

2.1.7 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT

The University of St. Thomas values excellence in its academic and administrative programs. It is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that emphasizes the importance of relating work performance to its mission. This policy supports that commitment and establishes the foundation for the University's pay-for-performance program, which links employee performance and compensation. The principles of equal employment opportunity guide the administration of this policy.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to regular full- and part-time staff with an appointment term of one year or longer, including those covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Excluded from this policy are faculty, adjunct faculty, archdiocesan priests, and temporary employees. The performance assessment process for faculty is outlined in the [University of St. Thomas Faculty Handbook](#).

DEFINITIONS

1 *Performance Assessment*

Is a process of assessing, summarizing, and documenting the work performance of an employee.

2 *Performance Management*

Is an ongoing communication process that involves both the employee and supervisor in

- Identifying and describing essential job functions and relating them to the mission and goals of the university and/or the academic or administrative unit
- Developing realistic and appropriate performance standards
- Giving and receiving feedback about performance
- Writing and communicating the results of the performance assessment
- Planning educational and developmental opportunities to sustain, improve, or build on employee work performance.

3 *Performance Standards*

Are written statements describing how well a job, task, or activity should be performed.

4 *Pay-for-Performance*

Is a method of rewarding employees based on their accomplishments and annual performance assessment. The theory is that employees' compensation should be a direct function of their performance.

SECTION I General Provision

Performance assessment is an important component of the supervisor-employee relationship. It is part of an ongoing process of performance planning, management, and improvement and represents a culmination of past year's discussions between the supervisor and employee about the employee's performance. In contrast, performance management is a continuous process that begins immediately following the initial hiring process and continues throughout the employee's university employment. It is through performance management that the supervisor and employee gain a shared understanding of job expectations.

A. *Purpose of Performance Assessment*

The actual performance assessment serves several purposes. It encourages employee involvement, provides a formal mechanism for employees to receive feedback regarding job performance and expectations, and allows the employee to work closely with the supervisor to establish goals and priorities for the next year. Performance assessment also facilitates growth and development of employees and results in a documented history of employee performance

B. *Pay-for-Performance*

Rewarding employees relative to their performance reinforces workplace behaviors in a manner that increases the likelihood that employees will achieve the goals of their unit and/or the University and their own professional goals. Pay-for-performance attempts to recognize and differentiate between satisfactory and exceptional work performance. Results of the performance assessment process are used as the basis for awarding salary increases subject to the availability of University funds.

SECTION II Performance Assessment and Management Process

The foundation of an effective performance assessment and management process is frequent and timely communication. It is expected that supervisors will inform employees of job requirements and expectations and the way in which employees' performance will be evaluated. Employees are entitled to a thoughtful and timely performance assessment. Its success depends both on the willingness of supervisors to complete a constructive and objective assessment and on the willingness of employees to respond favorably to constructive feedback and, when needed, to improve their performance. As a result, employees are evaluated in writing at least annually with the assessment generally occurring during May and June.

A. *Written Performance Assessment*

A written performance assessment is based on the employee's overall performance in relation to his or her job responsibilities. It takes into account the employee's work behaviors, record of attendance, and other established performance standards. The written assessment is a legal document. It also is an official record of the employee's work performance, which may be considered in future promotion, disciplinary, and other human resources actions.

In addition to the regular performance assessment described above, supervisors may initiate at any time a written out-of-cycle assessment to document and advise an employee of performance deficiencies. Please refer to the University's [Discipline and Corrective Action Policy](#).

An overall rating of "Unsatisfactory" performance expectations must be supported by the contents of the written assessment and accompanied by, as part of the assessment, a developmental plan, which is designated in Part IV of the performance assessment form.

B. *During the Assessment Process*

During the performance assessment process, employees are provided an opportunity to review, discuss, and comment on the actual performance assessment document. The [Performance Assessment Form](#) is signed by the supervisor and employee and placed in the employee's official personnel file, which is maintained by the Human Resources Department. The appropriate member of the Academic and Administrative Leadership Committee or his or her designee also should sign off on all employee assessments within their unit prior to the supervisor filing them with the Human Resources Department. The completed form is placed in the employee's official personnel file, which is maintained by the Human Resources Department.

Job standards and other performance evaluation criteria are established by the supervisor with input from the employee. Detailed instructions about the performance assessment process are available on the Human Resources Department web site in the [Performance Assessment and Management Guidebook](#). Supervisors of unionized employees should consult the labor agreement or contact the Human Resources Department. Trial period employees are evaluated in writing prior to its expiration.

SECTION III Appeals Process

Disagreements occasionally arise over the written performance assessment. In the event an employee disagrees with any part of the written assessment, he or she may attach a supplemental, explanatory response. The response will become a part of the record. If the employee believes the performance assessment is not factually accurate, he or she may request a review by the supervisor, the next level of management, and/or intervention by the Human Resources Department. If the disagreement remains, the employee may file a formal grievance using the university's grievance procedures.

SECTION IV ACCOUNTABILITY

- 1** The Executive Vice Presidents are responsible for assuring that employees governed by this policy receive a timely, factual, and thoughtful performance assessment.
- 2** The Associate Vice President for Human Resources is responsible for monitoring and assuring the uniform and consistent application of this policy.
- 3** Members of the Academic and Administrative Leadership Committee are responsible for assuring the timely, equitable, and implementation of this policy within their respective unit.
- 4** Supervisors and managers are responsible for coaching, counseling, and providing timely and factual feedback to their employees and codifying the same in a written performance assessment.