

## NORWICH UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

### Introduction to the Annual Appraisal Process

In order to improve the process of performance planning and review for staff at Norwich University, we are proposing a new approach which will reduce the emphasis on ratings of prescribed dimensions using a standard evaluation form to document past performance. This new approach will focus on work planning and goal setting discussions between employees and supervisors, and regular and frequent two-way feedback. This approach will require managers and supervisors to integrate an ongoing work planning process into their supervisory role. This new emphasis on proactive work planning and regular two-way discussion is designed to promote an environment that focuses on the work process and results, and to reinforce the connection between individual tasks and the success of the unit and the University.

The foundation of this new process is the development of work plans. Each staff member is expected to develop an annual work plan for his or her job in discussion with the supervisor. The work plan outlines the key areas of responsibility for the employee's job and sets out specific goals for that work for the coming year. Employees can use whatever format they prefer for the work plan. A template for a work plan, titled "Performance Management Document 1: Work Plan," is provided as an attachment to this outline. Once created, progress on the work plan should be reviewed at least twice a year. The plan should be revised and updated if necessary as circumstances and job demands change. As part of this new process, Human Resources will provide training in how to develop a work plan. The purpose of work planning is for supervisors and staff members to achieve a common understanding of the staff member's work goals and expected results. A work plan is also the basis for two-way feedback and coaching through the year. Used effectively, a work plan can provide clarity and understanding between the supervisor and the staff member on three things:

- what are the core elements of my job?
- What work goals should have priority for the coming year?
- What progress am I making in accomplishing these goals?

Underlying these is also the most important question of "...and why am I doing it?" Supervisors can help answer this by clarifying the purpose, direction, and goals of your unit as they relate to Norwich University's Vision and Mission, and the goals outlined in NU2019. This kind of consideration of a job's role and purpose is particularly important during organizational changes and changes in the way in which tasks are accomplished.

In developing a work plan, use the following process:

1. Consider the purpose, vision, and business goals of your organization and your unit. Discuss how these integrate with the overall job goal of your position. The overall job goal formula is: The (job title) is responsible for (what) (why).
2. Define the primary areas of responsibility for the job. Rather than listing every task performed, focus on the most important or time consuming parts of the job. For most jobs, this will mean about 3 to 10 primary activities. Use brief phrases to describe major categories of work in the job. These primary components are likely to remain fairly constant from year to year in many positions, but can be easily updated if responsibilities change.

3. For each primary area of responsibility, develop statements of the job goals in that area. A goal is a written statement of what you expect to accomplish or improve within a specific period of time. Several goals can be listed under a key area of responsibility, if appropriate. A simple goal formula is (action taken) (expected result or outcome). Example: Decrease response time for service requests. The goal statement may include reference to how the expected result is to be achieved.
4. Goals are most useful when they include a measurable objective or outcome, or otherwise specify how success will be determined. A complete goal statement should answer the question “How will anyone be able to tell that I have achieved this goal?” Measurable objectives allow you to gauge success or progress toward meeting the goal. Example: By May 1st, decrease response time for service requests from 72 hours to 24 hours for urgent requests and from 2 weeks to 1 week for non-urgent requests.
5. For long term projects or broadly defined goals it may be helpful to develop an action plan, which is a list of tasks or activities that will be undertaken to achieve the goal, with a timetable for each. A formula for developing an action plan is: who will do what, when, with what resources.

Once the employee has drafted the work plan for his or her job, the supervisor and the employee will be expected to meet and discuss the proposed work plan and reach agreement on the expected results. The work plan document will be the basis for regular communication between employee and supervisor, including an informal mid-year review of progress and a formal end of year discussion. During these meetings, any changes in responsibilities and expected results should be noted on the work plan document.

What about appraisals? All supervisors are expected to schedule an annual appraisal meeting of at least one hour with each employee to listen to the employee’s reflections about his or her work over the past year, discuss the outcomes of that work, and consider suggestions for improving the work of the unit through the work of the employee. Again, the work plan is the starting point for this conversation. Guidelines to assist with such discussions will be provided by Human Resources. This formal wrap-up discussion leads into developing the work plan for the coming year.

An appraisal document based on the work plan, showing the goals and expected outcomes, and the results actually achieved, should be submitted to Human Resources each year after the annual appraisal meeting. This document can be in any format that the employee and supervisor choose. We have provided two templates that can be used or modified for the annual appraisal. The first is a very open framework for a narrative appraisal, titled “Performance Management Document 2: Narrative Annual Appraisal.” The second template is a more structured format, titled “Performance Management Document 3: Annual Appraisal Form.”

When the work plan is used as a reference tool for feedback discussions, and when two-way feedback about work goals is a regular and frequent part of conversations between employee and supervisor, the end of year formal appraisal discussion is a natural wrap-up of those conversations.

## Work Planning Meeting Suggestions

The purpose of the work planning meeting is for the supervisor and the staff member to reach common ground on what is expected of the staff member, and what support and resources she can expect from the supervisor and others. This meeting is the opportunity for both of you to discuss perceptions of the staff member's specific job now and to clarify expectations for the upcoming year.

*"...Appraisal just looks in the rearview mirror. Planning looks to the future to maximize performance to come, not to analyze performance that is past and unchangeable. The real increases in productivity come from aiming the employee at the bull's-eye and then getting out of the way."*

--Robert Bacal, Performance Management

### Before the Meeting

1. Staff members should prepare a draft work plan with areas of responsibilities and possible goals.
2. Supervisors should prepare for the meeting by considering their priorities and goals for the position for the coming year.
3. Arrange a time and place to meet privately, without interruption.
4. Before the meeting, review the draft work plan. Copies should be available for both supervisor and staff member.

### During the Work planning Meeting:

1. Work to establish rapport between staff member and supervisor and to maintain an atmosphere of mutual communication. Remember to ask questions based on the goal setting nature of the meeting, and to listen carefully to the answers. Observe body language as an essential part of listening.
2. If each of you have prepared material in advance, take time to compare your lists of job responsibilities and goals and to note any significant differences.
3. Work toward settling the differences. It is not useful to spend time selling your exact wording or format. It is essential for your job, however, that agreement is reached on accomplishing your department's goals through the clear, agreed-upon overall job goals and key responsibilities of the staff members.
4. When you have arrived at a common understanding of the job responsibilities, agree on a process to prepare an updated copy of the work plan within a week of this meeting.
5. Establish intervals at which supervisor and staff member will meet during the year to discuss details of progress toward the goals listed.
6. Agree that if, at any time during the year, either of you find the work plan in need of revision, irrelevant to actual work demands, or unreasonable in any way, you will meet to revise the plan.

### After the Work planning Meeting:

1. Schedule some additional time to complete your notes immediately following your meeting.
2. The supervisor and the staff member should initial and date the revised work plan within one week of the meeting. Keep a paper and electronic copy with both the supervisor and the staff member.
3. Confirm the schedule of time to check in see what resources and support are needed for success.

<b>Employee Name:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Supervisor Name</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
<b>Initial Work Plan Conference Date:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Feedback Meeting:</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Feedback Meeting:</b>

**Overall Job Goal and how this work contributes to the overall mission of the Department and the University:**

<b>Key Areas of Responsibility (3 to 10 suggested)</b>	<b>Effort %</b>	<b>Goals (What specific outcomes are expected; how will success be determined.)</b>	<b>Action Plan (Optional) (Who does what by when with what resources.)</b>
1. Teamwork and Professional Conduct		Perform as an effective member of the work group, assuming an appropriate role and level of responsibility. Adhere to department Customer Service Standards.	

**NORWICH UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT  
DOCUMENT 2: NARRATIVE ANNUAL APPRAISAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Appraisal Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Last Appraisal: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Discuss the primary job responsibilities, work plans and results achieved for the year of this review.

2. Discuss the work plans and expected results or improvements for the year ahead.

3. Annual appraisal level and comments.

4. Employee comments.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Immediate Supervisor      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature      Date  
Your signature indicates neither agreement nor disagreement with this appraisal, but it does indicate that you have read the appraisal and that it has been discussed with you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Department Head      Date

**NORWICH UNIVERSITY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT DOCUMENT 3: ANNUAL APPRAISAL FORM**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Appraisal Period: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Last Appraisal: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPRAISAL LEVEL DEFINITIONS**

- O – Clearly Outstanding Consistently exceeds expectations for achieving position goals/responsibilities
- A – Above Expectations Consistently meets and frequently exceeds expectations for achieving position goals/responsibilities
- M – Meets Expectations Consistently meets expectations for achieving position goals/responsibilities
- B – Below Expectations Partially meets expectations for achieving position goals/responsibilities; marked improvement is necessary
- U – Clearly Unsatisfactory Does not meet position requirements. Immediate and significant improvement is necessary

**IMPORTANCE FACTOR FOR EACH AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Rate each responsibility in terms of its importance to total job performance

- 4 – Critical
- 3 – Very Important
- 2 – Moderately Important
- 1 – Minor Importance

**I. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

RESPONSIBILITY	GOALS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED	Importance Factor	Appraisal Level
1.			
2.			
3.			

