



# **SESPECS Policies and Procedures**

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## Policies and Procedures

### *School Special Education, School Psychology, & Early Childhood Studies*

#### **1.01 Affiliate Faculty Status** **Approved by the faculty on 2/20/09**

1. All doctoral level faculty who are hired full time in the School will have voting rights in faculty meetings, and will be expected to engage in other school service activities, including membership on committees.

2. The purpose of Affiliate Faculty status within the School of Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies is to recognize a specific relationship between the individual and this academic unit. All doctoral level faculty who seek affiliation, but who are not employed full-time within the unit will be considered for affiliate status on a case-by-case basis by the department faculty following these procedures:

- a. All faculty seeking affiliate status will submit a vita to the department chair.
- b. Faculty members review the applicant's vita.
- c. Following this review, members of the School's Faculty and Budgetary Affairs Committee (FBAC) may interview the applicant.
- d. At the discretion of the FBAC, applicants for affiliate status may be asked to submit additional materials (e.g., letters of recommendation, publications), and/or to provide support for their application by presenting a colloquium.
- e. After the FBAC reviews material supporting the application for affiliate status, members will report back to the faculty who will discuss and vote on the application.
- f. The faculty will decide, based on a positive vote of 75% of the eligible faculty, whether to provide affiliate status, as well as whether the affiliate faculty member will be accorded voting rights and be expected to participate in service activities.
- g. Faculty with affiliated status will be reviewed every three years to verify the continuation of this relationship.

3. Courtesy Affiliation recognizes the significant contributions of individuals who are outside the University system to the mission of the School. Faculty nominate individuals for a Courtesy Affiliation with the School that extends for a 3-year period. A positive vote of 75% of eligible faculty is required for appointment. Courtesy Affiliates may attend School meetings and participate in School functions, colloquia, conferences, etc. Courtesy Affiliates do not have voting rights in the School. Like other faculty affiliates, Courtesy affiliations will be reviewed every three years.

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### School Special Education, School Psychology, & Early Childhood Studies

#### **2.01 Criteria for Chairing Doctoral Committees and Directing Dissertations Approved by the faculty on 2/20/09**

Persons who are approved to chair doctoral committees and direct doctoral dissertations must meet the following minimum criteria:

1. Must have Graduate Faculty Status with the University of Florida or, in the case of newly appointed faculty, must be eligible for Graduate Faculty Status (i.e., be appointed in a graduate degree granting unit, have a terminal degree, and have recent refereed research publications.)
2. Must have a strong record of scholarly publications and presentations at meetings of national associations.
3. Must have a record of doctoral committee service at the University of Florida or another doctoral degree granting institutions.
4. Must have experience in developing a program proposal, conducting the qualifying examination, and chairing or co-chairing a dissertation to completion at UF or another doctoral degree granting institution. These experiences may occur with a single student or occur across students who are at different stages in their doctoral degree programs.
5. Must be supported by a two-thirds vote of all faculty members in the School who have doctoral research faculty privileges.

New faculty members shall be assigned to co-chair supervisory committees as rapidly as their professional development and the availability of students allow.

#### **2.02 Procedures for Requesting to Chair Doctoral Committees & Direct Dissertations Approved by the faculty on 2/20/09**

1. Faculty member will submit his/her vita to the chair of the School of Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies. The vita should include information about the applicant's experience with doctoral committee work.

2. The chair will make available the applicant's vita to the doctoral research faculty at least 2 weeks prior to the faculty meeting at which the vote is to be taken.
3. After the faculty meeting, the doctoral research faculty will convene and discuss the applicant's request. The faculty member who has co-chaired with the applicant shall be present at this meeting.
4. Following discussion, the doctoral research faculty will vote on the applicant. A two-thirds vote is required for approval.

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#### 3.01 Merit Evaluation Approved by the faculty on 12/28/08

##### ***Overview***

Meritorious performance is a comprehensive judgment that requires a holistic review of the evidence presented in each faculty member's annual evaluation materials in the areas of scholarship, teaching, and service.

Scholarship is defined broadly to include basic research, the integration of knowledge, the transformation of knowledge through the intellectual work involved in teaching and facilitating learning, and/or the application of knowledge to solve a compelling problem in the community. The productive scholar is involved in research, writing, and creative efforts that advance knowledge in a field.

Teaching is defined in its broadest sense to include instruction, course revision and development, analysis of the impact of one's teaching, program development and leadership, advising and mentoring, serving on and chairing doctoral committees. It also includes responsiveness to students' needs beyond the classroom.

Service is defined broadly as professional and public activities that contribute to the mission of the Program, Department, College, or University, including membership on committees, and activities that promote the advancement of the discipline. This includes working creatively to ensure that professional knowledge has an impact on families, schools, colleges, professional organizations, community agencies, or other institutions, and local, state, national, and international policies and practices.

##### ***Meritorious Performance***

In most cases, meritorious performance is defined as distinction in the area or areas of the primary assignment and at least satisfactory performance in any other assigned areas. Faculty members and the Department Chair work collaboratively to determine "primary assignment." It is recognized that faculty assignment is typically more complex than what is reflected on the Faculty Load form each semester and should be considered in relation to the varied contributions of faculty to the department, college, and university.

*Distinction* is characterized by performance that is well above the expected, typical performance. In most cases, one of the primary areas of assignment should include scholarship, unless the faculty member has an assignment that primarily reflects other responsibilities. Merit should be regarded as more important than variety of activity.

### ***Merit Committee***

The Merit Committee shall consist of the Department Chair and four faculty members. One tenure-line faculty member is nominated for the committee from each program area (i.e., Early Childhood, School Psychology, and Special Education). One non-tenure line faculty member will be nominated by all non-tenure line faculty from all three areas. Faculty members are selected by the program faculty to serve 2-year staggered terms.

### ***Process***

Each member of the faculty submits an annual report using the college's online form. In addition, each faculty member may submit a one-page addendum to the annual report to provide a more detailed explanation of their assignment, clarification of information on the annual report, or any other information needed to evaluate the faculty member's materials. The Chair provides a summary of student evaluations of teaching and the faculty load assignment for each faculty member. The materials used by the committee for merit evaluation include the annual report form, data from student evaluations, the faculty load assignment, and the faculty member's addendum to the annual report, if provided. It is the responsibility of faculty members to communicate clearly the nature of their activities and accomplishments. It is also the responsibility of the Merit Committee members to seek additional information when needed to inform the decision-making process.

Before the meeting of the Merit Committee, each member of the committee independently evaluates the evidence presented in the annual evaluation materials submitted by each faculty member. The Chair convenes a meeting of the Merit Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to develop groupings of faculty with similarly meritorious performance. Groupings are based on evaluations by individual Merit Committee members and discussion among the members during the meeting. Although consensus among the Merit Committee members on final groupings is the goal, the Department Chair has final decision-making authority.

### ***Reviews & Appeals***

At the request of a faculty member, the Department Chair will explain where the faculty member's evaluation materials were placed in the final assigned group and why. Within a specified period after the merit evaluation process has been completed, any faculty member may request an appeal of the placement of their evaluation materials in the

final assigned group. The Merit Committee will review all appeals and make decisions about whether a change in the groups is warranted.

***Merit Allocation***

The allocation of available merit funds will be the responsibility of the Department Chair. Although the Chair has the final decision-making authority on merit allocation, faculty members in the same group should be allocated comparable merit increases in terms of dollars (not percentage of salary); and faculty in the highest group should be allocated more merit than those in lower meritorious groups.

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### School Special Education, School Psychology, & Early Childhood Studies

#### 4.01 Peer Review of Teaching Approved by the faculty on 2/20/09

Each college at the University of Florida has been asked to develop a peer teaching review plan (*Recommendations for Peer Review of Teaching at the University of Florida*) and many colleges already have completed such plans. Now peer evaluations are mandated in the University's Tenure and Promotion Guidelines.

*Peer evaluations of teaching, or the results thereof, should be included in the packet after the student evaluations. Peer evaluation is desirable in all cases. If the nominee is assigned teaching, but teaching evaluations are not available, an explanation should be provided regarding their absence.*

Student evaluations are one measure of teacher effectiveness, but they can be usefully supplemented with other evidence of effectiveness such as thoughtful and thorough peer reviews. By themselves, peer reviews might be suspect. Researchers have identified myriad difficulties associated with subjective measures of teaching effectiveness. Similar issues arise in evaluating papers for publication, grant applications, or, for that matter, in the grading of student papers. Researchers also have identified some limitations in student evaluations of college teaching. When careful peer evaluations are combined with well-designed, student evaluation instruments, the limitations of both can be reduced. This document describes the peer review of teaching plan that has been adopted by the faculty in the School of Special Education, School Psychology, and Early Childhood Studies.

#### Peer Review Policy and Process

##### ***When should a peer review be conducted?***

An evaluation of a faculty member's teaching effectiveness is required for:

Tenure and promotion decisions (that typically occur in the sixth or seventh year),

- Pre-tenure reviews (that typically occur in the fourth or fifth year), and
- Periodic Salary Pay Plan for Professor reviews (that usually occur every seventh year).
- Teaching award competitions.
- Other periodic reviews of faculty.



Peer reviews of teaching will be conducted prior to these occasions, but may be conducted more frequently if requested by the faculty member or by the school director.

***What is the purpose of the review?***

The central purposes of peer reviews are to study and improve college teaching.

***Who should conduct the review?***

The person or persons conducting the peer review will depend on the specific purposes of the review. A peer review will most often be conducted by a faculty member from the school or college, or an outside expert in college teaching. In some instances, an ad hoc committee may be formed to conduct the review, consisting of faculty from the school, college, and/or outside experts in college teaching.

***Who chooses the peer reviewer(s)?***

A person or persons to conduct the peer review will be selected collaboratively by the director and the faculty member being reviewed.

***How should the peer review be conducted?***

The particular format of the peer review will depend on the purpose of the review and the makeup of those doing the review. For more information regarding the range of options for a review, see "Peer Review of Teaching Options" (Webb, 2004).

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#### 5.01 Travel Stipend Allocation Approved by the faculty 4/24/12

The SESPECS FBAC in accord with the school directors and program area leaders will annually review the school's expense budget to determine the amount of faculty and student travel allocations for the academic year.

**Faculty travel stipends:** When funds are available, a travel stipend will be allocated to each full-time faculty member with the expectation that these monies will be used toward the presentation of research at national or international meetings, and the advancement of the SESPECS faculty's reputation for conducting and disseminating high quality scholarship.

**Doctoral Student travel stipends:** When funds are available, travel stipends will be allocated to full-time students, who do not have travel support from grants or other sources equal to or in excess of the allocated amount for the given year, with the approval of their faculty advisor.\* Applications for stipends are due to the student's program area leader by a date determined annually subsequent to the approval of the school's budget.

**Note:** students may only receive this school travel stipend twice in their doctoral program. Students who are awarded a school travel stipend, as well as students with grant travel funding, are encouraged to apply for funds from the Graduate School, which would complement their travel stipends/funds with a match of up to \$300. Any doctoral student-with or without school or grant travel support-- may also apply directly to the Graduate Student Council for awards of \$250. This award does not involve matching funds.

\*Students with travel support from grants or other sources may request funds for conference travel from a separate account with the approval of the faculty advisor. These requests shall be considered and approved by the director on a case by case basis.