**Pilot Faculty Annual Performance Evaluation 2013**

(Provisions and content outlined in section 4.3.2 of the *Faculty Handbook*)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Faculty Name | Laurie A. Ramirez |
| Current Rank | Assistant Professor |
| Department | Curriculum & Instruction |
| Academic Year | 2013 |

Consideration of Accomplishments during the Past Year (Please Review in Particular *Handbook* Section 4.3.1 Provided Above)

I. Instruction

A. Self-Evaluation

I believe I have met expectations for teaching in 2013. The courses I teach are informed by the Conceptual Framework, particularly in the areas of creating communities of practice, advancing professional knowledge, and developing expertise in the middle level field through reflection and inquiry.

Courses in the middle grades program follow a cohort model, so students have an automatic “community.” However, I work very hard in my classes to create a true community of practice where students are engaged in work that achieves common goals and where relationships are at the heart of learning. I strive to recreate the experience my students will have when they are teaching in middle schools—one where they are part of a team that works together with students’ needs in mind. I model this in my teaching and explicitly endeavor to create a democratic community where constructive dialogue, differing perspectives, and courageous collaboration are encouraged. Beyond alignment with the Conceptual Framework, these practices align with middle grades philosophy as described in the seminal work of the Association of Middle Level Education, *This We Believe* (2010).

Advancing professional knowledge in my courses is more than simply subject matter knowledge. Students come to my classes with a range of understanding in their two content areas that they have gained throughout general education and concentration courses. What I strive to accomplish is a melding of that content to a knowledge of young adolescent learners and a knowledge of pedagogy. My CI 3900 and CI 3920 courses specifically address knowledge of learners. We work to understand the young adolescent brain, body, and mind. We explore the development of young adolescents in terms of the changes they are experiencing physically, emotionally, mentally, socially, culturally, and within their families and communities. Understanding young adolescent learners is key in the success of my students as middle level educators. In my CI 4300 course, we take that level of understanding a step further and begin to cultivate a knowledge of diverse populations, socially just principles and practices. We address issues of equity and examine the sociopolitical implications of the work we do in schools. We explore issues of gender, sexuality/sexual orientation, race, class, etc. as we work to understand our roles and responsibilities in US public education. One of my specific teaching goals is to help my students feel empowered to change practices they see that are inequitable or that marginalize particular populations. In this relatively conservative state, that is not always the easiest goal to achieve.

Reflection is at the heart of education, in my opinion. My teaching and research revolve around the concept and I included it in every class I teach. I challenge my students to reflect on their own beliefs, assumptions, biases, etc. so they understand the lenses through which they view young adolescents in general and, specifically, diverse young adolescents. Through their continual reflection, they can see growth in themselves in terms of confidence, competence, and knowledge. This important reflective process is something my students engage in both formally and informally, in writing and in discussion. Especially when they are in their field placements, reflection is an opportunity to engage in inquiry and further their understanding of their students, themselves, and the complex institution in which they will soon work. My goal is for them to gain a world view that is more inclusive while also being better able to look inward and self-analyze. Further, I hope my students will see the benefit of collaboration and recognize the important contributions that all stakeholders make in the education of the diverse young adolescents in middle level schools.

Because I believe so strongly in the significance of good teaching, I continually strive to improve my instruction. In that effort, I meet regularly with my middle grades colleagues (weekly), during which time we assess our progress and discuss improvements in our own courses and in the program overall. Beyond the university, I attend a wide range of conferences, workshops, and professional development. In 2013, I attended and presented at four conferences:

--Association of Teacher Educators – February 2013 – Atlanta, GA

--North Carolina Middle School Association Conference – March 2013 – Greensboro, NC

--Collegiate Middle Level Association Spring Symposium – April 2013 – Morehead, KY

--Association of Middle Level Education Conference – November 2013 – Minneapolis, MN.

Each of these conferences informed my teaching in different ways; however, each offered an opportunity to engage with colleagues and students (who attended 3 of the 4 with me) in conversations and discussions about the issues that are most relevant to the work we do with young adolescents.

In addition to these conferences, I attended a number of professional development workshops to improve either my teaching or my advising of students. These included topics such as: iPad Quickoffice Pro, Explain Everything (iPad app), AsuLearn V2 (I was part of the pilot for the new format), Suicide Prevention, and the Summer Reading Book & Student/Faculty Exchange. I am continually trying to engage in activities that teach me more about myself, my teaching, my students, and the community in which we all interact and learn.

In some ways, I exceed the expectations for teaching/instruction. Much of what I do daily is directly connected to student advising, mentoring, and educational support. In 2013, as the program coordinator, I advised innumerable students at all levels of their education--high school juniors/seniors considering Appalachian’s Middle Grades Program, transfer students coming here for the first time, students considering changing majors, those struggling with general education requirements, students in my current courses, students looking for their first teaching jobs, and students considering graduate study. While time consuming, student advising and mentoring is something I believe makes our program thrive and grow, so it is something that is necessary despite the time commitment. Additionally, it gives me an opportunity to know my students better and earlier on than I normally would. Once they are in my class, the relationship building has already begun and we can deepen that connection and begin to build true communities of practice.

B. Chair’s Assessment

The results of your Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) on the college’s standardized instrument for the six courses you taught during the year were often above the CI and COE mean. Your course effectiveness means ranged from 3.33 to 4.75 and your instructor effectiveness means ranged from 3.56 to 5.00. In most cases, student comments confirmed the positive quantitative results. Your students stated that you are honest, fair, and helpful. Further, students cited your course as one of their favorites and one from which they have learned a great deal.

When comparing your work to the CI Annual Review Rubric for *meets expectations*, it is evident that you implemented discipline specific teaching practices appropriate for your learners, engaged your students in numerous conversations beyond content discussions, and were an active participant/leader in the Middle Grades program Community of Practice (CoP). These activities have strengthened your teaching. In addition, you have met a few of the indicators for *exceeds expectations* according to the CI Annual Review Rubric. You interacted consistently and effectively with students and faculty to improve your teaching and other measures of teaching performance, such as peer reviews, indicated quality teaching. In addition, you spend a great deal of time providing assistance to your students and supervising them during their internship in the public schools and advising them.

After reviewing your overall teaching record for 2013, I conclude that you met expectations on the teaching dimension.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dimension | Fails to Meet  Expectations | Meets Expectations | Exceeds Expectations |
| Instruction |  | X |  |

II. Research and Creative Activities

1. Self-Evaluation

In the area of scholarship/research, I have met the expectations for 2013. I am active in my research and am continually working on projects to move forward toward promotion and tenure. The scholarship I create is original and is centered on improving P-20 schools, particularly middle level schools and teacher education practices at the university level.

My research agenda has two strands—while distinct, there is some overlap in the underlying frameworks. Strand One is middle level education research. Strand Two is the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices. Both value and promote critical reflection on teaching practices and the importance of students’ learning and engagement.

Middle level education research is an area that interests me greatly, as it immediately impacts my teaching and my students. Each year, including 2013, I attend the state, regional, and national middle level conference as well as attend special interest group meetings at the larger international conferences. These conferences and meetings have put me in touch with middle grades researchers from all over the US.  I have been invited to work with individuals from UNC Charlotte, Western Carolina, and UNC Asheville on a national research project looking at the status of middle schools nationwide (since the middle grades movement began in NC).  These relationships and opportunities will only serve to further strengthen my middle level research. The methodologies I typically utilize (i.e., case study, content analysis) allow me to focus on middle level education as content.  In 2013, I began a research project with two colleagues who have expertise in middle level literacy. We presented our article at the American Reading Forum conference in December 2013 (I was unable to attend) and we continue that work forward in 2014 with proposals accepted at the American Educational Research Association conference in Chicago, IL, and the Association of Middle Level Education Conference in Nashville, TN. This work is an attempt to determine if the Common Core State Standards for Language Arts aligns with the tenets of middle level philosophy. In addition, I spent a significant amount of time in 2013 working on an invited presentation for the North Carolina Middle School Association conference in March 2014. I was invited to that presentation by colleagues at other UNC schools; we each responded to a keynote address given in March 2013 by Paul George, one of the founders of the middle school movement. My contribution was from the perspective of a teacher educator who works with future teachers and it was subsequently published in the North Carolina Middle School Journal as a special edition with the keynote and the four responses. It was an honor and privilege to be asked to do this unique research project with people across the state that I so highly regard.

Self-study of teacher education practices (S-STEP) is a growing methodology internationally.  It began in the mid-1990s with a small group of individuals in Arizona, appropriately called The Arizona Group, and has grown greatly with the help of teacher scholars in Australia, Canada, and Europe.  It is a research method and philosophy that refuses to allow the dichotomy of pedagogy and scholarship.  Rather, they embrace scholarship OF teaching and teaching AS a research practice.  This particular type of research has become my major focus and I look forward to its growth over the next few decades. While it is still relatively small, it has an international, diverse, and very welcoming group of members.  It is a research method that really allows me to use my research to inform my teaching and my teaching as a topic for my research and I plan to continue to use it, as it has greatly impacted my thinking about both pedagogy and scholarship. In 2013, I prepared, in collaboration, two proposals for publication in the S-STEP conference proceedings and both were accepted. While they were actually published in 2014, the bulk of the preparation and revision was completed in 2013. They are:

Ramirez, L. A., & Allison-Roan, V. A. (2014). Leadership, ready or not: Lessons learned about self through ‘becoming’ leaders via co-mentoring.

Allison-Roan, V. A., Hayes, M., Allender, D., & Ramirez, L. A. (2014). Demystifying taboo: Consequences of dancing with or around the topic of sexual abuse as educators.

Supplementary to the work highlighted in the previous paragraphs, I also disseminated my work at peer-reviewed venues, presenting at professional conferences. Three significant presentations were:

Ramirez, L. A. (February 2013). I am white—that’s a privilege: White teachers, White privilege, and social justice education. Paper presented at the Association of Teacher Educators Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA.

Ramirez, L. A., & Allison-Roan, V. A., (April 2013). Who are we now? The storied lives of two emerging teacher educators. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Heath, R. R., Ramirez, L. A., Ruppert, N., & Shankar-Brown, R. (November 2013). Nurturing a culture of leadership in middle level education. Paper presented at the Association of Middle Level Education Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN.

While I did not have any publications come through in 2013, the above is evidence that my scholarship/research is alive and well. Many of the works started in 2013 came to fruition in early 2014 (three of them within 9 days in January) and some are still in the pipeline. I anticipate another soon and more to come in late 2014-early 2015.

B. Chair’s Assessment

You have submitted a couple of journal articles this year and at least one has been accepted and will be published in 2014. You have a well-developed research agenda and have spent considerable time pursuing your work this year. Further, you complemented your scholarly publications with presentations at the national, state, and local level.

When comparing your work to the CI Annual Review Rubric, your publication record is solid and you have made a contribution to your field this year. You have disseminated your work in peer-reviewed venues and you have provided evidence of a clear research agenda.

After reviewing your overall scholarship record for 2013, I conclude that you met expectations.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dimension | Fails to Meet  Expectations | Meets Expectations | Exceeds Expectations |
| Research and Creative  Activities |  | X |  |

III. Service

A. Self-Evaluation

Service is, I believe, an often overlooked facet of our responsibilities at the university level. There is a lot of work to be done, especially if we hope to enact change, and it requires the commitment of all. Because my passion for service is so strong, I fully meet (and likely exceed) the requirements for service/engagement for the 2013 year. I have broken down my service into department, college, university, professional organizations, and community. Then, I highlight the two that I feel have the most lasting and profound impact.

Department Service:

* Undergraduate Program Coordinator (all year)
* Open Houses – Spring 2013 and Fall 2013 (twice yearly)
* Curriculum & Instruction Leadership Team (September 2013 – February 2014)
* Professional Advisory Council – Middle Grades (September 2013--ongoing)

College Service:

* RCOE Diversity Committee (all year)
* RCOE International Committee (all year)
* NCATE Standard 1 Committee (January – October 2013)
* Image and Identity Task Force (August – December 2013)
* Voices of Inspiration Event Committee (January – April 2013)
* Teaching Fellows Advisory Council (all year)
* B. Broome Doctoral Dissertation Committee (all year)
* M. Johnson Doctoral Dissertation Committee (all year)
* H. Martin Honors College Thesis Committee (all year)
* K. Wayne Honors College Thesis Committee (April 2013 – May 2014)

University Service:

* Diversity Celebration Committee (all year)
* General Education Impact Committee (all year)
* Summer Reading Program and Student/Faculty Exchange (Summer 2013)
* Dean Search Committee (Fall 2012 – April 2013)
* Hispanic/Latino Faculty Forum (Summer 2012 - ongoing)

Professional Service:

* Leadership Positions:
  + Advisor - Collegiate Middle Level Association (all year)
  + Association of Teacher Educators Diversity Committee (multi-year)
  + North Carolina Professors of Middle Level Education Secretary (multi-year)
  + Middle Level Research Special Interest Group Council Member (2013-2015)
* Reviewer:
  + Conference Proposal Reviews:
    - Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices SIG of AERA
    - Middle Level Education Research SIG of AERA
    - Association of Teacher Educators
    - Association of Middle Level Education
    - North Carolina Middle School Association
    - American Educational Research Association
    - Castle Conference
  + Journal Manuscript Reviews:
    - The New Educator
    - Reflective Practice
    - Research in Middle Level Education
    - North Carolina Middle School Journal
    - Studying Teacher Education

Community Service:

* F.A.R.M. Café Volunteer
* F.A.R.M. Café Board Member
* F.A.R.M. Café Fundraising Committee

*Significant Contributions:*

*CMLA:*

The two most significant service commitments I hold are the Collegiate Middle Level Association Advisor and Board Member of the F.A.R.M. Café in Boone, NC.

I began advising the Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA) chapter on campus in 2011. It is an affiliate member of the Association of Middle Level Education, the premier professional organization for middle level education and research. The CMLA is the student side of the organization and its goals are to support members as they finish their education and begin their careers at the middle level. Currently, there are 45 chapters across the US, including hundreds of students who will become middle grades teachers.

Since I took over, Appalachian’s CMLA has grown and developed greatly. In late 2012, my student officers and I drafted a proposal to become the National Host Chapter and we won! That means that for the academic years of 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, we are officially the National CMLA Chapter (as well as our campus chapter). With this opportunity comes great responsibility to present at conferences, review grant proposals from other chapters across the country, and generally advocate for and try to grow the organization while still continuing fundraising and service efforts around our own campus and community.

As the National Chapter and Appalachian chapter, we have engaged in a number of fundraising activities that allow our students to travel to conferences—state, regional, and national. We also do a variety of service projects, some affiliated with other campus organizations and some on our own. One that we do twice yearly is hold a Scholastic Book Fair. While this is a lot of work and long hours, we believe that it is a critical time for future educators to start building their classroom libraries with quality books that appeal to a range of diverse learners. We make no money on this event in the spring and very little in the fall, if any. The main reason we do this major event is to benefit the literacy and learning of the community.

In 2013, 14 students from CMLA traveled to Minneapolis, MN to present at the national conference. This is an opportunity few novice teachers get, not to mention teacher candidates! With my guidance, students planned and presented five sessions at the conference as well as facilitated an advisors’ meeting:

**Thursday, November 7, 2013**

Session # 1334 Middle School Student Panel

Session # 1434 What to Expect: Early Years Teacher Panel

CMLA Business Meeting

**Friday, November 8, 2013**

Session # 2143 Understanding High Risk Decision Making by Middle Level Students

Session # 2339 CMLA Networking

**Saturday, November 9, 2013**

CMLA Advisor's Meeting

Since 2011, I have taken students to this conference as well as the North Carolina Middle School Association conference in Greensboro, NC each March. The AMLE conference has specific CMLA strands addressing the specific needs of pre-service teachers. Students overwhelmingly talk about how attending these conferences have changed their lives. They learn, the network, and they begin to see themselves as professionals who have expertise and something to contribute to the conversations surrounding education in our state and beyond. I plan to continue this, even after my students are no longer the national host chapter of CMLA. But having had the opportunity to not only attend these conferences but to host sessions and prepare professional presentations is something I believe will impact them greatly as they join the profession.

*F.A.R.M. Café:*

F.A.R.M. Café (Feed All Regardless of Means) is a local non-profit pay-what-you-can community kitchen that strives to alleviate food insecurity in the High Country. They recognize that 1 in 5 individuals in our area is food insecure—they do not know where they will get their next meal. I began volunteering at F.A.R.M. Café in February of 2013 because I heard about their mission and wanted to help. Having grown up in a home and neighborhood plagued by poverty, I understood the importance a space like this could have in our community. After a few times volunteering, it was clear to me that this place was about much more than food. Though their main goal is to provide local, homemade, healthy/nutritious food for everyone, they also have a parallel goal of creating a safe, welcoming, inclusive community. This is what has kept me coming back and spurred me, when invited, to become a board member and fundraising committee member.

In the year 2013, I logged over 200 volunteer hours at the F.A.R.M. Café, washing dishes, serving food, prepping for the day, cleaning, doing laundry, or anything else they might have needed. Now, as a Board member, we work on educating the community about the broader issues as well as about the café. Many people do not understand that having a job does not make you food secure. Many of our patrons are working adults, but their circumstances prevent them from making ends meet. Likewise, we have a number of patrons who suffer from mental illness, homelessness, or health ailments. Educating the community about ALL its members is crucial to the process of improving the lives of all community members.

In my brief time as a volunteer and Board member, I have come to know some fascinating people at the café. I have also been able to help plan and organize major fundraising events. In 2013, we planned a Real.Good.Party. event that eventually brought in $18,000 to help feed our community. I organized the silent auction, traveling around to local business owners and getting donations for the event. I also helped with the food and entertainment for the evening, which was no small feat! Later in the year, I helped with a social media campaign to raise more money, which helped us feed people in the cold winter months and over the holidays. Currently, we are organizing a series of community talks called “Food for Thought” that will bring the divergent voices of our community together to address real issues that exist in our community but that are rarely talked about in our efforts to maintain the quaint, small-town, safe image that we have had for so long. These important conversations will bring to the forefront issues such as generational poverty, mental illness, and community social responsibility. As an educator, I’m excited about this opportunity to contribute to the growth and development of a community that recognizes all, cares about all, and sees it as everyone’s responsibility to improve our shared lived experience.

B. Chair’s Assessment

In 2013, you made significant contributions at all levels: profession, university, college and department. Your involvement was extensive and required countless hours. For example, your service to CMLA was substantial and positively impacts many of the students in your program. Student membership has increased under your stewardship and you were recently named the host site for the national conference for the next two years. Your service at the unit level consisted of membership on the Dean’s search committee, NCATE Standard 1 committee, a variety of task forces for the college, and two dissertations. Your accomplishments are note-worthy at the department level as well. Your contributions to the Middle Grades program are outstanding and as the Middle Grades program coordinator, you invested a tremendous amount of time on working with faculty and students. In addition, you were a member of the inaugural CI Leadership Team and facilitated the development of the CI Annual Review rubric. Also noteworthy is your investment in community service, specifically at the FARM Café, which aligns with the values and vision of the university, college, and department. Your strong passion for delivering quality programs with a student-centered approach are evident in your activities and the department is grateful for the amount of time and energy you invest in its program and students!

In accordance with the CI Annual Review Rubric, you consistently engaged in significant and effective service at multiple levels, collaborated with others to contribute to the profession, and assumed a leadership role in scholarly organizations. In addition, your service is clearly connected to your teaching and therefore you are engaged in the scholarship of teaching.

After reviewing your service record for 2013, I conclude that your service exceeds expectation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dimension | Fails to Meet  Expectations | Meets Expectations | Exceeds Expectations |
| Service |  |  | X |

IV. Progress toward Promotion and/or Tenure

A. Self-Evaluation

At this stage, I am very close to submitting materials for promotion and tenure. I have worked very hard to meet the requirements as they were laid out for me in previous annual review meetings. Thus, I believe I am well on track to achieve promotion and tenure.

My teaching evaluations are overwhelmingly high (with some dips here and there) and my peer reviews are positive. I have continually reflected on my teaching and made changes to my instructional approaches and curricular design. Likewise, I have assessed my student learning outcomes and have made adjustments to assignments and signature assessments where necessary. My research and teaching are so closely aligned that the cycle of improvement is always a top priority.

My research and scholarship have met and exceeded the minimum requirements for promotion and tenure. Since I arrived at Appalachian State University in 2009 to 2013, I have published 9 pieces of original scholarship, ranging from newsletter articles to top tier journal articles. These have been published in state, regional, national, and international venues. I have presented at over 25 conferences, some with multiple presentations. I plan to continue this work and anticipate many more in the near future.

My service record is exemplary and will not be an issue in my promotion and tenure process. I have done significant service at all levels: department, college, university, professional, and community. I will continue to serve in many of these roles for the near future and beyond. Service is something that I believe in very strongly and something that brings me great joy and a sense of accomplishment.

1. Chair’s Assessment

After a review of your work in 2013, I conclude that you are making significant progress towards tenure and promotion. You have made outstanding progress in all three areas. Thank you for all of your contributions!

V. Goal-Setting for the Next Academic Year

1. Faculty Member’s Goals (Teaching, research/creative activity, and service)

*Teaching:*

My goals for the 2014 year are to revamp my CI 4300--Literacy, Language, and Culture-- class that seems to have some areas that are repetitive for the students. There is overlap in my class and their Content Area Literacy course taught by reading faculty as well as some perceived repetition from their Block I 3920 course (Teaching Diverse Young Adolescents). In my attempts to improve that course, collaboration with reading faculty and other CI faculty will be essential. I will strive to find the gaps in our program and fill them in relevant, meaningful ways. Student input will be necessary and I have begun to gather that data. At this point, students seem to need more in terms of classroom management and lesson planning. I will find ways to incorporate those topics in CI 4300 while still maintaining the focus on young adolescent literacy, language, and culture. Another goal I have is to incorporate more technology in my classes. That is something that I have always assumed students know better than I do, but I am finding that they are not the “digital natives” I assumed they were. Thus, teaching them how to use Smart boards, educational apps on their iPads, and other online tools is a top priority.

*Research/Scholarship:*

One of my biggest goals for the coming year is to get publications. I have a lot of work in the pipeline that is either in need of submission or that has been submitted and needs follow-up. Those will be top priority. I would also like to strive for another journal article on my own. Most of the work I do is collaborative and while I value and appreciate collaboration, I think it is also important to have solo articles presented and published. Again, I have some that I have previously presented but have done nothing with since then. Those will be my second research priority. Finally, an area in which I lack knowledge and skill is grant writing. For my research trajectory and for the service work I do, this knowledge gap is becoming more problematic. I need to learn how to write grants, where to find grant opportunities, and how to manage a grant if achieved.

*Service:*

Honestly, one of my goals for the coming year is to focus my service more so that it is not pulling me in so many directions. Student advising and program coordination are a must, of course. But in other service areas, I hope to be more purposeful and selective, choosing only those projects that somehow align with my overall goals. Saying “no” is not an easy task for me, but I’m planning to practice that skill as I move forward, for my own well-being and for the benefit of those I serve.

B. Chair Comments

I believe you have carefully identified your goals for 2014 and have considered important objectives in all three areas.

Faculty Member: I have reviewed this document and discussed the contents with the department chairperson. My signature means that I have been advised of my performance evaluation and does not necessarily imply that I agree with the evaluation. Failure to return a signed copy of this form to the department chair within thirty days of its receipt constitutes acknowledgement of receipt and refusal to return the form.

Faculty Member’s Signature

Date:

Chairperson’s Signature

Dean’s Signature

Date:

Date: