

Common Questions
NSU Performance Appraisal

What is the purpose of performance appraisal?

The purpose of performance appraisal is to measure levels of job-related behavior. Performance appraisal is a management tool used to improve communication, improve performance, encourage employee development, and guide personnel actions.

Where do I start?

Use the training resources available. Review the procedure and forms. Supervisors should use the current job description as the foundation for the performance appraisal. NSU's mission, vision, values and service excellence values should be considered when evaluating job performance factors, and setting all goals and objectives. Each supervisor should identify the core job duties in the job description, and assess the employee's performance on each of those duties.

Do I have to do performance appraisal on my employee(s)?

Yes, performance appraisals must be completed on all full-time staff, and if you have part-time staff who work at least 500 hours in a six month period.

When are performance appraisals due?

The accountability date is October 1, 2015. Each staff employee should have a performance appraisal on file that is less than 1 year old.

Why are these so important?

It is a good way to give feedback to your employee, and really set performance targets for the coming year. Performance appraisal is required to comply with NSU policy. Performance appraisal forms are important documents that must be completed using responsible communication. Each is discoverable in a court of law.

Why October 1?

You actually have all year to complete the performance appraisal and may do this at any time. Performance appraisals must be completed and less than one year old prior to any wage or salary increase that may be given at a designated time.

What happens if I decide not to do performance appraisal this year?

Performance appraisals for staff employees must be completed. The University is audited to ensure we are in compliance with annual performance appraisals in personnel files. Since performance appraisal is part of managements' responsibility, not completing these will be reflected negatively in your personal performance appraisal.

Should I use the standard forms that are on-line?

Yes. The Office of Human Resources has forms designated and recommended for positions. If you have reasons to use another form, that form must be approved in advance by the Director of Human Resources. A recommendation as to which form to use is posted on-line with the forms. By using the same form by type or title of employee, consistency is maintained.

How do I know if someone is classified as Staff or Faculty?

The Office of Human Resources staff should be able to assist with clarification on this.

Is there any salary/wage increase or a bonus tied into performance appraisals?

Not at this time. Employees rated below standard on the most recent performance appraisal would not be eligible for any salary/wage increase for that period.

What if the employee's job description is out of date?

Job descriptions are designed to outline responsibilities, and not intended to be a list of all duties. NSU updated job descriptions have been prepared as an important element to the NSU grading system. Changes to any job description must be carefully evaluated, and will be coordinated and completed by the Office of Human Resources. All job description must be in the new format. Job descriptions should be less than two years old.

What should I tell my employee about the Mission, Vision, Values and Service Excellence Values?

Hopefully, you have had multiple and continuous discussions with your employees about the values and how the values are incorporated into the work in your department. Be sure you let the employee know your expectation for service in your department, and that the Service Excellence Values are part of performance appraisal. Mission, Vision and Values are part of the performance appraisal process. Employees need to understand the connection of job duties with the University's Mission, Vision and Values.

Can I just write out the performance appraisal and give to my employee to review?

No. Every employee should have a face-to-face meeting with management to review the performance appraisal. The purpose is to open lines of communication between the two parties, clarify expectations and set goals. It is an ideal time to recognize an individual's strengths and contribution to NSU, and agree on changes that might be needed.

What if my employee disagrees with the performance appraisal rating or something I write?

Each employee is given an opportunity to make a comment on the form before it is signed and submitted to the Office of Human Resources. An employee can review the performance appraisal with higher department management.

Does an employee need to sign the performance appraisal form and do I need to sign the self-assessment form?

Yes. All employees do need to sign the form even if they disagree. Signing the form simply acknowledges that the process was completed, not agreement. Yes, supervisors need to sign that they have reviewed the Employee Self-Assessment form.

Do I need a witness in the performance appraisal meeting?

Not necessarily. If you feel more comfortable with another management person in the meeting due to past experience, behavior or because the performance appraisal score is at Does Not Meet Expectations, a third person might be a good idea.

Do I give the employee a copy?

Yes, you may give the employee a copy if requested. You definitely should ensure the employee has a copy of the current job description.

How can I improve the performance appraisal process?

You can ensure that you provide specific, written and measurable justification for ratings. This has been missing from many of the performance appraisals completed. Make the performance appraisal a positive process with continuous improvement as the goal. You should prepare in advance, keep your agreed upon meeting time, allow uninterrupted time, and hold your meeting in a private setting.

What is the NSU attendance standard?

More than six occurrences of unscheduled leave in six months may be considered abuse of leave, outside the standard, and may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Individual departments may establish more specific time notification schedules, and who is designated to be notified upon absence.

What do the new performance ratings mean?

Management should strive for a normal distribution of performance ratings. Performance appraisals at NSU have traditionally been skewed to the high side of performance. When performance appraisal ratings are skewed to one side or the other, this could represent a problem, i.e., inflated performance ratings or too many low performing employees. This type of problem must be corrected for a performance appraisal program to meet the needs of the university and its employees. Normal distribution of rating levels is critical with any performance appraisal system that is tied to a pay incentive.

What if I have already completed my department performance appraisals on an old form?

Performance appraisals that are already completed for this evaluation year (October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015) on alternate forms are acceptable. The Office of Human Resources recommends the comprehensive employee performance appraisal forms located on-line. These forms include: Form A for non-exempt/hourly positions; Form B for exempt/salaried positions; and Form C for positions that report directly to a Vice President. Management may decide between Form A and Form B for performance appraisal provided the same form is used for all employees in the same grade within the department.

Where can I get training?

Resources to assist with effective performance appraisal are available by calling the Office of Human Resources, attending training programs to be announced by the Office of Human Resources, and reviewing information on Blackboard.

What happens to the completed form once I give it to the Office of Human Resources?

The Human Resources staff records the performance appraisal as complete for that employee. HR will use the data to determine overall NSU rating scores. The Additional Consideration section may be reviewed by the Cabinet.

What if I have suggestions on the forms?

Provide your feedback to the Office of Human Resources.