Florida Space Institute (FSI)
Annual Evaluation Standards & Procedures (AESP)

The Florida Space Institute

The Florida Space Institute (FSI) is a space-focused research institute under the UCF Office of Research. Its mission is primarily to support space research, development, and education activities within UCF, and secondarily to support the development of Florida's space economy – civil, defense, and commercial.

This mission is accomplished through several different avenues including, but not limited to, (i) lead ground-breaking space science and engineering projects including flight instruments on civil, defense, and commercial spacecraft; (ii) significantly contribute to the education and training of the next generation of space scientists and engineers; (iii) fostering collaboration between various entities in Florida on the development of space-related projects; and (iv) fundamental research related to space science and engineering.

Introduction

The present document describes the Annual Evaluation Standards & Procedures (AESP) for FSI faculty. FSI faculty titles and ranks, as well as the associated expectations, are described in the FSI bylaws. Title and ranks are as follows:

- Research Professor (RP)
  - Assistant
  - Associate
  - Full
- Scholar/Scientist/Engineer (SSE)
  - Assistant
  - Associate
  - Full
- Research Associate (RA)
  - Research Associate
  - Senior Research Associate

The FSI Director directly supervises all Research Professors. Scholars/Scientists/Engineers and Research Associates are supervised either directly by the FSI Director, a Research Professor, or Principal Investigator.

Evaluation Procedure

Since all FSI faculty are in-unit, the form to be used for their annual evaluation is the *Annual Evaluation of In-Unit Faculty Performance,* which can be found at:
https://facultyexcellence.ucf.edu/document/in-unit-faculty-annual-evaluation-form/

Step 1: Faculty input. The *Annual Evaluation of In-Unit Faculty Performance* form (https://facultyexcellence.ucf.edu/document/in-unit-faculty-annual-evaluation-form/) has to be filled out by each faculty and submitted to their supervisor by May 7 of each year. The period of performance covered goes from May 8 of the previous year to May 7 of the current year, the day of submission. The supervisor, may, at the written request of the employee, provide an extension of up to twenty-one days to submit the annual report. Article 10.1 (b) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA):
https://www.collectivebargaining.ucf.edu/completecba.asp

Step 2: Supervisor input. The supervisor reviews and edits the *Annual Evaluation of In-Unit Faculty Performance* form according to the FSI evaluation standards described in the next section, including the appraisal of:

- Conditional
- Unsatisfactory
- Satisfactory
- Above Satisfactory
- Outstanding

The form is then sent back to the faculty for review. The proposed written annual evaluation shall be provided to the employee at the start of the fall semester. Article 10.1 (e) of the CBA:
https://www.collectivebargaining.ucf.edu/completecba.asp

Step 3: Signing the form. If the faculty is in agreement with the supervisor's evaluation, both party can sign the form. In the case that the supervisor is an FSI Research Professor, the form is then sent to the FSI Director for signature.

If the faculty is not in agreement with the supervisor's evaluation, the faculty and supervisor shall set up a meeting to discuss their differences and attempt to reach a resolution. In the case that an evaluation disagreement cannot be reached, the faculty can follow the steps to submit a grievance as outlined in the CBA:
https://www.collectivebargaining.ucf.edu/completecba.asp

Step 4: Archiving the form. The signed form is archived by the supervisor in Interfolio for each faculty, including the associated appraisal. The signed form is also sent to the faculty for their own record keeping.

Evaluation Standards
Instructional Activities
Teaching – FSI RPs and SSEs are not expected to teach classes but may do so at their leisure. Teaching can be done either as a lecture/lab or as directed research. In both cases, it requires affiliation to a Department under one of the UCF Colleges. In the case of a lecture/lab class, this Department will provide the teaching faculty with an appraisal of their teaching that is independent from their FSI evaluation.

Since instructional activities are not part of the FSI faculty assignments, they shall not impact their annual evaluations.

Mentoring – FSI researchers of all titles and ranks are encouraged to mentor students and/or postdoctoral researchers. The quality of the mentorship they provide will be part of their yearly evaluation. To complete the mentorship evaluation, the faculty input on this topic, which will be provided in Step 1 of the evaluation, will be sent to their mentees for review. Should any adjustments or corrections be required, these will be provided to the faculty during Step 2 of the evaluation and will be part of the discussion leading to signing the form.

Evaluation criteria for mentoring are summarized in the following table:

	Graduate students	**Undergraduate students**	**Postdoctoral researchers**
Outstanding	The faculty has satisfactorily mentored at least 3 mentees and one or more of them have distinguished themselves by winning funded proposals, awards, or similar honors.		
Above Satisfactory	The faculty has satisfactorily mentored over either 3 graduate students, 6 undergraduate students, 2 postdoctoral researchers, or 5 mixed mentees total.		
Satisfactory	- Availability: the faculty has to meet with the student regularly, at a pace that has been agreed upon with them. - Ensuring progress toward degree: within the evaluation period, the faculty has to demonstrate how they are supporting the student's progress towards their degree or provide a justification in case there has been no progress. - Providing career-furthering opportunities: during the evaluation period, the faculty should provide at least one opportunity for the student to network within the scientific community.	- Availability: the faculty has to meet with the student regularly, at a pace that has been agreed upon with them. If several undergraduate students are being mentored, group meetings are satisfactory. - Providing a clear plan of work: the faculty has to demonstrate that they have informed the student of their plan of work and that the amount of tasks is balanced.	- Availability: the faculty has to meet with the postdoc regularly, at a pace that has been agreed upon with them. - Providing career-furthering opportunities: during the evaluation period, the faculty should provide at least one opportunity for the postdoc to network within the scientific community. - Proposal training: during the evaluation period, the faculty should provide the postdoc with at least one opportunity to train on proposals. This includes allowing them to participate in review panels and/or proposal writing.
Below Satisfactory	The faculty does not meet the satisfactory criteria and is unable to convincingly justify the reason for it.		
Conditional	The relationship between the faculty and the mentee cannot be saved and it is demonstrated that this is due to a lack of adequate mentorship.		

Table 1: Mentorship evaluation criteria for FSI faculty. Students and postdocs can be from any type of educational institution, and the evaluated faculty does not need to be their main or full-time supervisor for the listed evaluation criteria to apply.

For Associate and Full Research Professors only, mentoring students and/or postdoctoral researchers is required. For these ranks, the absence of mentoring during the evaluation period will have to be justified for a Satisfactory evaluation. If no convincing justification can be provided, the absence of mentorship for these ranks will lead to a Below Satisfactory rating.

For other ranks, i.e. Assistant Research Professor, SSE, and RA, mentoring students is not required. For SSE and RAs in particular, the instructional section will not count as part of the overall evaluation. For Assistant RPs, the absence of mentees will automatically lead to a Satisfactory rating, while Table 1 will apply in case they are mentoring students or postdocs.

Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Activities

<u>Research Professors</u> – The quality of research and the ability to attract external funding are at the core of the expectations for the Research Professor ranks. The following table describes the evaluation criteria for attracting funding:

	Research Assistant Professor	Research Associate Professor	Research Professor
Outstanding	≥ 0.75 FTE C&G funded at the time of evaluation OR ≥ $1M/year in new C&G funding*	[≥ 0.9 FTE C&G funded at the time of evaluation AND ≥ 1 FTE employee of the faculty C&G funded] OR ≥ $1M/year in new C&G funding*	[≥ 0.9 FTE C&G funded at the time of evaluation AND ≥ 3 FTE employees of the faculty C&G funded] OR ≥ $1M/year in new C&G funding*
Above Satisfactory	≥ 0.5 FTE C&G funded at the time of evaluation OR [≥ 1 proposal awarded AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G]	≥ 0.75 FTE C&G funded at the time of evaluation OR [≥ 2 proposals awarded AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least 1 FTE of an employee of the faculty]	≥ 0.80 FTE C&G funded AND ≥ 1 FTE employee of the faculty is C&G funded
Satisfactory	≥ 0.25 FTE C&G funded AND ≥ 3 proposals submitted AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G	≥ 0.65 FTE C&G funded AND ≥ 3 proposals submitted AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G AND Total FTE requested in submitted proposals covers at least 1 FTE of an employee of the faculty	≥ 0.80 FTE C&G funded

	Research Assistant Professor	**Research Associate Professor**	**Research Professor**
Below Satisfactory	< 0.25 FTE C&G funded OR < 3 proposals submitted OR Total FTE requested in submitted proposals does not cover at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G	< 0.65 FTE C&G funded OR < 3 proposals submitted OR Total FTE requested in submitted proposals does not cover at least twice the faculty FTE that is not yet covered by C&G OR Total FTE requested in submitted proposals does not cover at least 1 FTE of an employee of the faculty	< 0.80 FTE C&G funded
Conditional	< 0.25 FTE C&G AND < 3 proposals submitted	< 0.65 FTE C&G funded AND < 3 proposals submitted	< 0.80 FTE C&G funded AND < 3 proposals submitted

*Note: If the evaluated faculty is PI of the ≥$1M/year grant, this criterion counts as Outstanding no matter the grant/budget portion that is actually attributed to the faculty. If the faculty is not the PI, the portion attributed to them needs to be ≥$1M/year in order for the Outstanding ranking to take effect.

Table 2: Evaluation criteria for FSI Research Professors with respect to attracting external funding. C&G funding is used to describe any non-departmental E&G funding. Funding as Co-PI, Co-I, or named researcher, but only the portion of the grant/contract's budget that goes to the evaluated faculty, counts towards the listed funding and proposal levels.

In the case that several criteria apply to a faculty member, the best ranking one shall be used. If the employee is a partial FTE employee, all FTE fractions listed in Table 2 apply to that partial FTE. If the employee started in the middle of the reporting period, they will only be rated on their funding level during that period and all requirements for proposal submission will be ignored.

In addition to the funding activities, the quality of the faculty research will be evaluated as well. On the topic of journal and conference proceedings impact factor, we note that there are various ways to define an impact factor: global rating, partial rating per field, mean or median ratings, etc. For the purpose of evaluating the outstanding level of research productivity of FSI faculty, any of these rankings will be considered acceptable, as long as the faculty specifies which ranking is chosen and provides the journal data as part of their draft evaluation.

The following table describes the criteria associated with research productivity:

	Assistant Level	**Associate Level**	**Full Level**
Outstanding	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 1 paper published or full patent application issued AND ≥ 1 paper is published in the top 3 journals in terms of impact factor in their field, not including invitation-only journals AND Faculty is corresponding authors on ≥1 of those publications	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 2 papers published or full patent applications issued AND ≥ 2 papers are published in the top 3 journals in terms of impact factor in their field, not including invitation-only journals AND Faculty is corresponding authors on ≥1 of those publications	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 2 papers published or full patent applications issued AND ≥ 2 papers are published in the top 3 journals in terms of impact factor in their field, not including invitation-only journals AND Faculty is corresponding authors on ≥1 of those publications
Above Satisfactory	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 1 paper published or full patent application issued	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 2 papers published or full patent applications issued	≥ 2 papers submitted or preliminary patents issued AND ≥ 2 papers published or full patent applications issued
Satisfactory	≥ 1 paper either submitted or published AND ≥ 2 work presentations	≥ 2 papers either submitted or published AND ≥ 2 work presentations	≥ 3 papers either submitted or published AND ≥ 2 work presentations
Below Satisfactory	no paper either submitted or published OR only 1 work presentation	only one paper either submitted or published OR only 1 work presentation	1 or 2 papers either submitted or published OR only 1 work presentation
Conditional	no paper either submitted or published AND no work presentation	no paper either submitted or published AND no work presentation	no paper either submitted or published AND no work presentation

Table 3: Evaluation criteria for FSI Research Professor ranks with respect to research productivity. Publications indicate papers in peer-reviewed journals or conference proceedings, either as first author or co-author, depending on the publication's field of research. If a paper gets submitted and published in the same year, this paper counts towards both submitted and published. A work presentation can be oral or poster, either as first author or co-author, but has to be scientific in nature.

Scholar/Scientist/Engineer (SSE) – SSEs' requirements for attracting external funding are different than for the Research Professor ranks, as described in the FSI bylaws. SSEs are not expected to attract their own funding, but to be supported by a PI. For this reason, the evaluation criteria for attracting external funding are as follows:

- Satisfactory: The SSE engages in the activities required by the PI or PIs to successfully secure funding and run projects. The FSI Director will loop in the PI/PIs in Step 2 of the evaluation on this criteria.
- Above Satisfactory: The SSE is contributing to proposal and project work as Co-I, Co-PI, or PI.
- Outstanding: The SSE has been able to attract funding as a PI. The regular re-occurrence of Above Satisfactory or Outstanding evaluations in the funding area might indicate an inadequate ranking of the SSE and re-ranking to Research Professor should be discussed with Faculty Excellence.
- Below Satisfactory: The SSE is not satisfactorily fulfilling their funding and project duties and hampering the PI or PIs in their successful pursuit of funding and project completion. In addition, the SSE is unable to convincingly justify why their duties are not satisfactorily fulfilled.
- Conditional: The SSE does not engage in any proposal or project activities.

From a research productivity point of view, requirements on SSEs are as follows:

- Satisfactory: The SSE provides project support as required for the PI/PIs to produce publications and project reports. With proper justification, this requirement can be waved to obtain a Satisfactory rating.
- Above Satisfactory: The SSE has submitted and/or published in a peer-reviewed journal 1 paper as first author or ≥ 2 papers as second author.
- Outstanding: The SSE has submitted and/or published in a peer-reviewed journal 2 papers as first author or ≥ 3 papers as second author.
- Below Satisfactory: The SSE does not support publishing and reporting on their assigned projects as required.
- Conditional: This evaluation shall not be given to an RA under this criteria.

Research Associate (RA) – As described in the FSI bylaws, the RAs are not required to engage in any proposal activities, but purely support projects as required by PIs. For this reason, the evaluation criteria for attracting external funding are as follows:

- Satisfactory: The RA engages in the activities required by the PI or PIs to run projects. The FSI Director will loop in the PI/PIs in Step 2 of the evaluation on this criteria.
- Above Satisfactory: The RA is contributing to proposals as well as project work.
- Outstanding: The RA has been able to attract funding as a Co-I, Co-PI, or PI.
- Below Satisfactory: The RA is not satisfactorily fulfilling their project duties and hampering the PI or PIs in their successful project completion. In addition, the RA is unable to convincingly justify why their duties are not satisfactorily fulfilled.
- Conditional: The RA does not engage in any project activities.

From a research productivity point of view, requirements on RAs are also lower than for SSEs and RPs:

- Satisfactory: The RA provides project support as required for the PI/PIs to produce publications and project reports.
- Above Satisfactory: The RA has submitted and/or published a paper in a peer-reviewed journal as co-author. In the case that publishing is not allowed by the project, the RA will be evaluated on their participation into reporting. Above Satisfactory corresponds to the RA producing $\geq 50 \%$ of the written reporting required by the project.

- Outstanding: The RA has submitted and/or published in a peer-reviewed journal one paper as first author or ≥ 2 papers as second author. In the case that publishing is not allowed by the project, Outstanding corresponds to the RA producing $\geq 90\%$ of the written reporting required by the project.
- Below Satisfactory: This evaluation shall not be given to an RA under this criterion.
- Conditional: This evaluation shall not be given to an RA under this criterion.

Service Activities

The service activities evaluated include:
- Service to the unit (this includes serving on departmental committees, participating in job candidate interviews for future members of the department, attending Commencement, attending departmental functions, etc).
- Service to the College or University (this includes serving on college or university committees, leading or participating in special projects that benefit the college or the university and are external to the department, etc.)
- Professional service to the community (media interviews, public lectures, etc.)

It may happen that certain service activities are part of externally funded projects. Those activities will not be evaluated here. This section focuses in particular on service performed on top of funded work. As described in the FSI bylaws, the faculty can charge up to 10% or their time to the FSI departmental E&G in order to perform this service. All FSI titles and ranks will be evaluated as follows:
- Satisfactory: Participate in at least one service activity during the evaluation period.
- Above satisfactory: Participate in at least three service activities during the evaluation period.
- Outstanding: Participate in several (more than 3) service activities during the evaluation period.
- Below satisfactory: The faculty has not participated in any service activities during the evaluation period. In addition, the faculty can not convincingly justify the lack of participation in service. Such justification might include full-time project work for SSEs and RAs, full funding and project requirements for RPs, no requests for service have been received, or illness just to cite a few example.
- Conditional: This evaluation shall not be given to an FSI faculty under this criterion.

Other Activities

Other Activities can be very disparate in nature. At FSI, those might include managing facilities, grant programs, or other large FSI projects. At the beginning of each semester, as part of the Assignment of Duties (AODs), the faculty who engage in Other Activities will be notified of the tasks that are expected of them and the associated FTEs dedicated.

Under this category, the faculty will be evaluated as follows:
- Satisfactory: The faculty completed their defined Other Activities duties as expected.
- Above Satisfactory: The FSI Director can give an Above Satisfactory rating for Other Activities on a discretionary basis.
- Outstanding: The FSI Director can give an Outstanding rating for Other Activities on a discretionary basis.
- Below Satisfactory: The faculty did not complete their defined Other Activities duties as expected.
- Conditional: This evaluation shall not be given to an FSI faculty under this criterion.

Overall Evaluation for All Faculty

Once the individual criteria are evaluated according to the description above, all these evaluations are combined into the overall evaluation. Given that the relative importance of evaluation factors is variable, weights are assigned to each factor and will allow for the computation of the Overall Evaluation. These weights are as follows:

	Research Professors	Scholar/Scientist/Engineers Research Associates
Service Activities	IA 15% F/P 60% RP 15% SA 10% Total 100%	IA 0% F/P 60% RP 30% SA 10% Total 100%
No Service Activities	IA 15% F/P 70% RP 15% SA 0% Total 100%	IA 0% F/P 70% RP 30% SA 0% Total 100%

Table 4: Overall evaluation weights per category: Instructional Activities (IA), Funding/Projects (F/P), Research Productivity (RP), Service Activities (SA). If the evaluated faculty engages in Other Activities, the evaluation weights will be defined together with the FSI Director before the period of performance starts, usually on a semester basis as part of the AOD process.

Computation of the Overall Evaluation

Each evaluation is associated with a number as follows:
- Outstanding: 4
- Above Satisfactory: 3
- Satisfactory: 2
- Below Satisfactory: 1
- Conditional: 0

The weights described above are used and multiplied with the evaluation numbers to calculate the Overall Evaluation. The number obtained is rounded to the nearest integer (exact half points will get rounded up), and the associated evaluation is determined. In the case of a half point, the number is rounded up.

Example 1 – A RP doing service has received the following evaluations:
- Instructional Activities   Satisfactory (2)
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Activities
  - External funding/Projects   Above Satisfactory (3)
  - Research productivity   Satisfactory (2)
- Service Activities   Satisfactory (2)

The Overall Evaluation is then computed as: 2*0.15 + 3*0.6 + 2*0.15 + 2*0.10 = 2.6
The Overall Evaluation will be Above Satisfactory (3).

Example 2 – An SSE doing service has received the following evaluations:
- Instructional Activities   Satisfactory (2)

- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Activities
  - External funding/Projects   Satisfactory (2)
  - Research productivity   Above Satisfactory (3)
- Service Activities   Above Satisfactory (3)

The Overall Evaluation is then computed as: $2*0.15 + 2*0.45 + 3*0.3 + 3*0.10 = 2.4$
The Overall Evaluation will be Satisfactory (2).

Example 3 – An RA doing no service has received the following evaluations:
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Activities
  - External funding/Projects   Above Satisfactory (3)
  - Research productivity   Outstanding (4)

The Overall Evaluation is then computed as: $3*0.7 + 4*0.3 = 3.3$
The Overall Evaluation will be Above Satisfactory (3).

Example 4 – A RP doing service has received the following evaluations:
- Instructional Activities   Above Satisfactory (3)
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Work Activities
  - External funding/Projects   Outstanding (4)
  - Research productivity   Above Satisfactory (3)
- Service Activities   Satisfactory (2)

The Overall Evaluation is then computed as: $3*0.15 + 4*0.6 + 3*0.15 + 2*0.10 = 3.5$
The Overall Evaluation will be Outstanding (4).