

## Core Competencies and Their Role in Performance Appraisals – Frequently Asked Questions

Performance Management - Educational Session Two

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1. Why not just use the job description instead of core competencies?
  - The job description addresses what you do. Competencies address how you do your work. How you do your job is as important as what you do. Many of us accomplish our work directly with others (i.e. teams, committees); however, even if you work alone, you still have colleagues and customers. All of our teammates, customers, and colleagues are diverse in their backgrounds, experiences, and working/learning styles. Because of this, there is a need to pay attention to how we work with other individuals and how we affect them. Additionally, by measuring all staff – regardless of position – against the same shared core competencies, our performance evaluation paradigm is standardized across the campus, thereby allowing us to assess performance and assign merit increases (for non-represented staff) consistently across populations.
2. Why do we include “Diversity and Inclusion” as a core competency? Doesn’t everyone meet these expectations?
  - The [Principles of Community](#) and UC’s Policies on [Diversity and Non-Discrimination](#) set a foundation for who we are as an organization. This competency defines diversity and inclusion specifically, and it measures how we integrate diversity and inclusion into our everyday work life. It would nice to assume that everyone meets these expectations, but by measuring this competency, we come closer to knowing this. We expect all members of our community to meet or exceed expectations in this foundational competency. Should underperformance occur, immediate corrective and rehabilitative action must be taken.
3. These webchats are very helpful however, some of our supervisors at UCM do not understand the core competencies and are not able to answer our questions regarding competencies. So, my question is how can we develop a partnership with our supervisors and also encourage them to learn the competencies first before assessing their employees on them?
  - HR is hosting a series of Performance Management webcasts to assist staff and supervisors with the performance management process. In the first [webchat](#) in this series, AVC Powell empowered every employee to play an active role in the performance management process. This includes an understanding of these core competencies. We know that some supervisors have not held substantive discussions on the core competencies with their direct reports. This will change as performance management becomes an ongoing cultural norm at UCM. If you find yourself in this situation, we encourage you to schedule a time to meet with your supervisor to discuss the competencies so that you both better understand what they mean for your job function and the unit. If you have attempted this and have not been successful in communicating with your supervisor, please contact your designated HR Business Partner or HR Consultant for guidance.

4. What is a good measurement approach or strategy to use to compare my progress on core competencies?
  - By “compare”, I believe you are referring to comparing your progress against the core competencies. A strategy that is highly recommended is to initiate a conversation with your supervisor to talk about what the competency looks like for your particular job/unit. You might also take a look at your specific projects/tasks and ask yourself, “how can I incorporate a particular competency in what I do every day?” For example, in the Communication competency, you might be focusing on the behavioral indicator “written and verbal communications are consistently clear, persuasive and audience appropriate.” Perhaps you ask a colleague to proofread your emails before you send them out. You might ask a coworker about the best ways to communicate with people who work a different shift than you to ensure the communication is appropriate and reaches your target audience. Be sure to have regular check-ins with your supervisor to discuss the progress you are making with regard to this particular competency. At a minimum there should be a semiannual check-in; however, we recommend quarterly check-ins to discuss performance and progress towards goals.
5. I’m concerned about the fact that I have a temporary supervisor who has only been around for a month now. How will I be properly evaluated on a year’s worth of work when there is no supervisor here who knows what I did?
  - Your current supervisor has a duty to solicit feedback from your former supervisor if he/she is still employed on campus. If not, encourage your supervisor to solicit feedback from his/her direct supervisor. To assist your supervisor in the evaluation process, it is strongly recommended that you complete the SOA in order to engage your current supervisor in discussion about your accomplishments, challenges, and development throughout the year. You might also consider scheduling a meeting with your supervisor prior to close of the appraisal period to review your SOA.
6. How can I be exposed to progressing in all the competencies if I have a routine-based job (Custodian or Dining Services worker)?
  - All competencies are intended to apply to everyone who works at UCM regardless of your level or job title in the organization.
  - Example: Take a look at the Resource Management & Sustainability competency. In essence, everyone working at UCM needs to be applying health and safety standards and modeling safe behavior. An indication of meeting expectations in this particular competency is, *engaging in practices that conserve energy and environmental resources; actively looking for savings*. Think about what it means to conserve energy and environmental resources in your particular job. Could you conserve energy by turning off certain pieces of equipment instead of leaving them powered on all the time? Think about how you might also conserve University resources. Are you using the right tools or techniques to measure cleaning supplies or ingredients to prepare food? Are you efficiently using your time and the time of others?

7. Can you elaborate on “Employee Engagement” core competency? How do I measure that?
- The Employee Engagement Competency states – Demonstrates commitment to the job, colleagues, the University and its mission by acting in ways that further the accomplishment of its goals. Below are behavioral indicators of an individual performing in this particular competency at the *Meets Expectations* level. Each indicator is followed by a prompt that should help spark internal dialog to assist you in assessing your performance at this level.
    - Exhibits self-accountability and acknowledges the support and contributions of others.
      - *Think about how you might do this in your job. For example, you may be in a staff meeting where you have the opportunity to acknowledge the work of someone else.*
    - Consistently and actively assists others in expanding and developing skills and knowledge
      - *Are you involved in cross training in your unit? Do you have a body of knowledge you can share with others? Think about how you are actively contributing to others being able to learn about what it is you do, how it affects them and how it contributes to the unit.*
    - Effectively contributes to team efforts; work is professional and high quality.
      - *Take a look at any team you belong to and think about what the goals and outcomes are for the team. Think about what you have done to help the team move forward.*
    - Demonstrates understanding of; and supports the need to align work with organizational initiatives and goals.
      - *This has to do with always knowing how you and your work fit in to the organization meeting its goals. You might talk with your manager about your unit’s priorities and goals for the upcoming year and identify ways that you can help achieve these goals while developing specific competencies.*
8. Can you please provide clarification if core competencies and job descriptions work in conjunction to assess my performance?
- Yes. The job description really has to do with the part of your evaluation that speaks to what you did whereas the core competencies speak to how you performed your job. Both are being assessed in your appraisal. Your supervisor will need to substantiate your performance in each competency by measuring what you did and how you accomplished it.