

Common Mistakes in Materials Submitted for Performance Review

Publications

- Not clearly indicating dates
- Listing publications dated outside of the evaluation period (calendar years 2009 and 2010 in this case). Including publications which came out too late to be included in your last evaluation materials is acceptable, but state that they were not included last time
- Not clearly differentiating published, accepted/in press, submitted, or in preparation (there is not much point in listing publications in preparation but not actually submitted)
- Using et. al on author listing (we want to know with whom you are working)
- Listing pubs as “referred.” This has a different meaning than “refereed” which distinguishes a publication as externally peer-reviewed and accepted by an outlet which doesn’t publish everything submitted to it.

Grants

- Not listing agency or funding source
- Not indicating your role clearly (PI, co-PI, collaborator)
- Not indicating funding dates
- Listing agency as USDA-CSREES, rather than identifying granting program (NRI, Special Grants, etc.)

Narrative

- Excessive focus on philosophy at the expense of summarizing impact, significance of achievements
- No narrative at all

Other mistakes

- Completely ignoring format guidelines (we are flexible, but within reason)
- Way too many pages
- Not listing teaching evaluations clearly (if previous semester evaluations are unavailable when materials are submitted, you are encouraged to submit the four most recent consecutive semesters available, even if one of them is prior to the evaluation period)
- Listing old awards

As a final issue, areas (R, E, I, special assignments) less than 3% or so are virtually impossible to evaluate meaningfully. In most cases contributions in such areas will be more of an asset in your evaluation if they are included as contributions within your major areas of effort, and not negotiated as a very small DOE assignment with your chair. For example, a small number of lectures in a graduate class can be claimed as a part of your research activities (where it will be a positive in your major area of DOE), rather than claiming 1% instruction DOE for this (where the evaluation will have essentially no impact on your overall evaluation).