PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

I. Purpose
This policy encourages managers and employees to discuss and document the expected levels of performance required by the department and University and encourages managers to provide feedback of each employee’s performance.

II. Policy Statement
Georgia Southern University recognizes that employees must understand their role at the University in order to perform well. Performance expectations should be in writing and based on University policies and procedures. Managers will provide clear and consistent feedback to allow employees the best opportunity to succeed professionally.

III. Definitions
Performance Expectation Plan (PEP) - A document used to provide opportunities for an employee to improve performance when the employee is not meeting expectations. A PEP is best used to develop soft skills, such as collaboration. A PEP is not part of the disciplinary process. Please see the Progressive Discipline Policy for disciplinary options.

Training Improvement Plan (TIP) - A document used to define the expectations of a specific employee when the employee takes on a new role or responsibilities, such as learning new software or other hard skills.

Employee Categories:
- Faculty - Faculty consists of the corps of instruction and the administrative officers as defined in Board of Regents (BOR) Policy 3.2.1 Faculty Membership.
- Staff Employees:
  - Staff Professional and Administrative Employees are exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities. This group does not include faculty or graduate assistants.
  - Staff Non-exempt Employees are not exempt from the Federal wage-hour provisions of the FLSA.
  - Classified Employees consist of the Staff Professional and Administrative Employees and Staff Non-exempt employees as defined above.
Student Employees are considered temporary and include graduate assistants and student workers.

IV. Procedures

A. Performance Expectations

To perform well, employees need to know what is expected of them. An up-to-date job description describes the essential functions, tasks, and responsibilities of the job. It also outlines the general areas of knowledge, skills and abilities required of the employee to be successful in the job.

Performance expectations serve as a foundation for communicating about performance throughout the year. They also serve as the basis for assessing employee performance. When a supervisor and an employee set clear expectations about the results that must be achieved and the methods or approaches needed to achieve them, a path for success is established.

Expectations should always be set in accordance with Georgia Southern policies and procedures and should always be put in writing. When performance expectations change, a written summary of the discussions during the planning process serves as a record of the supervisor and employee’s mutually understood expectations. A signed copy of the employee’s revised expectations should be provided to the employee and placed in the department’s employee file.

B. Work Rules & Policies

All University and specific departmental policies and rules should be clearly communicated to all employees, as well as consequences for violating these policies and/or department work rules. Only after reviewing the policies with each employee can employees be held accountable. Department-specific work rules should also be discussed with the employee for their understanding and compliance.

C. Performance Evaluations

All classified employees shall be evaluated by their supervisor in a systematic manner once each year. An employee in the provisional period should be evaluated at least once prior to the completion of the provisional period. During the performance evaluation period the supervisor and employee should set clear goals for the upcoming year. In addition, the supervisor should monitor, evaluate, and support the employee’s performance.

D. Performance Expectation Plan (PEP)

An employee may be given a Performance Expectation Plan as a supportive measure to provide opportunities for an employee to improve performance when the employee is not meeting expectations. This is a supportive measure and may be used at the supervisor’s discretion. Human Resources may provide guidance on the proper use of a PEP, if desired. A copy signed by the supervisor and by the employee as an acknowledgement should be placed in the employee’s personnel file in their department.
Specific recommendations to reach acceptable levels of performance will be in writing. This progress will be reviewed with the employee throughout the performance development experience.

A PEP is not part of the disciplinary process. Please see the Progressive Discipline Policy for disciplinary options.

1. In situations when the employee’s performance is not meeting expectations, the supervisor may create an opportunity to improve the performance by completing a Performance Expectation Plan (PEP). A PEP should be used when there is a commitment to help the employee improve, not as a way for a manager to start the termination process.

A PEP is best used when there are skill level deficiencies. It is not recommended with behavioral deficiencies. Behavioral deficiencies are best addressed using the counseling/written warning/final written warning process.

2. Procedures for Performance Expectation Plan (PEP)

   Determination of placement in this program and the length of time of involvement will be made by the CHRO (or designee) in consultation with the appropriate administrative staff. The PEP should not be less than sixty (60) calendar days and no more than ninety (90) calendar days; the PEP can be extended due to extenuating circumstances.

   A PEP should be discussed with and acknowledged by the employee to ensure that the employee has ample time to change or correct their deficient performance. The PEP sets outcomes, acknowledges necessary training, and sets deadlines. The PEP can also be used in conjunction with the progressive discipline process.

   Notification of placement of a PEP shall be given orally and in writing. A copy signed by the employee will be placed in the employee’s official personnel record in Human Resources in addition to the employee’s departmental personnel file.

   The PEP will include specific recommendations to reach acceptable levels of performance and a timeline to determine progress. Progress will be reviewed with the employee throughout the performance development experience.

   Within five days prior to the conclusion of the PEP period, the supervisor will prepare a written evaluation which will be discussed with the employee. The evaluation will be forwarded to the Department of Human Resources with one of the following conclusions:
   - The employee has successfully completed the PEP; or
   - The employee has failed to successfully complete the PEP. Additional action(s) after failure of the plan should be discussed with the CHRO or designee.
   Successful completion of a PEP will remain only in the departmental files and does not need to be in the Human Resources personnel file.