

# Iowa State University

## Performance Management Program For Professional and Scientific Employees

### GLOSSARY

**Accountability**

The responsibility of program staff to provide evidence to stakeholders and sponsors that a program is effective and in conformity with its coverage, service, legal, and fiscal requirements

**Analysis**

A systematic approach to problem solving. Complex problems are simplified by separating them into more understandable elements. This involves the identification of purposes and facts, the statement of defensible assumptions, and the formulation of conclusions.

**Appeal**

An appeal is a process that an aggrieved employee uses to ask for reconsideration on the decision or outcome of a grievance or complaint.

**Audit**

The systematic examination of records and the investigation of other evidence to determine the propriety, compliance, and adequacy of programs, systems, and operations. The auditing process may include tools and techniques available from such diverse areas as engineering, economics, statistics, and accounting.

**Benchmarking**

Measuring progress toward a goal at intervals prior to the anticipated attainment of the goal.

**Benchmarks**

Measures of progress toward a goal, taken at intervals prior to the program's completion or the anticipated attainment of the final goal.

**Best Practices**

New ideas or lessons learned about effective program activities that have been developed and implemented in the field and have been shown to produce positive outcomes.

**Complaint**

For the sake of clarifying and distinguishing this policy, "complaint" will refer to complaints of discrimination or harassment by any individual in the ISU community. A complaint is usually about treatment not about terms and conditions of employment.

**Confidentiality**

In research this involves not revealing the identity of research subjects, or factors which may lead to the identification of individual research subjects. In personnel business in the public sector, confidentiality refers to private or personal information, such as performance evaluations or matters not related to or impacting work.

**Consensus Building Outcome**

The production of a common understanding among participants about issues and programs.

**Content Analysis**

A set of procedures for collecting and organizing nonstructured information into a standardized format that allows one to make inferences about the characteristics and meaning of written and otherwise recorded material.

**Content Validity**

The ability of the items in a measuring instrument or test to adequately measure or represent the content of the property that the investigator wishes to measure.

**Corrective Action**

Corrective action is not intended to be punitive; the objective of corrective actions is to improve performance or behavior.

**Cultural Competency**

A set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among, and between groups.

**Discharge**

A management action that results in the termination of the employment relationship with an employee. Discharge results in the loss of employment and employee status, and is a consequence of serious, persistent or severe deficiencies in performance and/or conduct.

**Dismissal**

In the context of this policy, dismissal refers to [Summary Dismissal](#), which is used in circumstances spelled out in the separate [Summary Dismissal](#) policy.

**Discipline**

Discipline constitutes a punitive action, which may include a written negative evaluation for the personnel file, an unpaid suspension, a demotion, and potentially discharge.

**Effectiveness**

Ability to achieve stated goals or objectives, judged in terms of both output and impact.

**Efficiency**

The degree to which outputs are achieved in terms of productivity and input (resources allocated). Efficiency is a measure of performance in terms of which management may set objectives and plan schedules and for which staff members may be held accountable.

**Efficiency Assessment**

An evaluative study that answers questions about program costs in comparison to either the monetary value of their benefits or their effectiveness in terms of the changes they bring about in the social conditions they address.

**Empowerment Evaluation**

An approach to gathering, analyzing, and using data about a program and its outcome that actively involves key stakeholders in the community in all aspects of the evaluation process, and that promotes evaluation as a strategy for empowering communities to engage in system changes.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation has several distinguishing characteristics relating to focus, methodology, and function. Evaluation (1) assesses the effectiveness of performance in achieving its objectives, (2) relies on the standards of the position and (3) aims at recognizing and rewarding improvement on a regular basis.

**Evaluation Plan**

A written document describing the overall approach or design that will be used to guide an evaluation. It includes what will be done, how it will be done, who will do it, when it will be done, and why the evaluation is being conducted.

**Goal**

A desired state of affairs that outlines the ultimate purpose of a program. This is the end toward which project or program efforts are directed.

**Grievance**

A mechanism for grieving actions of supervisor or others with authority in the workplace. A grievance is specifically used to grieve actions or the interpretation or implementation of policy that has adversely impacted the employee who is grieving.

**Insubordination**

The act of refusing to execute or deliberately disobeying a lawful directive, work assignment or performance expectation expressed by a supervisor or organizational official.

**Loss of Compensation and Loss of Job**

Loss of compensation and loss of job are potential consequences of non-performance. These consequences are so serious as to require thorough fact finding and previous approval at the highest levels of the university, as described in Section B of the [Procedures for Grievances and Appeals of Employment Disputes](#). Experiencing a loss means the employee previously had the compensation or job they claim to have lost.

**Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)**

A plan developed by the supervisor, in consultation with the employee, to develop a plan and timeline for corrective performance deficiencies.

**Professional & Scientific Employees**

Regent Professional and Scientific employees are defined apart from the Regents Merit system based upon the professional, scientific, or administrative nature of their work. They have separate employee benefit programs and are not covered by Merit System rules. Each Regent institution maintains its own set of policies and practices in regard to their professional staff, subject to the approval of the Board of Regents. This policy defines the various types of professional appointments, including temporary, term, probationary, and career status, and at-will designations.

**Professional Development**

In the context of this policy, professional development may include education or training, or any opportunity to build or develop knowledge, skills or abilities advance or improve performance. For example:

[Human Resource Services Professional Development](#)  
[Human Resource Services Tuition Reimbursement Grant](#)

**Professional and Scientific Appeal Committee**

A committee of trained P&S employees who serve on an appeal panel, which is an option available to an employee appealing a decision on a grievance. The committee is made up of a pool of individuals recommended by the president of P&S Council to the EVPP, upon request of the EVPP. Appeal committee members should not be from the same unit or department as the appealing employee.

**Supervisor**

The level of a position assigned responsibility for overseeing, assigning and evaluating the work of others who are at comparable or lower level positions in the organization.

**Unit or Organizational Unit**

A unit is a usually the smallest segment of an organization for which there is a supervisor. A supervisor may supervise one or more employees in a unit and one or more units.