

Guidelines for Faculty Association Appointees to
Recommendation Committees Constituted Under
Article 10 of the Collective Agreement
updated September 2009

So you've been asked to be an LFA rep to a selection and evaluation committee. What does this entail?

Ideally, you will be the LFA rep for the next few years for this department or program, so that any time there is a hiring or an evaluation, you will be the LFA rep to the committee. Your main task is to ensure that the processes are fair and equitable, and follow the Collective Agreement. The procedures of your home department may be different from those of this department, and this is a great opportunity for you and others on the committee to share your experiences.

You are probably a faculty member on a continuing contract, so that you are likely to be around for future meetings of the committee. You are a voting member of the committee, and you should be part of all meetings and discussions concerning selection and evaluation in this department.

Your main task is to observe that the processes are fair and reasonable, and that the processes outlined in the Collective Agreement are followed. You are the representative of the process, not of any individual faculty member. Please refer any faculty member who has questions about his/her specific situation to the Committee/Department Chair. If after speaking with the Chair the faculty member still has questions, he/she may contact the LFA office to speak with a shop steward.

If at any time you have concerns about the selection and evaluation process, please contact the LFA President, Vice President, Chief Steward or Assistant Chief Steward. And if at any time you find that you really do not enjoy this type of volunteer work, please let us know so that we can find another rep.

Thanks for being an LFA rep!

SELECTION & HIRING

The Committee recommends faculty to the Dean. The College hires, not the Committee.

The List – Department Members

Every department does their scheduling in their own special way, but there are a few things to keep in mind. Work is assigned based on a well-defined set of rules that involve conditions such as contract type, workload, and qualifications, as well as the needs of the department and the request of the faculty member. Scheduling is the responsibility of the Department Chair, who occasionally may refer to the Committee for guidance.

The Committee Chair should maintain a list of department members who are eligible for work.

- Regular faculty (those who are part-time and/or not on-going and those who are looking to switch to a different part of the department) are ranked by the Committee, based on qualifications including evaluations.
- Similarly the Term faculty are ranked by the Committee.
- In cases where two or more faculty are relatively equally qualified, use seniority to rank them within contract type.
- Some departments may decide to keep separate lists for the different areas within the department (for example, Literature and Communications; Marketing and Accounting; Organic and Inorganic Chemistry).
- Remove a faculty member's name from the list when the faculty member resigns or has not worked for more than 2 years.
- Update the list after each contract/evaluation.

Maintaining the list is important so that there is no ambiguity about who is ranked where. Committee membership can change, and the list ensures that information is not lost.

The Candidates

There are three types of candidates.

- i. internal to the department (usually regular faculty who are part time or who do not have ongoing contracts, and term faculty; could be regular faculty looking to change their area of teaching; faculty maintain their internal status for 2 years, unless they resigned)
- ii. internal to the LFA, but external to the department ("internal" candidates)
- iii. external to the LFA ("external"); note that this includes Langara administrators, CUPE members, and Continuing Studies instructors

Faculty with a full-time continuing contract in a "home" department may apply for temporary work in a different ("visiting") department. They will be considered along with the other internal (see ii above) applicants. However, as long as they keep their full-time ongoing appointment in their home department, they will not be considered as internal to the visiting department. (The principle is that no person should "own" more than full time work at the College.) If ongoing work opens up in the visiting department, then the faculty member may elect to resign part of the work in their home department in order to be considered for the new ongoing work.

To Post or Not To Post

The Committee does not need to meet, or to post a vacancy, if there are faculty internal to the department who have already been determined to be qualified for the available work, and who have been ranked by the Committee. The Chair can assign work using that list of ranked department members, remembering to consider Regular faculty first and Term faculty next.

Using the Committee's list, the Department Chair will assign faculty within the department as much work (up to full time) as they want and are qualified for. If more work is available, then that work will be posted internally to invite faculty from other Langara departments to apply. The work can be posted externally as well, but external applications must not be looked at until all internal applicants have been dealt with.

If at any time the Committee decides to reduce the qualifications, then the vacancy must be re-posted.

Internal/External

No internal candidate will be interviewed until all department members have received as much work as they are entitled to and qualified for (up to full time). Similarly, no external candidate will be interviewed until all internal candidates have been dealt with. Internal candidates do need to be available for an interview within a reasonable period of time.

If the Committee believes that an internal candidate does not meet the posted qualifications, then the Committee may ask the Chair to contact the candidate to see if he/she wishes to proceed with the interview.

Short Listing External Applicants

The LFA rep does not normally participate in the short-listing exercise, but should ensure that all interviewees meet the qualifications published in the job posting.

The Interview

The LFA rep should have three things: a copy of the job posting, a copy of each interviewee's curriculum vitae, and a list of the interview questions. If the candidate is to give a presentation or mini lecture, then the LFA rep should confirm with the Chair that every candidate was given the same instructions (preferably by email) and the same preparation time. When the candidate arrives, the Committee will have already prepared the interview script/questions, and will have already agreed on the "correct" answers to the questions. After the interviews, the committee's aim is to reach consensus, or to vote if necessary; no committee member has a veto.

Interview questions should be consistent for all candidates, although of course follow-up questions will likely vary.

Sometimes a department member will need to be interviewed, if the Committee did not previously interview for the type of work that is available. In such a case, the Committee is assessing qualifications, and may use previous evaluations. The Committee will use such an interview to update its ranking list. The department member must not be compared to applicants from outside the department.

Because any unsuccessful applicant is entitled to know the reasons for rejection, and because the Committee must submit to the College President (through the Dean) a ranked list of qualified candidates, the Committee should summarize their deliberations. (For example, compile a summary of how the Committee ranked the candidates.) The LFA rep will take notes during the interviews, but then (like every committee member) hand in these notes to the Committee Chair at the end of the selection process.

The References

The Chair will contact references. The Committee may wish to suggest questions to be asked of the references. The Committee will decide whether they need to reconvene to discuss the references.

EVALUATIONS

1. Wherever possible, the LFA rep will continue as a member of the Evaluation Committee for the successful applicant. The Committee will not meet without the LFA rep.

As LFA rep, your job is to ensure that the Collective Agreement processes are followed in a fair and equitable way. There are certainly differences across departments – an evaluation that might be considered a #2 in your department may be a #1 in another department. Part of your role is to learn the culture of this department; while it may be different than the culture in your home department, just watch to see that the faculty are being treated fairly and equitably within the department.

We usually use the word “evaluation” to describe the pulling together of the various evaluative materials; an evaluation may include materials for more than one teaching semester.

2. The Committee will meet with the faculty member early in their initial contract to describe how the evaluation will proceed throughout the faculty member’s term of employment; guidelines are in Appendices II & III of the Collective Agreement. Instructional faculty can expect to have at least one classroom visit as part of each evaluation. All faculty can expect to have student feedback form part of their evaluation. The LFA rep will ensure that the evaluatee knows who to go to (for example, Chair, Committee members, faculty mentor) for help and guidance should any issues arise during the term.

3. Article 10.4.2.1 reminds Evaluation Committees that negative comments are to be communicated to the faculty member as soon as possible and that the committee is obliged to work with the faculty member to attempt to ameliorate the problems prior to submission of the final evaluation report. A Committee that fails to promptly notify and work with the evaluatee to ameliorate the problems cannot later use the negative student data as part of the evaluatee’s evaluation summary report – the LFA considers ignoring supposed problems as equivalent to deciding that the problems were not substantive.

4. It is the responsibility of the Committee Chair to ensure that evaluations are carried out in a timely manner, according to the timelines described in the Collective Agreement.

5. The Committee should meet with the evaluatee at the end of the evaluation period (see dates in Collective Agreement) to review the documents and complete the recommendation form. If the evaluatee is ranked “category #1 – satisfactory”, then the Committee and evaluatee may opt to not meet in person.

6. The Committee must provide the Committee Summary and Student Feedback Summary to the evaluatee, at least one day before meeting with the evaluatee. Informal student comments, anonymous complaints, and second-hand comments must not be used as evaluative data.

7. A department must be consistent in its evaluation processes, which is why it is important to have consistent LFA representation.

8. Committees use the evaluation result (#1, #2, #3) to rank faculty, therefore the Committee should be sure that their ratings in any given semester are consistent with what they have done before.

#1 or #2?

How do we decide if a faculty member is #1 satisfactory or #2 satisfactory? If the Committee has suggestions and recommendations, but nothing that they insist must be “fixed”, then the faculty member is a #1. It is acceptable for a Committee to determine that a faculty member is a #1 “for this sort of work”, leaving a window to interview for and evaluate different types of work within the department. It is not acceptable to say that a faculty member is not a #1 because the Committee hasn’t had a chance to evaluate them on some other type of work.

#2 or #3?

There is quite a big difference between #2 and #3. If a faculty member is given #2, then there are things that the Committee wants the faculty member to address, and those things will be looked at in the next evaluation. If not addressed in the next evaluation, the Committee’s next rating might be #3, however at this stage the Committee is happy with most of the work but wants these issues improved.

A Committee with serious concerns about a faculty member’s performance will use #3 to indicate that the concerns are so serious that not fixing them may lead to no further work.

A specific list of problem areas and strategies should accompany any evaluation rated as #2 or #3.

9. Occasionally, during a semester, a Committee will have serious concerns about a faculty member’s work. The LFA recommends the following process: the Committee (through the Chair) will inform the member that there are serious concerns, and will provide the member with a written description of the concerns. The member will be asked to meet with the Committee one week hence to discuss the concerns, and may be invited to submit a written response to the Committee’s concerns. Such a submission is not a self-evaluation, but is simply an opportunity for individuals who are not adept at face-to-face meetings to explain their situation. The Committee will develop a plan for working with the faculty member to address the concerns.

10. In the rare event that a Committee considers an evaluatee to be unsatisfactory and unsuitable for further appointments (#4 on the Faculty Evaluation Summary form), please contact the LFA Chief Steward or Assistant Chief Steward as soon as you sense that this is a possibility.

11. When a Committee has determined that the evaluatee may not be satisfactory (#3 or #4), the LFA recommends the following process:

- a. the Chair will inform the evaluatee in person that the Committee has serious concerns about the evaluation
- b. at the same time, the Chair will provide to the evaluatee, in person and in writing, specific details about the areas of concern, and
- c. the Chair will ask the evaluatee to meet with the Committee one week later, to speak to the concerns. The evaluatee will be invited to respond in writing to the concerns, if the evaluatee wishes.
- d. after meeting with the evaluatee, and considering his/her response, the Committee will decide within two days whether the evaluatee is satisfactory, not satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. This outcome will be communicated to the evaluatee by the Chair and LFA rep, either in person or by phone. Any rating other than unsatisfactory will be accompanied by a clear plan of assistance and evaluation.
- e. if the final decision is that the evaluatee is unsatisfactory, then the evaluatee will be reminded that they can contact the LFA.

Meetings With the Evaluatee

The Committee will meet with the evaluatee as described below. Whenever a meeting involves reviewing

evaluative material, that material will be provided to the faculty member at least 48 hours in advance. The Committee's summary report will usually not be written until after the Committee has met with the faculty member (exception – often a committee will be able to write the summary for a #1 faculty member prior to the meeting). End-of-contract meetings for faculty rated as “#1 satisfactory” need not be face-to-face.

- a. First term contract – beginning: At this meeting, the Committee will clearly describe the evaluation procedures for the term. The meeting will take place at or near the beginning of the contract.
- b. First term contract – end: At this meeting, the Committee will review the evaluation report. Use this meeting to explain when the next evaluation will take place, and what it will entail.
- c. Second year of term contracts – end: At this meeting, the Committee will review the evaluation report and explain the next (on regular contract) evaluation process. The Committee should check the previous evaluation to ensure that any previous concerns have been or are being addressed.
- d. First year of regular contract – middle/end: At this meeting, the Committee will review the evaluation materials. Only material from the current year will be considered, but the Committee should ensure that any previous concerns have been or are being addressed.
- e. Second year of regular contract – end: This is normally the final evaluation.
- f. Other special meetings may occur as needed to address concerns.

Remember, if at any time you have questions or concerns about the process, please contact the LFA President, Vice President, Chief Steward or Assistant Chief Steward. If you are in a meeting with the Committee, and you and the Committee are unsure about how to proceed, then it is completely reasonable to ask that the meeting reconvene at a later time, so that you can get more information.