluation. The statement should evaluate the faculty member's performance in the areas of teaching and instruction, professional growth and productivity, and college and community service. It should also include recommendations if activity in any given area is determined to need improvement. Attention should be given in cases where a faculty member has any form of load adjustment related to their duties within the department/unit. The department/unit head should address the faculty member's planning and goals for the following year and determine if they are aligned with departmental, college, and university goals, and if they are prioritized in a manner that facilitates appropriate levels of activity that may lead to tenure and promotion. The department/unit head's assessment of the faculty member should be based on departmentally established standards of performance.

SATISFACTORY: Satisfactory performance is demonstrated by performance levels that are recognized as meeting all reasonable and acceptable standards compared to other professional faculty within the department.

UNSATISFACTORY: Unsatisfactory performance is demonstrated by performance levels that are clearly recognized as not meeting reasonable and minimal standards compared to other professional faculty within the department, or documentation is not provided by faculty when requested or prescribed in the evaluation process.

1. Teaching and Instruction

___Satisfactory **___Unsatisfactory**

2. Professional Growth and Productivity

___Satisfactory **___Unsatisfactory**

3. College and Community Service

___Satisfactory **___Unsatisfactory**

4. Recommended Activities for Improvement

Progress toward next personnel action (List next scheduled personnel action and earliest date, or due date for that action): _____

Overall Evaluation: Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

_____	_____	_____	_____
Department/Unit Head	Date	Faculty Member	Date

The faculty member's signature on this document does not indicate agreement with its contents but that the faculty member has read the evaluation and discussed it with the evaluator. The faculty member has the right to append a response to this evaluation.

_____	_____
Dean's Signature	Date

_____	_____
VPAA Signature	Date