

# Review Criteria Guidance for Unit-18 Lecturers

Updated: 1/27/2025

The purpose of this document is to provide clarification on the evaluation criteria articulated in [Article 31](#), "Academic Review Criteria," of the Unit-18 contract, and to help departments better understand how these criteria should be applied in the evaluation process. Please note that these guidelines apply to reviews and promotions of Continuing Lecturers, as outlined in [Articles 7b-c-d](#), *not* to reviews of Pre-6 Lecturers, as outlined in [Article 7a](#).

Article 31, Section D.1 of the Unit-18 contract specifically states, "Evaluations of the academic qualifications or performance of a Unit 18 faculty member for purposes of achieving continuing status, merit, and promotion shall be made on the basis of their assigned instructional duties.... Academic responsibility and other assigned duties shall also be utilized in the review." Below we outline guidance on evaluating a lecturer's "instructional duties" and "academic responsibility and other assigned duties."

## Instructional Duties

### Expected Qualities of Instructors

Effectual teaching is the essential function of Unit-18 lecturers, and the primary basis upon which lecturers should be evaluated in the academic review process. To be successful as instructors, lecturers should evince the following qualities (below are the specific contract criteria that correspond to each quality):

- **Teaching efficacy**
  - 31.D.4.a. "Dedication to and engagement with teaching"
  - 31.D.4.f. "Awakening in students an awareness of the importance of the subject matter"
  - 31.D.4.g. "Inspiring interest in beginning students and stimulating advanced students to do complex work"
  - 31.D.4.h. "Developing pedagogically effective assignments, lecture slides, lesson plans, exams, and/or other course materials and/or prompts for student work"
  - 31.D.4.i. "Exceptional instructional performance would include introducing new teaching practices into the course(s)"
- **Knowledge of the subject matter**
  - 31.D.4.b. "Command of the subject matter and continued growth in mastering new topics"
- **Accountability to students**
  - 31.D.4.c. "Organizing and presenting course content effectively and with demonstrated learning outcomes"
  - 31.D.4.d. "Setting pedagogical objectives appropriate to the course topic, level, and format"
  - 31.D.4.e. "Responding to student work in ways commensurate with student performance, course topic, level, and format"
- **Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion**
  - 31.D.5. "contributions to diversity and equal opportunity"

## Common Manifestations of the Qualities

While these qualities can be demonstrated in a variety of ways, here are some examples we might commonly expect to see:

- **Teaching efficacy:** Engaging students in course materials and encouraging imaginative, critical, and analytical thinking about relevant course content. Ensuring that students receive consistent, productive, timely feedback on their learning. Keeping abreast of pedagogical best practices and actively incorporating these into classroom teaching. Mentoring students outside of the classroom context. Integrating and updating course materials that are current and relevant to students' learning needs. Developing course materials that are engaging for both beginner and advanced students. Offering co-curricular educational opportunities to support students beyond the classroom. If applicable, providing mentorship to graduate student TAs, and support in their development as instructors. Demonstrating pedagogical expertise through publications relevant to discipline-specific pedagogical approach, course content and/or course design, or other aspects of teaching.
- **Knowledge of the subject matter:** Developing and demonstrating knowledge and expertise in relevant content pedagogy. Keeping abreast of advancements and changes in the discipline, and updating curriculum to reflect these changes. Attending conferences and workshops to deepen subject matter knowledge. Producing publications relevant to course subject matter.
- **Accountability to students:** Ensuring that courses meet all requirements of the academic program. Creating a learning environment in which students can thrive. This includes: coming to class prepared and on time; ending class on time; being flexible with, and responsive to, students and their challenges and concerns; being available to students via office hours, and/or email; and commenting thoughtfully, effectively, and promptly on student assignments. Improving and developing course design based on previous student course evaluations. Writing letters of recommendation on behalf of students.
- **Commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion:** Designing lessons that consider diverse populations of students and meet individual student challenges. Demonstrating in teaching and comments to students a respect for and engagement in students' cultural and linguistic differences. Integrating universal accessibility principles or practices into course content, online course management system, and in-class experience. Actively participating in educational and professional development opportunities related to DEI pedagogical practices. Communicating professionally and respectfully to all students while fostering an environment based on fairness and equity.

## Typical Methods for Evaluating Teaching

While evaluation methods may vary somewhat by discipline, the following are commonly used:

- Class observations and post-observation discussions
- Reviews of instructors' course materials (syllabi, writing project guidelines, exams, Canvas pages, etc.) to ensure that teaching and course design are in alignment with discipline-specific best-practices
- Commentary on student work (accessed via Canvas or student portfolios)
- Contributions to and/or engagement in faculty/program meetings

- Student evaluations, including narrative comments and numerical scores (to the extent that they are statistically valid), through standard course evaluations or other student evaluation mechanisms (see also: [SET Interpretation Guidance](#))
- Lecturers' written self-reflections about their teaching and course materials
- Lecturers' demonstrated instructional expertise pertaining to pedagogical methods and course subject matter, such as through related presentations or publications

## Merit Increases

As explained in [Article 22](#), the normative salary increase for Continuing Lecturers is 2 salary points, which indicates "excellent" performance along all evaluative criteria described in [Article 31](#). A normative advancement for Senior Continuing Lecturers is 3 salary points, which indicates "exceptional" performance along all evaluative criteria described in Article 31. Recommendations for larger increases may be considered if all of the performance review criteria are met, **and** the instructor has been deemed truly extraordinary *along multiple evaluative criteria*, above.

For example, the instructor employs especially creative pedagogy while also adhering to the curriculum; they include lessons that provide opportunities for students to apply their learning; they ensure most lessons successfully include evidence-based or research based strategies; they ensure students learn to personalize and apply discipline-specific ways of thinking, data-gathering, and problem-solving; they ensure that courses unfold as a learning dialog (facilitated by the instructor), where students exchange questions and share information; they have exceptionally strong student evaluations; they proactively and systematically analyze experiences of people in their courses to create/adapt curricula that inclusively reflects diverse participants and allows learners to use their identities, interests, and experiences as assets in course group's learning.

Examples of evidence of accomplishments that could be used to demonstrate extraordinary performance possibly warranting higher than normative advancements might include (among others):

- Receipt of a competitive, distinguished teaching award
- Evidence of successful implementation of a significant teaching innovation (examples of evidence might include: student reviews or performance, recognition from a professional organization, etc.)
- Evidence of teaching with a demonstrated impact on student learning (examples of evidence might include: student publications or presentations, students' original research, student performance in subsequent classes, etc.)
- Teaching scores well above norms or narrative comments consistently demonstrating extraordinary student experience
- Evidence of development of new and effective instructional techniques, technologies, or modalities of instruction, including providing robust opportunities for cocurricular, experiential, or service learning
- Outstanding peer evaluations
- A pedagogical or curricular change that has resulted in measurable student learning gains
- Development of new, innovative courses

While there are many different ways that an instructor might demonstrate performance beyond normative (again, defined as "excellent" for Continuing Lecturers and as "exceptional" for Senior Continuing Lecturers), it is important to note that outstanding teaching is a critical component. While many Unit-18 lecturers may also engage in *unassigned* duties (including, but not limited to, publication or independent research), these duties are not requirements of their positions and therefore do not constitute a basis for acceleration. These activities might be used as evidence of exceptional subject matter knowledge, but to make a successful case for acceleration there must be clear evidence of the impact on teaching.

## Other Assigned Duties

### Incorporation of Other Assigned Duties into the Merit Review Process

In addition to instructional responsibilities, the Unit-18 contract further stipulates that, "Academic responsibility and other assigned duties shall also be utilized in the review." Other duties, in this context, typically refers to University service, which can take a variety of forms, such as serving on committees, performing administrative tasks, coordinating events and activities to support students beyond the classroom, and many others. Not all lecturers are assigned such duties, in which case their review will be based entirely on the teaching record. In situations where the lecturer *has* been assigned other duties, quality of teaching continues to be the primary basis for assessment, but quality of other assigned duties should be factored into the overall recommendation.

As mentioned above, recommendations for increases above normative will only be considered if the lecturer has demonstrated outstanding performance across *multiple evaluative criteria*. Therefore, outstanding performance of other assigned duties, including administrative duties, is not, in and of itself, a basis for acceleration, but could be used to support a recommendation for acceleration if the lecturer has also demonstrated outstanding performance in one or more instructional areas.