

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Annual Evaluations and Observations of Teaching Adjuncts

Annual evaluations and teaching observations are of critical importance in reviewing and evaluating employees' performance and providing them with specific feedback to strengthen their work.

Q: *What governs annual evaluations and observations of teaching adjuncts?*

A: The collective bargaining agreement between CUNY and the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY ("Contract") Article 18.

Annual Evaluations

Q: *How often must an employee have an annual evaluation?*

A: At least once each year, all teaching adjuncts shall have an evaluation conference. After four (4) semesters of service, annual evaluations for adjunct personnel shall be held at the request of the chairperson or the adjunct, however, if the evaluations are conducted at the request of the adjunct, such evaluations may not be conducted more than once every four semesters.

Q. *Who may conduct an annual evaluation?*

A: The department chairperson or a member of the departmental P&B committee to be assigned by the chairperson.

Q: *What should the evaluation conference cover?*

A: As stated in the Contract section 18.2(a), the evaluation shall be based on the employee's total academic performance, with special attention to teaching effectiveness. The employee's total academic performance and professional progress for that year and cumulatively to date shall be reviewed.

Q: *Can I have a second person in the room when conducting an evaluation conference?*

A: No. The contract provides that only one person may meet with the employee for the evaluation conference. This is a critical issue, and the evaluation can be voided if this provision is not complied with. If there are special concerns, please contact the QC General Counsel's office.

Q: *Can I have a post-conference memo prepared when I meet with the employee?*

A: No. The Contract provides that **following the conference**, the chairperson or assigned member of the P&B shall prepare of record of the discussion in memo form for inclusion in the employee's personal file.

Q: *When does the post-conference memo have to be provided to the employee?*

A: Within ten (10) working days after the conference, a copy of the memorandum shall be given to the employee. The employee should initial a copy for inclusion in his/her personal file.

Q. *What happens if the employee fails to attend an evaluation conference without cause?*

A: If an employee fails to attend a conference without reasonable cause, the conference shall be rescheduled. The employee shall be notified in writing of the date of the rescheduled conference. If the employee again fails to attend the evaluation conference without reasonable cause, the department chair/ supervisor may prepare an evaluation memo for inclusion in the employee's personal file without holding a conference. A copy of the memo shall be sent to the employee within ten (10) working days from the scheduled date of the rescheduled conference by regular mail to his/her address on file and by email to his/her college email address.

Q: *What if the overall evaluation for a teaching adjunct is unsatisfactory?*

A: The conference memo has to state if the overall evaluation is unsatisfactory. In such a case, the employee has the right to request to appear in person before the department P&B Committee

Q: *What happens if the yearly evaluation is not scheduled by March 1?*

A: If the annual conference is not scheduled by March 1, the employee shall file a request with the chairperson or supervisor within ten (10) working days thereafter. A copy of the request must be sent to the appropriate dean and the Office of the President. Upon receipt of the request, the dean or President shall cause appropriate remedial action to be taken to ensure compliance with this provision. If an employee fails to file this request, he/she shall be barred from complaining about the College's failure to comply.

Q: *What is the employee does not agree with their evaluation?*

A: The employee may prepare a rebuttal or attach any comments to an evaluation which will be included in his/her personal folder.

Q: *What if the employee refuses to initial the evaluation memo?*

A: Employees should be reminded that initialing an evaluation does not mean that they agree with or approve of its contents, and that they can prepare a rebuttal if they wish. If they still refuse to initial the document, indicate "refused to sign" on the evaluation memo and include it in the employee's personal folder.

Teaching Observations

Q: *How often must an adjunct have a teaching observation?*

A: At least once during each academic semester, teaching adjuncts shall be observed for a full classroom period. After ten (10) semesters of service, teaching observation for adjunct personnel shall be held at the request of the chairperson or the adjunct. Adjuncts who are subject to a three-year appointment shall have at least one 50-minute teaching observation during the three-year period.

Q: *Is it ok if I leave the class early?*

A: No. The Contract provides that the observation must be for a **full** classroom period.

Q: *Can I perform the observation at the end of the semester?*

A: No. The Contract provides that at least one observation must take place during any scheduled class in the **first ten weeks** of a semester.

Q: *Do I have to give notice to the employee?*

A: Yes. The employee shall be given no less than 24 hours of notice prior to the observation.

Q: *Who can conduct teaching observations?*

A: Each department P&B committee shall designate a panel, the size to be specified by the chairperson, of department observers which shall include members of the P&B committee. The department chairperson shall schedule members of this panel to conduct observations.

Q. *Is there a written report of the observation?*

A: Yes. Each observer shall submit, through the department chairperson, a written observation report to the department P&B committee within one week of the observation. These observation reports shall be considered by the committee in its total evaluation of the employee.

Q: *What happens after the observation? Is there a meeting with the employee?*

A: Yes. The department chairperson shall schedule a post-observation conference for the employee within two weeks after receipt of the written observation report. The post-observation conference shall include the employee and the observer.

Q. *Can a third party be at the post-observation conference?*

A: Yes. Either a member of the P&B committee or a member of the department with the rank of tenured Associate Professor or tenured Professor may be assigned by the chairperson to attend the post-observation conference at the request of the employee or observer.

Q: *What happens after post-observation conference?*

A: After this conference, the assigned P&B representative or the assigned senior faculty member shall prepare a memo recording the discussion and submit it to chair. If the conference is only between the observer and employee, the observer prepares the memo. The original conference memo and observation report shall be initialed by the employee and placed in the employee's personal file.

Q. *What happens if the observation or post-observation is not timely held?*

A: If the observation or post-observation conference is not timely held, the employee must, within ten (10) working days thereafter, file a request for an observation and/or conference with the chair. A copy of the request shall be sent to the dean and the Office of the President. Upon the receipt of the request, the College shall cause appropriate remedial action to be taken. If the employee does not timely file this request, he/she is barred from subsequently complaining about the College's failure to comply.

For more information, please see:

<http://www2.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/about/administration/offices/labor-relations/labor-contracts/2007-2010CUNY-PSCcollectivebargainingagreement.pdf>

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