Appraisal Manual

Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal System for Program Assistants

Employee Guide

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UTEXTENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

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Cooperative Extension

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I. Introduction

The University of Tennessee Extension (UT Extension) and Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension Program (TSU Extension) work cooperatively to provide research and evidenced based information to the residents of Tennessee through local county extension agents, area specialists, and Program Assistants. Assessing the performance of these employees is an important process to ensure the success of the county program.

In October, 2014, the UT and TSU Performance Appraisal Revision Committee produced a revised Performance Appraisal System for Extension Agents, Extension Agents and County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists to provide one joint appraisal form, set of criteria, and process to be used by both organizations. In 2016, this revision process was implemented to review the Performance Appraisal system for Extension Program Assistants.

A team of 10 UT and TSU personnel began work to revise the performance appraisal system for paraprofessional positions in all program areas (Agriculture and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, and 4-H Youth Development).

The UT Extension publication Appraisal Guide: Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal System for Extension Agents, Extension Agents and County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists (Donaldson, 2016) was the primary resource used in the development of this document. Throughout this guide, the employee can refer to this publication for further background information.

The purpose of this guide is to provide County Directors, supervising agents, and Program Assistants with guidelines and suggested practices in the area of performance-based assessment and accountability.

Performance Appraisal Outcomes

Performance appraisals are not always seen in a positive light. Research reflects that more than half the professional and clerical employees working today do not understand how their work is evaluated (Maddux, 2000) and raters often are not trained in evaluation methods and appraisal interviewing techniques (Clausen, Jones, & Rich, 2008; Donaldson, 2014; Kuchinke, Correthers, & Cecil, 2008; Patterson, 1987). This can lead to a negative experience for the employee and the evaluator. However, a performance appraisal provides a periodic opportunity for communication between the person who assigns the work and the person who performs it, to discuss what they expect from the other and how well those expectations are being met (Maddux, 2000). Table 1 shows potential performance appraisal outcomes.

Outcomes	Sources
Distinguish employees for merit pay	Bamberger & Meshoulan, 2000
Increase communications between supervisors and employees	Bennett, 1981
Set action plans for the coming year	Wright & Evans, 2008; Bennett, 1981
Promote overall organizational and employee effectiveness	Daley, 1992
Improve the quality of personnel decisions such as promotions	Murphy & Cleveland, 1995
Increase employee engagement in and commitment to their jobs	Gilliland & Langdom, 1998; Murphy & Cleveland, 1995
Improve employee self-development and recognition	Brown & Larson, 1962
Improve employee job performance	Gililand & Langdom, 1998

Table 1. *Performance Appraisal's Potential Outcomes (Donaldson, 2016)*

Performance appraisals should not be viewed in isolation. It should be seen as one element of a comprehensive performance management system (Norris & Baker, 1999). This system is the ongoing process which includes performance expectations, ongoing coaching and feedback, midyear appraisals, and the annual appraisal interview (Norris & Baker, 1999). If conducted correctly, it can be a positive experience for the employee and the evaluator. The ultimate goal of this committee is to ensure that this process is fair and implemented positively so that employees and supervisors can benefit from it.

II. Performance Factors and Criteria

The effectiveness of any performance appraisal system is contingent on a number of factors, including the purpose of the appraisal, the appraisal technique and content, characteristics of the appraiser, and the employee's specific job (Cederblom, 1982). The extent to which an individual believes that he or she understands the overall role and process of the organization's performance appraisal system may be very important in determining how he or she views the organization in general and the appraisal process in particular (Kuchinke, Correthers, & Cecil, 2008). The team selected to review the performance appraisal system for UT and TSU Program Assistants emphasized the importance of creating a process in which expectations were clearly defined, simple to comprehend, and supported the organizations goals.

The Program Assistant Performance Appraisal Revision Team reviewed the job descriptions and PDQs for Program Assistant positions in all program areas, noting the most frequent job responsibilities across the entire sample. This review identified 14 major job responsibilities: goal setting, implementing, data collection, reporting, resource management, equality, access, and opportunity, outcomes, policy compliance, professional development, technology skills, work habits, interpersonal skills and customer service. This work was predicated on the idea that major job responsibilities should be represented as the performance criteria.
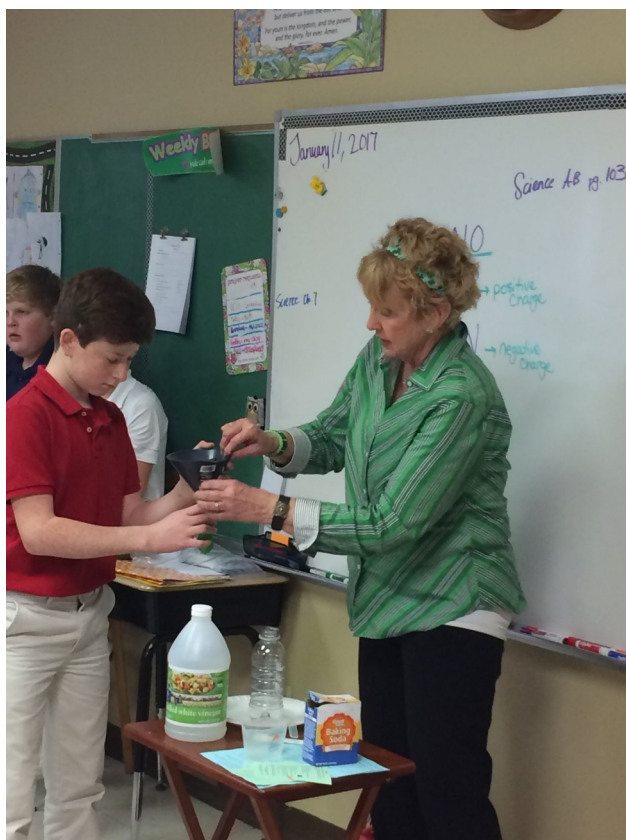
Regarding research of Extension personnel, sources were studied to understand Extension Program Assistant competencies (Baker, 2009) and agents' perspective on appraisals (Donaldson, 2014); however a gap in the research was identified concerning Program Assistants perspectives on performance appraisals. The newly revised Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal rubric (2016), University of Tennessee system-wide appraisal form (2013), Tennessee State University system-wide appraisal form (2015), Iowa State University Extension Appraisal form, University of Georgia appraisal form (2015), University of Arkansas Extension appraisal form (2015), Texas A&M Extension appraisal form (2015), and Mississippi State University Extension appraisal form (2015) were also reviewed to identify performance factors and criteria, and descriptions of each criterion.

This review of appraisal forms, research, and other applicable resources confirmed the 14 major appraisal criteria from the review of job descriptions and PDQs. SMART Goal setting and tasks to accomplish goals were identified from the Tennessee State University system-wide appraisal (2015) as an important criteria to include.

The 14 criteria were then organized into major categories or performance factors. Table 2 shows the selected performance factors, criteria, and applicable references which were used to author the descriptions of each criterion.

There are five main performance factors of the performance appraisal instrument: Program Goals, Program Implementation, Program Accomplishments, Professionalism, and Community and Organizational Collaboration.

Performance Factors	Criteria	References
Program Goals	• SMART Goal setting	• A, B, D, E, G
Program Implementation	• Implementing • Data Collection • Reporting • Resource Management	• A, B,C, D E, H • A, B C, D,E, I • A, B, D, I • A, B,C, D, H, I
Program Accomplishments	• Equity, Access, and Opportunity • Outcomes	• A, B,D, , H • A, B, D, H, I
Professionalism	• Policy Compliance • Professional Development • Technology and Innovation • Work Habits	• A, B,C,D • A, B,C, D, E, H • B, B, D, E • C, B, C,D,E F, H
Community and Organizational Collaboration	• Interpersonal Skills • Customer Service	• A, B,C, D, F, H • A, B,C, D,E, H

Table 2. *New Performance Factors, Criteria, and References*

Note. The following letters are used to identify references as follows:

A. Donaldson, et. al Document Review (2015)
B. Baker, (2009)
C. Iowa State University (2015)
D. University of Tennessee (2013)
E. Tennessee State University (2015)

F. University of Georgia, (2015)
G. University of Arkansas (2015)
H. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension (2015)
I. Donaldson (2008)

Program Goals

The purpose of a needs assessment is to uncover the problem, who it affects, how it affects them, and what results are to be achieved through programming (Rothwell & Kazanas, 2008). While the supervising agent will conduct the overall needs assessment for the program, the Program Assistants will determine how they can contribute to meeting those needs. The program goals portion of the evaluation is relative to whether or not the Program Assistant has identified specific goals they would like to achieve to assist in the implementation of the county program. This portion will determine if the Program Assistant has identified tasks to complete in order to accomplish these goals. There are two criteria in this performance factor: SMART goal setting and identifying tasks to accomplish goals.

SMART Goal Setting: This determines if the Program Assistant has developed goals that are Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Results Oriented, and Time bound. These goals should be aligned with program area for the coming year. The supervising agent has input that should be obtained in developing the goals which should contribute to the needs assessment.

Identifying tasks to accomplish goals: This area provides measurement of whether tasks to accomplish goals are well defined and aligned with county program goals for the coming year. These tasks include program implementation steps that have reasonable potential to lead to desired program outcomes.

Program Implementation

This performance factor measures how well the Program Assistants manage their responsibilities within their program area. Both Baker, Pearson, and Chipman (2009) and Munson and Parsons (1979) identified specific competencies such as conducting program evaluation, maintaining accurate records and reports, and demonstrating personal accountability as core competencies needed by Program Assistants in both nutrition education and 4-H. The four criteria identified under this performance factor include implementation, data collection, reporting, and resource management.

Implementation: Program Assistants should use approved research based program materials and curricula provided by state specialists. Their program delivery is adapted within program guidelines to meet the needs of the clientele. They collaborate well across program areas with other units and organizations and plan a regular, on-going effort to market Extension.

Data Collection: This criterion measures if approved program evaluation tools are used correctly, collected, and submitted in a timely and efficient manner. Program Assistants should provide documentation, program accomplishments, and progress toward program goals.

Reporting: Program Assistants should submit complete, neat, and accurate reports in a timely manner. They should keep data up-to-date and readily accessible.

Resource Management: Resource management measures Program Assistants' proper use of supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to provide a quality program. It also measures how Program Assistants manage their individual program budgets, inventories, and accounts under the direction of supervising agent.

Program Accomplishments

In an era of accountability, Extension must be able to defend how people are served. It also needs to document that programs are achieving positive results (Andrews, 1983). The Program Accomplishments performance factor measures how well the Program Assistant evaluated, documented, and collected valid information to determine the outcomes and impacts of the program. This performance factor also measures if the Program Assistant provided access and opportunity to all eligible community members.

Equity, Access, and Opportunity: This criterion measures the Program Assistant's ability to reach diverse and underrepresented audiences. It also measures if the Program Assistant complies with Americans with Disabilities Act, Equal Employment Opportunity, Civil Rights, and Affirmative Action guidelines.

Outcomes: Program Assistants are evaluated on how well and often they provide information and documentation for evaluation of program impact.

Professionalism

While Program Assistants are classified as paraprofessionals, they must demonstrate professional qualities at all times when working with co-workers and clientele.

Policy Compliance: This measures how well the Program Assistant understands and follows all applicable policies and procedures associated with the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Extension.

Professional Development: Throughout the year, Program Assistants must participate in a minimum of 32 hours, per full time FTE, of professional development. This performance criteria measures if the Program Assistant attends and participates in appropriate professional development opportunities and if they have identified professional development goals. It also measures how well the Program Assistant incorporates the knowledge gained in professional development into the Extension program.

Technology Skills: This criterion provides measurement of the Program Assistant's routine use of appropriate technology for communication and programming. This also measures if the Program Assistant takes advantage of training opportunities to stay on the cutting edge with technology advances in content and program delivery.

Work Habits: Work habits criterion measures if the Program Assistant displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments, and requirements. It also measures if they comply with established work rules and organizational policies and protocols. Their ability to independently manage their time and resources to meet commitments are measured here.

Community and Organizational Collaboration

The community and organizational collaboration performance factor measures how well the Program Assistants work with both internal and external stakeholders to cultivate relationships that increases their effectiveness in an educational role. Collaboration with community groups and agencies helps to increase program effectiveness.

➡️ **Interpersonal Skills:** The Program Assistant should work cooperatively with all agents, co-workers, volunteers, clientele, and partners. They should also demonstrate the ability to be an effective team member and contribute to harmony in the workplace.

➡️ **Customer Service**: Program Assistants should respond to client needs or requests in a timely manner. The customer service criterion measures how well the Program Assistant works with all clientele groups and communicates respectfully to all client requests. This criterion also measures if the Program Assistant effectively recruits and utilizes program specific volunteers.

III. Conducting the Appraisal

The Process

While many extension employees focus on the performance appraisal at the end of the year, the actual process should occur throughout the year. There are three parts to the performance appraisal process: Planning, Implementation, and Assessment.

Planning

For the Extension Program Assistant, the performance appraisal process begins with developing SMART Goals. This period may occur over several months where they will assist the supervising agent in producing a plan for the coming year. The Program Assistant will set program goals to assist the supervising agent in implementing programs outlined in the Individual Annual Plan (IAP). Comments and ratings of SMART Goals and Tasks to accomplish goals from the County Director will transfer to the program goals section of the performance appraisal form (Appendix D).

Establishing Goals for the Coming Year

Effective goal-setting is a critical part of a successful appraisal system. Goal-setting should increase communications between supervisors and employees, set action plans for the coming year, and promote overall organization and employee effectiveness (Donaldson, 2016).

Employees should set goals for the coming year that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-oriented (SMART). The following discussion is adapted from: Doran, G. T. (1981). There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives, Management Review, 70, (11), pp. 35-36.

S   **Specific** – Specific goals are concrete, detailed, focused, well-defined, straightforward, and action-oriented.

M   **Measurable** – Appropriate measures help employees make progress toward completing objectives. Progress measurements also allow for course corrections along the way for both direction and pace. If you set an objective that is measurable, you will have tangible evidence of completion of the objective.

A   **Achievable** – Achievable objectives are those that your employee can actually accomplish (something he or she can realistically do within the time frame set), not an aspiration or vision. Achievable objectives need to challenge your employee but not so much so as to be unattainable or to cause frustration in being unable to complete them.

R   **Realistic** – Realistic objectives are those that you have the resources to accomplish, including skills, funding, equipment, time and staff.

T   **Time Oriented** – Time Oriented Objectives are those that have deadlines for completion. The time frames create a sense of urgency, and lead to action. The deadlines, just as with overall objectives, must be achievable and realistic. For a complex objective, break it into small parts, and set a deadline for completion of each phase (Doran, 1981).

Employees may set at least three goals for the year. Goals may relate to personal development, professional development, and/or program goals. As a best practice, professional development and program goals should relate the performance criteria (Donaldson, 2016). The following are examples of SMART Goal setting:

- Attend and participate in four TNCEP Coalition meetings.

- Complete 12 hours of Extension in-service courses related to youth development.

- Identify two schools for implementation of the Junior Master Gardner program

While it is acceptable to create personal goals (such as "Walk 45 minutes every morning"), employees should never disclose personal or medical information on the appraisal form. Key applicable federal and state laws govern how employers must treat employees, including:

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment, transportation, public accommodation, communications, and governmental activities. The ADA also establishes requirements for telecommunications relay services.

- The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) mandates the protection and confidential handling of medical information.

Supervisors should never discuss personal or medical information with employees. An example of the goal description, timeframe, and evaluation are shown in Figure B.

Description	Timeframe	Evaluation
Increase EFNEP graduates by 20 participants each quarter.	December, 2017, March, June, September, 2018	Review WebNeers data
Attend 12 hours of UT/TSU in-service trainings on youth development	January-December, 2018	In-service participation will be shown in SUPER
Enter contact data in SUPER on the 5th of each month.	January – December, 2018	Review SUPER data entry on a monthly basis
Complete 3 hours of undergraduate courses in communication	August – December, 2018	Courses and grades will be shown on college transcript.
Recruit 2 schools for Junior Master Gardener programming	January – December, 2018	Documented participation in Jr. Master Gardner program

Figure B. *Example Goal Description, Timeframe, and Evaluation*

As a best practice, supervisors and employees should discuss goals during coaching sessions towards the end of each year. Ideally, goals would be finalized in December.

It is also important for the Program Assistant to identify specific tasks they will do to accomplish these goals. This will help them and the supervising agent identify what needs to be done and in what timeframe to complete the established SMART Goals. These tasks should be well defined and aligned with the program goals for the coming year. The following are illustrations:

GOAL   Increase EFNEP graduates by 20 participants.

Task to accomplish goal   Identify and meet with two new churches each quarter promoting the Faithful Families curriculum.

GOAL   Enter contact data in SUPER on by the 5th of each month.

Task to accomplish goal   Set aside each Friday to gather contact data for the week.

GOAL   Attend 12 hours of UT/TSU in-service trainings on youth development.

Task to accomplish goal   Record dates for recommended in-service trainings in planner.

Implementation

This involves the period of delivering, reporting, and evaluating educational programs throughout the year. During this period, it is important for the Program Assistant to implement the tasks to accomplish goals. During this period, the Program Assistant should regularly do the following:

1) Meet with supervising agent to discuss successes and concerns of reaching SMART Goals, tasks to accomplish goals, and other programming needs.

2) Review the Performance Appraisal rubric to identify areas of improvement in their overall performance.

3) Provide support of the county program through innovative program ideas.

Assessment

This period involves the assessment of the Program Assistant's overall performance for the previous year. As discussed, ongoing conversations of performance should take place throughout the year; however, the assessment component of the performance appraisal process is a more formal meeting and will reflect a final assessment of the overall performance. It is suggested that the supervising agent be included in this process. Below are some suggested approaches to assessing performance.

Review Program Assistant Performance Appraisal Rubric

Supervisors should first review the performance factors and criteria (Appendix A). This serves as a reminder of the various performance levels, and it is important before assessing performance so that the review conducted represents the stated criteria and contributes to consistency and fairness in reviewing employees with the same job titles. In making these various reviews, note specific areas that represent performance strengths, challenges, areas of improvement, and goals.

Annual Summarized Data

Donaldson (2016) discussed how annual summarized data plays an important role in documenting and measuring performance. The annual summarized data from SUPER modules will be displayed in the appraisal for the year of the appraisal. County Directors can utilized the same data elements with Program Assistants that are used with Extension Agents with the exception of Impact Summaries. Program Assistants do not develop Impact Statements; therefore, Impact Summaries would reflect direct education contacts, indirect education contacts and volunteer contacts only. Please refer to UT Publication 396 for a full list of data elements.

Review of Goals for the Current Year

When the supervisor reviews goals for the current year, he/she will indicate one of three dispositions:

Accomplished disposition means that the goal was met as stated.

Progress disposition indicates that the goal was not entirely accomplished but some major progress was made towards meeting the goal during the year.

No Progress disposition indicates that progress was not made and the supervisor and employee should assess the reason(s) why no progress was made. The supervisors and employee should also determine if the goal is appropriate to set as a goal for the coming year.

In many cases, the supervisor will be able to observe whether or not the goal was met. In other cases, the employee's annual summarized data will indicate whether or not the goal was met. It is appropriate for the supervisor to ask the employee if their individual goals were met.

In addition to marking a disposition of accomplished, progress, or no progress, the supervisor may make comments regarding the goals. If all goals are accomplished, then supervisory comments are not required, but positive reinforcement is recommended. See Figure C for an example of the Review of Goals for the Current Year section of the performance appraisal form.

Goal 1	Conduct four trainings for 4-H Consumer Judging Teams.	Accomplished Progress **X No Progress**
Goal 2	Participate in 5 community health fairs.	Accomplished **X Progress** No Progress
Goal 3	Complete three hours of undergraduate courses in communications.	**X Accomplished** Progress No Progress
Comments	4-H Consumer Judging trainings were not held due to lack of participation. Progress was made in participation in community health fairs. Goal was not accomplished due to agency cancellation.	

Figure C. *Review of Goals for the Current Year*

Performance Factors Averages

The supervisor rates the employee on the performance criteria which are organized by performance factor. The criteria ratings are summed and averaged within a performance factor to produce a score for each factor. The scores are summed for the overall rating (Figure D).

An overall rating of 14 or below requires a performance improvement plan. County Directors should contact the Regional Director who will advise on the performance improvement plan.

	Overall Rating	*Total Points*
☐	Exemplary	= 23-25
☐	Exceeds Expectations	= 19-22
☐	Meets Expectations	= 15-18
☐	Needs Improvement*	= 10-14
☐	Unsatisfactory*	= 9 or less

Figure D. *Overall Ratings and Total Points*

The above information and further information on avoiding common rating errors can be found in:

Appraisal Guide: Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal System for Extension Agents, Extension Agents and County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists (Donaldson, 2016).

Supervisors must provide comments for all five performance factors. The comments should be aligned with the performance factor and may represent performance strengths, challenges, areas of improvement, and goals. Example comments are shown in Figure E.

Averages	Score
Sum of **Program Goals** Criteria Rating – example: 5+5= 10/2 Supervisor Comments*: Goals are well defined. Continue the excellent engagement with supervising agent concerning program needs.	5
Sum of **Program Implementation** Criteria Ratings – ex: 5+3+3+4=15/4 Supervisor Comments*: Exceeds performance in most areas except reporting and data collection are areas that need improvement.	3
Sum of **Program Accomplishments** Criteria Ratings – ex: 5+4= 9/2 Supervisor Comments*: New residential horticulture programs demonstrated an area of strength. Continue working with new audiences and programs.	4
Sum of **Professionalism** Criteria Ratings- ex:5+5+5+4= 19/4 Supervisor Comments*: Your desire to increase your knowledge in nutrition and technology are exemplary. You continue to display a positive and cooperative attitude.	4
Sum of **Community and Organizational Collaboration** Criteria Ratings ex: 5+5= 10/2 Supervisor Comments*: Your performance builds and maintains effective relationships with colleagues, volunteers, clients, and partners	5
Overall Score =	21

Figure E. *Example Supervisor Comments for Performance Factors*

Supervisors must be sensitive to the fact that all appraisal forms are legal documents and property of the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University. Comments about personal matters, including medical/health issues, are never appropriate.

Employees are required to make overall comments. Employees are encouraged to describe anything they need help with, how their supervisor can assist on accomplishing goals, and/or resources needed.

Appraisal Interview

Supervisors and employees should have discussions regarding performance on a regular basis throughout the year; open dialogue improves performance, programs, and customer service. Employees should receive feedback from their supervisor during the year so that the appraisal interview is a summary of these discussions. Ratings should not come as a surprise to employees. In fact, when ratings come as a surprise to employees, it is indicative of the need for more communication (Donaldson, 2016).

The performance appraisal interview is an opportunity to review performance, consider lessons learned, assess progress during the rating period, and establish goals and objectives for next period. However, if there are any disagreements about ratings, handle dissent professionally. Disagreements should be noted as a matter of record either in the comments section of the performance appraisal or via separate documentation following the performance appraisal interview (Donaldson, 2016).

To prepare for the performance appraisal interview, supervisors should schedule sufficient time to focus on the interview; one hour is recommended. Choose a meeting space that will be free of interruptions from other staff members, phone calls, and texts. Both employees and supervisors should turn off cell phones during the appraisal interview. Best practices for conducting the performance appraisal interview include (Donaldson, 2016):

- Conduct a performance appraisal interview annually with each employee.

- Conduct a performance appraisal interview after meeting with Regional Director.

- Performance appraisal interviews should only be conducted with the door closed; a private setting ensures that both supervisors and employees feel comfortable talking openly.

- Performance appraisal interviews should be conducted on a consistent basis with all employees.

- Allow for sufficient time to prepare for and conduct the interview.

- Be aware of non-verbal communications: emotions, body language, space and tone of voice.

- Eliminate barriers for the appraisal interview. If a small conference table is available, that would be preferred over a supervisor sitting behind his/her desk.

- Participate in active listening.

Other suggestions for conducting the appraisal interview can be found in *Appraisal Guide: Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal System for Extension Agents, Extension Agents and County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists* (Donaldson, 2016)

Rebuttal of the Overall Performance Appraisal Score and Rating

Information in this section can also be found in the UT Extension publication Appraisal Guide: Tennessee Extension Performance Appraisal System for Extension Agents, Extension Agents and County Directors, and Extension Area Specialists (Donaldson, 2016)

Employees have the opportunity for rebuttal of the overall score and overall rating by writing to their immediate supervisor. If the employee is not satisfied with the response, they may write to their supervisor's supervisor. The employee may continue the rebuttal by writing to the next person in the supervisory line one level at a time. (For rebuttal of across-the-board pay increase decisions due to unsatisfactory performance, employees should write directly to the Dean.)

In situations when an employee has reason to disagree with the performance appraisal, the employee may respond to the content or conduct of the performance evaluation in writing within 30 days following the performance appraisal interview between the supervisor and employee.

If an employee chooses this option, the employee's response should be forwarded to their supervisor and a copy should be submitted to the Extension Human Resources Officer (for UT employees) or the TSU Vice President, Business and Finances, Human Resources (for TSU employees). If appropriate, the supervisor may respond in writing within 30 days of receiving the employee's response. Employees are encouraged to request, in writing to their supervisor, their annual performance evaluation be conducted in a timely manner.

Policy Highlight

See TSU Performance Evaluation Policy 6.29, Review with Employee

- Each formal performance evaluation will be thoroughly discussed with the applicable employee to point out areas that need improvement or are unacceptable.

- Employees are encouraged to comment about their work performance, in writing or verbally, and to discuss working conditions and offer suggestions for improving business operations.

- The employee should sign the performance report to acknowledge awareness of its contents and discussion with the supervisor.

- The employee's signature does not necessarily mean the employee fully agrees with the contents of the report and the employee may so state on the form before signing.

Roles and Responsibilities

An effective system of evaluating job performance should accurately outline employees' responsibilities and contributions to an organization, motivate employees, and provide valid and important input in personnel decisions (Clausen, Jones, & Rich, 2008). Within the UT and TSU system, it is important to understand the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the appraisal process.

The Supervising Agent

- Works with Program Assistant in identifying SMART Goals to meet county programming needs.
- Communicates regularly with the Program Assistant on program success and areas of improvement.
- Provides a summary of goals met and teaching effectiveness.

The County Director

- Reviews the SMART Goals and makes any applicable suggestions.
- Coaches the Program Assistant and answers questions in all aspects of the appraisal process.
- Makes preliminary ratings and comments.
- Conducts the appraisal interview

The Regional Program Leader

- Provides input for goals which meet county programming needs.
- Responds to questions from the Regional Director and/or the County Director regarding the performance of individual employees.

The Regional Director

- Provides instruction and answers questions in the appraisal process for all personnel in the region.
- Coordinates and advises County Directors in the appraisal process.
- Finalizes ratings and comments in coordination with the County Directors.

The Human Resources Staff

- Provides instruction and answers questions in the appraisal process from Regional Directors and others.
- Addresses questions and issues from Regional Directors regarding the appraisal process and forms.

Performance Appraisal in SUPER

The appraisal module in the System for University Planning, Evaluation, and Reporting (SUPER) will be used for the entire appraisal process. The appraisal tabs will be: Employee Information, Goals, Performance Factors, Averages/Overall Rating, Comments, and Print. The currently selected tab will be highlighted to show that it is the one selected as illustrated in Figure A.

Figure A. *Appraisal Tab*

The appraisal timeline for 2018 is shown in Table 3

Date	Description
November 4, 2017	2018 Individual Annual Plans (IAPs) submitted to Regional Program Leader. (County Directors will have reviewed and submitted IAPs from their unit on or before October 31, 2017).
December 16, 2017	Regional Program Leaders will review, rate and make comments or suggestions for improvement of the IAP as appropriate no later than December 2017.
December 1, 2017	2017 Impact Statements completed. Consider the performance factors, criteria, and annual summarized data. Create goals for the coming year, review goals for previous year, and enter comments in the employee section of the performance appraisal form.
December 1, 2017	Extension Agent performance appraisal due to County Extension Director. Area Specialist performance appraisals due to Regional Director.
January, 2018	County Directors review annual summarized data, goals for the coming year and previous year, makes supervisory comments, and coach personnel regarding the appraisal. County Directors make preliminary rating and may suggest changes to goals. County and area performance appraisals submitted to Regional Directors.
January 6, 2018	All activity reports for January 1, 2017 - December 31, 2017 entered in SUPER Delivery module.
January 31, 2018	The County Director and Regional Director jointly review annual summarized data, goals for the previous year, goals for the coming year, review any input from Regional Program Leaders (if applicable), and discuss employee's performance and goals. The County Director and Regional Director finalize ratings and make supervisory comments for every performance factor and for all goals.
February 16, 2018	The County Director conducts formal, individual performance appraisal interviews with County Extension staff. Individual employees finalize their comments, and the County Director and employee sign the appraisal form. The County Director submits signed forms to the regional office.
February 23, 2018	All county and area performance appraisal documents completed by Regional Directors and submitted to the Extension Dean.

Table 3. *2018 Performance Appraisal Schedule*

IV. Contacts

If you have questions about any aspect of the performance appraisal factors, criteria, descriptions, forms, and/or process, Program Assistants should always first direct questions to their County Director. Unresolved issues should be directed to the Regional Director. Regional Directors should direct their questions to the applicable Human Resources leaders:

Dr. Shirley Hastings

Interim Director,

Extension Evaluation and Staff Development

hastings@utk.edu

865-974-8461

Ms. Elizabeth (Beth) Duncan

HR Generalist

Tennessee State University

eduncan3@tnstate.edu

615-963-5283

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Appendix A – Performance Appraisal Criteria, Description, and Ratings

Performance Factor: Program Goals

SMART Goal setting

Unacceptable (1)		Acceptable (5)
Goals are not Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-Oriented and Time bound and/or aligned with program area for the coming year.		Goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-Oriented and Time bound and aligned with program area for the coming year.
Supervisor/Supervising Agent input was not obtained in developing the goals.		Supervisor/Supervising Agent input was obtained in developing the goals.

Performance Factor: Program Goals

Tasks to accomplish goals

Unsatisfactory (1)				Exemplary (5)
Did not identify tasks to accomplish program goals				Tasks to accomplish goals are identified.
Tasks are not well defined or aligned with program goals for the coming year.				Tasks are well-defined and aligned with program goals for the coming year.

Performance Factor: Program Implementation

Implementing

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Rarely uses approved research based program materials and curricula as provided by specialists.	Occasionally uses approved research based program materials and curricula as provided by specialists.	Uses approved research based program materials and curricula as provided by specialists.	Uses approved research based program materials and curricula as provided by specialists.	Uses approved research based program materials and curricula as provided by specialists.
Program delivery is not adapted within program guidelines to meet the needs of the clientele.	Program delivery is sometimes adapted within program guidelines to meet the needs of the clientele.	Program delivery is adapted within program guidelines to meet the needs of the clientele.	Uses real life problems to teach subject matter and relevance to clientele.	Adopts new teaching methods and demonstrates connectivity and engagement with various audiences.
Does not collaborate well across program areas with other units and organizations.	Sometimes collaborates across program areas with other units and organizations.	Collaborates well across program areas with other units and organizations.	Collaborates well across program areas with other units and organizations.	Collaborates efficiently across program areas with other units and organizations.
Has no plans to follow best practices for marketing Extension.	Seldom follows best practices for marketing Extension	Follows best practices for marketing Extension.		

Performance Factor: Program Implementation

Data Collection

Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary
Does not use required program forms correctly and/or forms are not collected and submitted in a timely and efficient manner. Provides no documentation of program accomplishments, or progress towards program goals.	Required program forms are occasionally used, collected and submitted in a timely and efficient manner. Occasionally provides documentation, program accomplishments, or progress toward program goals.	Required program forms are used correctly, collected, and submitted in a timely and efficient manner. Provides documentation, program accomplishments, and/or progress toward program goals.	Required program forms are frequently used correctly, collected and submitted in a timely and efficient manner. Frequently provides documentation, program accomplishments and progress toward program goals.	Takes initiative to organize required program forms in order to maximize program success.

Performance Factor: Program Implementation

Reporting

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Does not complete and/or submit reports in a timely manner.	Completes and submits reports that are incomplete or with errors.	Submits complete and accurate reports in a timely manner. Keeps data up-to-date and readily accessible.	Reports are completed accurately showing program progress and accomplishments. Reports are frequently shared with supervisor/ supervising agent.	Completes all reports on time and consistently shares program successes with supervisor/ supervising agent. Utilizes the reports to improve programming efforts.

Performance Factor: Program Implementation

Resource Management

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations	Exemplary (5)
Does not use proper supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to provide a quality program.	Occasionally uses proper supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to provide a quality program.	Routinely demonstrates proper use of supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to provide a quality program.	Frequently utilizes supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to improve a quality program.	Consistently utilizes supplies, facilities, technology, and equipment to improve a quality program.
Demonstrates improper planning and exceeds program budget and accounts.	Occasionally stays within program budgets and accounts.	Maintains accurate program budgets, inventories, and accounts under the direction of supervising agent.	Maintains organized records of accurate program budgets, inventories, and accounts under the direction of supervising agent.	Utilizes extramural funding and/or resources secured by the supervisor/supervising agent that enhance quality programs.

Performance Factor: Program Accomplishments
Equity, Access, and Opportunity

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Shows no effort in reaching diverse and underserved clientele. Does not use Americans with Disabilities Act, Equal Employment Opportunity, Civil Rights, and/or Affirmative Action guidelines.	Occasionally reaches diverse and underrepresented clientele.	Repeatedly strives to reach diverse and/or underrepresented clientele. Participation includes diverse and underrepresented clientele.	Successfully demonstrates an involvement of diverse and underrepresented clientele. Serves as a resource for equity, access, and opportunity issues. Plans specifically for equity, access, and opportunity issues.	Engages stakeholders in reaching diverse and underrepresented clientele. Provides support, opportunity, resources, scholarships, etc. for underrepresented clientele. Implements sustainable approaches to involve underrepresented clientele.

Performance Factor: Program Accomplishments

Outcomes

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Provides no or minimal program information and documentation for evaluation of program impact.	Occasionally provides information and documentation for evaluation of program impact.	Provides information and documentation for evaluation of program impact.	Documents outcomes which enhance program growth and improvement.	Consistently documents outcomes that demonstrate improved quality of life, economic and/or environmental conditions.
Does not meet performance goals.	Periodically meets performance goals.	Meets performance goals.	Exceeds performance goals	Consistently exceeds performance goals

Performance Factor: Professionalism

Policy Compliance

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Does not follow nor demonstrates minimal knowledge of applicable policies.	Occasionally follows policy and/or lacks knowledge of applicable policies.	Understands and follows all applicable policies.	Demonstrates, clarify, and encourages others to follow all applicable policies.	Recognized as a resource on applicable policies and procedures and is a role model to others.

Performance Factor: Professionalism

Professional Development

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations	Exemplary (5)
Rarely attends recommended professional development opportunities. Does not have professional development training goals.	Occasionally attends and participates in appropriate professional development and continuing education opportunities.	Participates in appropriate professional development and continuing education opportunities. Has current work-related professional development and training goals.	Incorporates knowledge from relevant professional development into the Extension program. Seeks additional professional development resources through research literature.	Facilitates the professional development of Program Assistants and/or volunteers in specialized content. Serves as a mentor and role model for new Program Assistants.

Performance Factor: Professionalism

Technology Skills

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Minimal use and knowledge of technology	Occasional use of technology.	Uses appropriate technology for communications. Takes advantage of training opportunities to stay on the cutting edge with technology advances in content and program delivery.	Frequently serves as a resource for using the latest technology for communications and programming. Shares innovative teaching practices.	Recognized by Extension professionals and volunteers as highly competent in using the latest technology for teaching, communications, programming, and/or technical assistance.

Performance Factor: Professionalism

Work Habits

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Rarely displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments, and requirements. Is rarely compliant with established work rules and organizational policies/protocol.

Rarely demonstrates the ability to manage time and resources to meet commitments within established time frames. | Occasionally displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments and requirements. Is occasionally compliant with established work rules and organizational policies/protocol.

Requires assistance to manage time and resources to meet commitments within established time frames. | Displays a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments and requirements. Complies with established work rules and organizational policies/protocol. Manages time and resources.

Demonstrates flexibility and initiative to meet commitments within established time frames. | Contributes to an effective work environment by displaying a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments and requirements. Complies with established work rules and organizational policies/protocol. | Inspires others to display a positive, cooperative attitude toward co-workers, clientele, work assignments and requirements. Complies with established work rules and organizational policies/protocol. Coaches others to manage time and resources to meet commitments within established time frames. |

Performance Factor: Community and Organizational Collaboration

Interpersonal Skills

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Demonstrates minimal interpersonal skills as needed to serve as an effective team member; minimal collaboration with other coworkers; and/or rarely utilizes appropriate communication methods to relate with others.	Occasionally demonstrates interpersonal skills as needed to serve as an effective team member; Sometimes collaborates with other coworkers; and/ or utilizes appropriate communication methods to relate with others.	Uses interpersonal skills to be an effective team member and contributes to harmony in the workplace.	Frequently uses interpersonal skills to be an effective team member. Contributes to both team projects and harmony in the workplace.	Readily utilizes interpersonal skills to mentor, develop, and coach others. Consistently contributes to both team projects and harmony in the workplace.

Performance Factor: Community and Organizational Collaboration

Customer Service

Unsatisfactory (1)	Needs Improvement (2)	Meets Expectations (3)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Exemplary (5)
Does not communicate in response to client needs or requests and/or ignores client needs.

Does not utilize volunteers for applicable program activities | Occasionally responds to client needs or requests.

Occasionally utilizes volunteers for applicable program activities. | Responds to client need or requests in a timely and professional manner. Works well with all clientele groups. Communicates respectfully and professionally to all requests.

Recruits and utilizes volunteers in coordination with supervisor/ supervising agent, for applicable program | Frequently addresses client needs or requests.

Frequently recruits and utilizes volunteers in coordination with supervisor/ supervising agent, for applicable program activities. | Consistently anticipates and addresses emerging client needs or requests.

Recruits, engages, and utilizes volunteers in coordination with supervisor/ supervising agent, for applicable program activities. |

Appendix B – Definitions of Key Concepts

Professional Development

Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities including credentials such as academic degrees, formal coursework, continuing education opportunities, conferences, mentoring, seminars/webinars and in-service. Professional development is continuing education relative to the responsibilities of the employee's current position or career development plan.

Professional organizations are those aligned with the profession. These organizations are ones that promote professional development in process, techniques, competencies, and/or subject matter relevant to the job.

Appendix C – Accessing Policies, Guidelines, and Procedures

Extension Volunteerism https://extension.tennessee.edu/eesd/Pages/Volunteerism.aspx

Marketing Toolkit Logo Guidelines https://marketingtoolkit.tennessee.edu

UT Extension Faculty and Staff website https://utia.tennessee.edu/ext/SitePages/default-tiles.aspx

UT Extension Performance Appraisal https://extension.tennessee.edu/eesd/Pages/PerformanceAppraisal.aspx

TSU Policy #6.29 Performance Evaluation http://www.tnstate.edu/hr/documents/updatedpoliciesandprocedures/Performance%20Evaluat ion.pdf

UT HRO129 Performance Reviews for Regular Staff Employees http://policy.tennessee.edu/hr_policy/hr0129/

Appendix D – Performance Review

The University of Tennessee and Tennessee State
University Performance Review Summary Form

Extension Program Assistant

Employee Name (Last, First, MI):	
UT IRIS Personnel Number:	TSU T#:
Division: Extension	Unit/Department:
Review Completed By:	Reviewer's Personnel Number:
Review Period: FROM:	TO:
____Annual ____Enhanced Annual ___Other	Position Name:

Performance Factors	Criteria	Points (1-5)*
Program Goals	SMART Goal Setting	
	Tasks to accomplish goals	
Program Management	Implementing	
	Data Collection	
	Reporting	
	Resource Management	
Program Accomplishments	Equity, Access, and Opportunity	
	Outcomes	
Professionalism	Policy Compliance	
	Professional Development	
	Technology and Innovation	
	Work Habits	
Community and Organizational Collaboration	Interpersonal Skills	
	Customer Service	

*5=exemplary, 4=exceeds expectations, 3=meets expectations, 2=needs
improvement, and 1=unsatisfactory

Employee Name (Last, First, MI):	
UT IRIS Personnel Number:	TSU T#:

Averages	*Score*
Sum of *Program Goals* Criteria Rating_____/2= *Supervisor Comments*:*	
Sum of *Program Implementation* Criteria Ratings_/4 = *Supervisor Comments*:*	
Sum of *Program Accomplishments* Criteria Ratings____/2= *Supervisor Comments*:*	
Sum of *Professionalism* Criteria Ratings____/4= *Supervisor Comments*:*	
Sum of *Community and Organizational Collaboration* Criteria Ratings_/2 = *Supervisor Comments*:*	
Overall Score =	

*Supporting comments are required.

	Overall Rating	*Total Points*
☐	Exemplary	= 23-25
☐	Exceeds Expectations	= 19-22
☐	Meets Expectations	= 15-18
☐	Needs Improvement*	= 10-14
☐	Unsatisfactory*	= 9 or less

*An overall rating of 14 or below requires a performance improvement plan.

Review of Goals for the Current Year

Goal 1		Accomplished Progress No Progress
Goal 2		Accomplished Progress No Progress
Goal 3		Accomplished Progress No Progress
Comments		

Employee Name (Last, First, MI):	
UT IRIS Personnel Number:	TSU T#:

Establishment of Goals for the Coming Year

The goals and objectives should include both departmental goals and plans for personal and professional development. The time frame indicates when the goal should be accomplished. Evaluation indicates how accomplishment will be measured.

	Description	Timeframe	Evaluation
Goal 1			
Goal 2			
Goal 3			
Comments			

Supervisor Comments:

Employee Comments: *(Required – Please respond about anything you need help with, how can your supervisor assist you in accomplishing your goals, and/or what resources you need.)*

This report represents my true and complete appraisal of this employee during the evaluation period.

County Director's Signature:	Date:
Regional Director's Signature:	Date:
Dean's/Associate Dean's Signature*:	Date:

*TSU Employee forms must be signed by TSU Associate Dean.

I understand that my signature does not mean that I necessarily agree or disagree with the performance appraisal. It has been discussed with me, and I have received a copy of the performance appraisal document.

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Employee's Signature:	Date: