

Discussion Points for Mentors and Mentees on Annual Appraisals

Annual appraisals provide an opportunity for faculty to receive feedback from their chairs on their professional progress and plans for the future. For an overview of the appraisal and planning process, read section [4.3.5 of the Faculty Handbook](#). You may also wish to review your department's [workload policies and merit metrics](#).

Mentees may want to meet with their mentors for guidance as to how best to prepare for, and get the most out of, the annual appraisal. Below are some potential points of discussion for a mentoring meeting. Every department is different, so it is important for mentors and mentees to discuss these points (and others) within the context of the department.

1. **Faculty Appraisal and Planning Form.** Prior to meeting with the chair, you will complete a “Faculty Appraisal and Planning form” that lists your activities in research, teaching, and service over the evaluation period. Different departments have different guidelines for determining which types of activities “count” and different metrics for scoring them. Mentees may wish to discuss their draft form with their mentor prior to submitting it to the chair. It might also be useful for mentees to see completed versions of this form from other members of their department.
2. **Chair Meeting.** The meeting with the chair offers a mutually beneficial framework for the chair to learn more about your work and its impact – and for you to learn about the chair and the current culture of the department and the university. It provides opportunities for you to promote your work, ask questions, make requests regarding the next year’s workload, and to discuss your progress towards promotion or leadership. As stated in the Faculty Handbook, “[t]he intent is to determine mutually acceptable goals that develop the faculty member’s strength or correct any weaknesses.”
3. **Joint Appointments.** For faculty with a joint appointment, the appraisal will be conducted in the department that holds the majority portion of the appointment. The evaluating chair should consult with or receive a letter from the second chair before conducting the appraisal. This is important because the evaluating chair is likely not familiar with the faculty member’s work done in the other unit or the evaluation norms in the other unit. If you have a joint appointment, check in with both chairs well before appraisal time to ensure that there is a plan for this communication to occur.
4. **Faculty with Atypical Workloads.** If your assigned workload falls outside the typical range for faculty in your department, be sure to remind your chair of your workload. Examples may include faculty with part-time administrative positions or CT faculty. Even if the Appraisal and Planning Form requires you to include your workload distribution, find ways to re-emphasize it in your written narrative.
5. **New Chairs.** If your chair is new, the appraisal meeting is a great opportunity to promote your work and get to know your new chair as a leader. Even if the new chair is a colleague from your department, they may not be very familiar with your work. If you have an atypical workload or conduct research or engage in teaching activities that is/are non-traditional in your department, you may have to do extra work to help your new chair understand the context of your work and its impact. This is time well spent and will help the chair as well.