### Guidelines for Writing a Self-Evaluation

(Most recently revised April 2025)

These guidelines are meant to help both new faculty and longstanding faculty write a self-evaluation that will enable the Personnel Committee to fairly evaluate your contributions to the College and help you plan for the future.

Remember that the Personnel Committee uses five sources of information as we put together a review:

1. The faculty member’s self-evaluation
2. The peer review, normally written by someone in the faculty member’s department
3. Observation of a class session by a committee member
4. Categorical responses on the Student Feedback on Courses (SFC)
5. Comments on the SFC
6. **CHRISTIAN VOCATION**

Take your time as you write your answers to these questions. It is the College’s expectation that all faculty members will continue to subscribe to the doctrinal standards as outlined in Chapter 3 of the College Constitution, that is, the Three Forms of Unity (the Belgic Confession, the Canons of Dort, and the Heidelberg Catechism). The Faculty Handbook offers a definition of subscription in 2.1.2.C. It is also the expectation that all faculty members will be members of a Christian church. These issues are addressed by questions 1 and 2.

It is accepted that members of a variety of churches may have beliefs that may diverge from these documents in some ways. Use your answer to question 3 as an opportunity to tell the College and the Personnel Committee about areas of both convergence and divergence, especially as they relate to each of the four following areas: God’s sovereignty, the Bible’s authority, Christ’s identity, and the sacraments. The committee is especially interested in your ability to describe the College’s doctrinal standards, the doctrines of your church, and your own beliefs. If you are a member of a church that holds the same standards as the College, the committee would still like to see reflection on what these standards mean to you.

It is also the College’s expectation that all faculty members will actively develop a Christian perspective on the subject they teach, especially as it relates to a Reformed world and life view. Use your answer to question 5 to describe the recent resources (books, articles, faculty development opportunities) that have influenced your ***ongoing*** development of that perspective and to describe how they have done this. In other words, Section I should feature new reflection that, while perhaps drawing on material from earlier self-evaluations, should not be copied directly.

1. **TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS / STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**
2. **Teaching:**

This section is an opportunity to describe how you approach your subject and how and why you do what you do as a teacher-scholar.

Question 3 asks for reflection on creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment for a diverse student population. This provides an opportunity to discuss how you work to meet the needs of various students in and outside the classroom. This could include thinking about how you shape the learning environment based on various student identities and experiences. This should include discussion of ***ongoing*** development, changes, or growth since the last evaluation. Once again, please provide an updated reflection and do not simply use material from previous iterations of your self-evaluation.

***Reflect, don’t deflect:*** Questions 4, 5, and 6 ask you to reflect on student categorical responses and patterns in comments on the Student Feedback on Courses. Try not to blame students. Explain what you believe led to the ratings you received. If there are areas of weakness identified, describe the specific plans you have for improvement and how you expect to assess the results of these plans. These questions are your opportunity to present to the committee your understanding of how your teaching encourages student learning and how you understand the ratings and comments that students have made about your teaching.

Question 6 asks you to be specific in how you have addressed areas for improvement identified in your previous review. You should look at the Personnel Committee’s evaluation from your most recent review before you compose responses to this question. It also asks you to outline plans for future growth.

Note that in this section, you are to address your teaching and student development activities and data about them ***since your last review***.

1. **SCHOLARSHIP**

**Description of Scholarship**

***Provide context:*** Use these questions to describe your Scholarship activities. Do not just list the same items that are on your vita in the same way. The list provided in the prompt should be used to organize your answer, but make sure to reflect on your activities and describe their significance to your own development and to the discipline. There may not be members of the Personnel Committee who are from your discipline. They may not know whether the journal you were published in is peer-reviewed or not. Describe the nature of your publications.

***Definition of peer-reviewed:*** Section 2 of the *Faculty Handbook*: “‘Peer-reviewed’ are those that submit all work under consideration to professional evaluation by one or more experts in the field as a condition for publication/presentation.”

**Plans for** **Scholarship**

Use these questions toprovide a detailed plan of what you hope to accomplish in the area of Scholarship during the next three to five years.

Note that in this section, you are to address your scholarly activities and data about them ***for the last five years***.

### COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

## Note that in this section, you are to address your college and community service activities and data about them *since your last review*.

## Committee service supports many facets of the college and is both a responsibility and an opportunity for faculty. Beyond the assigned tasks of a committee, consider how you have brought your particular gifts and creative ideas to the work of committees on which you have or are serving. Detail ways you have stepped into leadership and contributed to existing and new initiatives.

## College service is not limited to your contributions to assigned committees. Consider how you engage beyond committees in support of the college (examples include leading faculty book groups, mentoring new faculty, or serving on search committees).

## Community service represents ways faculty live into their vocational call beyond the campus community. While there are many ways you might engage with groups and organizations in your local community, focus on ways your community service activities represent an extension of your disciplinary expertise and commitments.

## SOME FINAL CONSIDERATIONS:

## *Length:* It is very difficult to give guidelines for how long a self-evaluation should be. In general, it should be long enough to provide space for sustained reflection on all areas of your work. However, experience has shown that the most effective self-evaluations are between ten and twenty pages, single-spaced. Since the self-evaluation questions themselves take up four and a half pages, a self-evaluation that is less than ten pages often does not contain the sustained reflection necessary to enable the committee to make a fair assessment of your performance.

## *Material from Previous Self-Evaluations:* A faculty member’s approach to certain aspects of their work may not have changed significantly, especially if the review period is only one or two years. However, each self- evaluation offers an opportunity to reflect anew and discuss ongoing growth, changes, or new ideas. A self- evaluation that is mostly duplicated from the previous one submitted will often not have the reflection necessary to enable the Personnel Committee to make a fair assessment of your performance.

## *The Due Date:* The Personnel Committee assumes that faculty members know when they will next be reviewed. The Vice President of Academic Affairs sends a letter to the faculty listing those who will be reviewed by June 15. It is expected that faculty members will take time during the summer to reflect and write the self-evaluation. Turn in completed self-evaluations by September 1.

## *Look over the rubrics before you begin to write:* The rubrics given in section 2.4 of the *Faculty Handbook* present the criteria that the Personnel Committee will use to evaluate your performance. It is good to have them in mind as you write your self-evaluation. However, we do not expect you to address the bullet points on the rubric in the self-evaluation. Instead, please answer the questions on the self-evaluation form. You should also consider the expectations by rank given in section 2.4 of the *Faculty Handbook* as you write.

## Crossover: You may encounter crossover among your teaching, scholarship, and/or college and community service. For example, a project that emerged out of teaching may evolve toward a scholarly project or community engagement. It is appropriate to include items in multiple sections. If you do include an item in multiple sections, please make it clear *how* it qualifies for categorization in each section.

## If you have any questions as you write your self-evaluation, please consult with the Vice President of Academic Affairs or with the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

## Appendix: *Definitions of Ratings Applied to Categorical Data from the Student Feedback on Instructio*

## These definitions apply to categorical data collected by the Student Feedback on Instruction (SFI). The Personnel Committee adopted these definitions in spring 2010 and updated them in spring 2017

## Definitions

## Exemplary: Commendable work done for this category during this particular semester

## Proficient: Good work done for this category during this particular semester

## Satisfactory: Acceptable work done for this category during this particular semester but growth is desirable

## Basic: For this category during this particular semester, an area for improvement has been identified

## Unacceptable: For this category during this particular semester, there is a serious concern that requires dramatic improvement

# Indicators for each Rubric Rating

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rubric Rating | Mean\* | Median | P10 (10th Percentile)\*\* |
| Exemplary | ≥5.4 | Strongly Agree (SA) | SA or A |
| Proficient | 4.6 ≤ Mean < 5.4 | SA or A | A or As |
| Satisfactory | See below for exact rules | | |
| Basic | 3.8 ≤ Mean < 4.6 | A or As | As or Ds |
| Unacceptable | Mean < 3.8 | Ds, D, or SD | Ds, D, or SD |

\*Assigning numerical values as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 6, Agree (A) = 5, Somewhat Agree (As) = 4,

Somewhat Disagree (Ds) = 3, Disagree = 2, Strongly Disagree = 1

\*\*This means that 90% or more of the responses are at these levels or higher. Note that for samples of fewer

than 50, the 5th lowest response overall is used.

**Rules for Assignment of Rubric Rating Exemplary**: All 3 indicators at exemplary level

**Proficient**: All 3 indicators at proficient or higher; 1 or 2 indicators may be at exemplary level

**Satisfactory**: Mean AND Median at proficient level OR P10 ≥ 4 (Somewhat Agree) **Basic**: At least one indicator meets basic level (but does not meet rule for Satisfactory) **Unacceptable**: All 3 indicators at unacceptable level

# Additional Notes

1. Because research has shown that reliability of these instruments is not strong for sample sizes of 10 or fewer, the rubric ratings are omitted for classes of these sizes. However, data from these classes are still included in semester summaries.
2. When reviewing faculty colleagues, the Personnel Committee focuses on the semester summaries as well as all student written comments. Faculty colleagues are encouraged to do the same when interpreting semester results and writing self-evaluations.