MIDWEST AREA
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
MANUAL

RPES - RESEARCH POSITION EVALUATION SYSTEM

Created by
Program Administrative Support Task Group

EMPLOYEE NAME: _____ CURRENT GRADE: _____

Revised Case Writeup Format CHECKLIST

(Caution: No entry at variance with prescribed format will be accepted. Factors 1-4: (convert to PDF Format/CD)

____ ARS-514 Cover Sheet (Paper copy -Original with signatures of employee/supervisor, form dated 9/06)

____ AD-332 Position Description form (Paper copy - Original with supervisor signatures, form dated 4/86)

____ ARS-570 In-depth Reviewer Contact Sheet [form dated 2/98](Convert to PDF format/CD) MUST list Asst. AD, MWA

Factor 1 - Research Assignment *(Factors 1-3 = official pos. description; must not exceed three (3) single-spaced pages; Gender Neutral).*

____ A. Assigned Responsibility - **Identify the specific NP(s) under which the research is conducted**. Example: "Research is a component of ARS National Program 202--Soil Resource Management," or more than one NP, "in support of ARS National Programs 106–Aquaculture, and 108–Food Safety."

____ B. Research Objectives and Methodology

____ C. Expected Results

____ D. Knowledge Required (limited to "brief" list of specific-applicable disciplines/skills needed in **current** assignment).

____ E. Supervisory Responsibilities (title & grade of ARS employees; nature of supervision given [technical/administrative]); Need **EEO statement from P&P**

Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls (Gender Neutral)

____ A. Assigned Authority

____ B. Technical Guidance Received

____ C. Review of Results

____ D. General Supervision

Factor 3 - Guidelines and Originality (Gender Neutral)

____ A. Available Literature

____ B. Originality Required

BEGIN NEW PAGE - 3C (Brief paragraph)

____ C. Demonstrated Originality (Brief paragraph **NOT TO EXCEED ½ page**; describe the originality and creativity demonstrated related to **current** assignment. Do not restate details of accomplishments described under Factor 4.

Factor 4 – Contributions, Impact, and Stature (Optional opening career summary paragraph limited to 1/3 page and must not repeat information from demonstrated originality).

Demonstrated Accomplishments - ***Accomplishments*:** 3> for GS-11 and below; 5> for GS-12; 8> for GS-13 and above. Must not exceed ½ page. **Max. number of 2 exhibits per accomplishment (MUST HAVE EXHIBITS)**. May combine support letters (limit 3) as 1 exhibit **ONLY** with cover memo from Area Dir.; RLs can use leadership letters from cooperators, administrators, NPLs.

Subheadings in bold: Accomplishment / Role / Impact. **See attached Guide for further information.**

** **Additional Accomplishments**: **Limited to no more than 2 entries in paragraph format; (no tables)**.

½ page in length; no exhibits permitted. ** **Label exhibits on CD: Ex 1A 26** **

B. Stature and Recognition {**Bullet Format**}

____ 1. Honors and Awards (no more than 20 most significant) (NO performance awards/Certificates of Merit)

____ 2. Special Invitations (no more than 20 most significant)

____ 3. Offices & Committee Assignments Held in Professional & Honorary Societies (no more than 20)

____ 4. Participation in Professional Meetings, Technical Conferences, Workshops, etc. (List each society; state years of membership; total number of meetings attended at all echelons; total number of presentations - No presentation titles need be shown. See Guide attached).

C. Advisory and Consultant Activities {**Bullet Format for all lists**}

____ 1. Professional Advisory & Consulting Activities (no more than 20 most significant)

____ 2. Special Assignments (no more than 20 most significant)

D. Other

____ 1. Educational Background (only Degrees - no additional)

____ 2. Research Experience

____ 3. Other Significant Information (Max. of 10 significant items; do not exceed 1/3 page per item. List materials actually submitted for review but not yet accepted; **NO material in other stages of preparation**. State total number of funded grants, CRADAs, & coop agreements covering the career followed by bullet list of 20 most significant. Don't list proposals). {**Bullet Format**}

E. Publications (**Start NEW Page**) (See P&P attached - subdivide into 2 sections)

____ 1. **Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Patents** (research published following standards for anonymous peer review prior to publication and **PATENTS**). Multi-authors: **bold** SY name and *italicize* graduate students, postdocs, visiting SYs. Need line denoting since hire/last promotion.

____ 2. **Additional Publications** (All other work not meeting definition above). ****Abstract list no longer permitted.**

Factor 1 - Research Assignment (Gender Neutral)

A. Assigned Responsibility
Need to show NP Program #: The incumbent is a Lead Scientist (or Research Scientist) for National Program (NP) 202, Soil Resource Management.

B. Research Objectives and Methodology

C. Expected Results

D. Knowledge Required

E. Supervisory Responsibilities
Need specific data, (i.e., title, grade level) of employees supervised. All positions having formally delegated and continuing technical and administrative supervisory responsibilities over ARS employees must include the following:

Incumbent provides technical and/or administrative supervision. Is responsible for making selections for positions, assigning duties, reviewing work, approving/ disapproving leave, and evaluating performance. Ensures equal opportunity is extended to all employees supervised and all candidates for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or non-disqualifying handicapping condition. Ensures affirmative implementation of Equal Employment Opportunity plans of action and applicable Civil Rights provisions which includes full consideration of eligible minority group members and women in filling vacant positions; providing career counseling and orientation; enhancing career opportunities through training and development, job redesign, and/or similar techniques; and ensuring full consideration of these employees in recommending promotions, awards, and other forms of special recognition.

Factor 2 – Supervisory Controls (Gender Neutral)

A. Assigned Authority

B. Technical Guidance Received

C. Review of Results

D. General Supervision

Factor 3 - Guidelines and Originality (Gender Neutral)

A. Available Literature

B. Originality Required

Must start a new Page:
Factor 3 - Guidelines and Originality

C. Demonstrated Originality

Factor 4 – Contributions, Impact, and Stature

A. Demonstrated Accomplishments

1. **Accomplishment:** High corn yields required to meet grain needs for increasing poultry and swine production in the southeastern Coastal Plain were achieved by integrating in-row tillage, fertilizer and water management, and twin-row planting configurations into a more complete production system. Principles of agronomy, plant physiology, soil fertility, plant nutrition, water management, and engineering were integrated using a systems approach to increase grain yield without forcing producers to change all of their equipment. **Role:** Dr. Karlen recognized that for higher grain yield, increased plant productivity per unit area was needed. Decreasing row spacing was not possible because of conflicts with equipment needed for other farming system operations (*i.e.*, cotton). Dr. Karlen provided leadership for a research team, with his personal efforts focused on soil fertility, plant nutrition, and row configuration. Other members included an agricultural engineer, plant physiologist, and microclimatologist for tillage, phytochrome, and water use components, respectively. He also partnered with Cooperative Extension Service colleagues to transfer the technology and insight associated with the "twin-row" production system. **Impact:** The twin-row system doubled local corn grain yields and increased silage yields by 40% without reducing crop quality or requiring excessive rates of N-P-K fertilizer. Better understanding of phytochrome regulation enabled the team to explain corn hybrid responses to row spacing, configuration, and orientation. Twin-row planters for corn, cotton, soybean, peanut, rice, and vegetables are currently manufactured by Monosem and are being used in several states. (Exhibit 1a, #24; Exhibit 1b, #41; and #22, #23, #25, #27, #31, #33, #34, #36, #43, #66, #71, #141, #142, #145, #146, and #147)

*2. **Accomplishment:**
*3. **Accomplishment:**
*4. **Accomplishment:**
5. **Accomplishment:** Up to 8 accomplishments

Additional Accomplishments Only 2 allowed.

Accomplishment: **Role: Impact:** (#30, #35, #50, and #51)

B. Stature and Recognition

1. Honors and Awards

Dr. Karlen has received 18 formal honors and awards during his career. They are:

- American Society of Agronomy, Outstanding Senior at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1973
- Sigma-Xi, 1977
- Gamma Sigma Delta, 1992
- Who's Who in Science and Engineering, 1992
- Who's Who in America, 1993
- Fellow, American Society of Agronomy, 1992
- Fellow, Crop Science Society of America, 1993
- Fellow, Soil Science Society of America, 1994

2. Special Invitations

Dr. Karlen has had more than 70 prestigious invitations to write reviews, edit books and journals, and make presentations at conferences in Brazil, Canada, England, India, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States addressing soil, crop, agronomy, sociology, and other aspects of agricultural systems. The following are representative of his international, interdisciplinary recognition.

- Invited to review "Conservation Tillage Research Findings and Needs in the East and Midwest" at the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, 1989 (#48).
- Invited by the Executive Editor of CRC Press, Inc. to co-edit the book Sustainable Agriculture Systems and to prepare a review chapter entitled "Management Strategies for Sustainable Soil Fertility," 1989 (#169, #170).

3. Offices and Committee Assignments Held in Professional and Honorary Societies

- Associate Editor, Division C3, Crop Ecology, Production, & Management, Crop Science, 1988-1993.
- Co-chair for a symposium entitled "Management Systems I. Sustaining the Soil Resource" for the First International Crop Science Congress, Ames, IA, 1992.

4. Participation in Professional Meetings, Technical Conferences, Workshops, etc.

- American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), (1972 to present). Attended 37 meetings and made 40 presentations.

- Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), (1982-present). Attended 4 annual meetings and made 4 presentations.
- International Soil and Tillage Research Organization (ISTRO), (1992-present). Attended 1 meeting, organized pre-conference tour, and made 2 presentations.

C. Advisory and Consultant Activities

1. Professional Advisory and Consulting Activities

Dr. Karlen is internationally recognized for his agronomy, crop science, and soil science expertise and is frequently invited to share his insight through many different venues within and outside his specific areas of training. This includes:

- Serving as an invited reviewer for at least 15 journals averaging 20 requests per year.
- Reviewing research proposals for the Binational Agricultural Research and Development (BARD) fund, 1989-present.
- Reviewing research proposals for the USDA National Research Initiative (NRI), 1993-present.

2. Special Assignments

Dr. Karlen has frequently taken on special assignments to assist ARS Area and National Program Leaders as well as his professional societies, ASA-CSSA-SSSA and the SWCS. Selected examples include:

- Serving as authorized departmental officer's designated representative (ADODR) for 5 different ARS projects, 1981-1996.
- Developing a plan for conducting Integrated Farm Management Systems (IFMS) research in response to a joint proposal between the USDA-ARS and the US-EPA, 1992.

D. Other

1. Educational Background

1969-1973 – University of Wisconsin-Madison; major, Soil Science; B.S. 1973

2. Research Experience
1981-1985, GS-12, Soil Scientist, Coastal Plains Soil and Water Conservation Research Center, Florence, SC

3. Other Significant Information

- Dr. Karlen is a full Professor/USDA Collaborator and member of the Graduate Faculty at Iowa State University, Ames, IA. He has served as major advisor for 3 Ph.D. and 5 M.S. candidates, and has served or is serving on advisory committees for 15 students in Agronomy, Agricultural and Bio-systems Engineering, Entomology, and Microbiology Departments.

- Dr. Karlen also has an adjunct appointment with Clemson University Department of Entomology, Soils and Plant Sciences.

- Manuscripts submitted for journal review but not yet accepted.
  - **Karlen, D. L.**, Dinnes, D. L., Jaynes, D. B., Hurburgh, C. R., Cambardella, C. A., Colvin, T. S., and Rippke, G. R. Corn crop response to watershed implementation of the late spring nitrate test. Submitted to Agronomy J. (June 2004).

- Grants and Cooperative Research Agreements
  Dr. Karlen has been "principle investigator" (PI) or co-PI for more than 20 grants and cooperative research agreements. Among the most significant are:
  - Soil Quality Indicators for the U.S. Northern Corn Belt. 11/92 – 08/96 with North Dakota State University ($105,000)
  - Soil Quality Indicator for Tropical Soils. 08/93 – 07/97 with US-AID Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (SANREM) project ($10,620)

*****Note: Continuing nonresearch activities which take 25 percent or more of the scientist's duty time should be reported in Factor 4.**

Start new Page

E. Publications

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles and Patents

1. **Karlen, D. L.**, Arny, D. and Walsh, L. M. Incidence of chocolate spot (Pseudomonas syringae), northern corn leaf blight (Helminthosporium turcicum), and lodging of corn as influenced by soil fertility. Comm. Soil Sci. Plant Anal. 4(5):359-368. 1973.

2. **Karlen, D. L.**, Vitosh, M. L. and Kunze, R. J. Irrigation of corn with simulated municipal sewage effluent. J. Environ. Qual. 5:269-273. 1976.

3. **Karlen, D. L.**, Whitney, D. A. and Ellis, R., Jr. Nutrient availability, plant growth, and composition as influenced by liming an acid Marshall silt loam. Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci. 80:129-135. 1977.

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4. Thien, S. J., Whitney, D. A., and **Karlen, D. L.** Effect of microwave radiation drying on soil chemical and mineralogical analysis. Comm. Soil Sci. Plant Anal. 9(3):231-241. 1978.

Additional Publications

5. Jones, K. C., **Karlen, D. L.**, Ford, G.R., Haydn, F. J. Cotton Crops of Texas, pp. 78-94. In Brown, D. F. and Black, J. R. (eds.) Cotton of the South, Simplex Publ. Co., New York. 328 pp. 2005. (Book Chapter)

6. **Karlen, D. L.**, Bush, G.W., and Eliot, T.S. Dryland storm abatement concepts. Proceedings of the Southwestern Blowhard Conference: 507-510. 2005. (Peer-Reviewed Conference Proceedings)

7. Griswold, Clark W., **Karlen, D. L.**, Bach, J.S. U.S. Patent Number 5,999,999. System for plastic materials application in dryland irrigation canals. September 2006.

Please Note:

The RPES Advisory Committee agreed to change the first subhead under Publications to read 'Peer Reviewed Journal Articles and Patents.' Everything else (**including book chapters, and other peer reviewed material**) goes under 'Additional Publications.'

To avoid confusion, ensure that titles in the publications list conform with **actual** titles as published.

For more information: http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/rpes/

INDEPTH REVIEWER CONTACT SHEET

Name of Scientist _____

Contact's Name, Official Capacity and Location	Telephone Number(s) and E-mail Address	Knowledge of Accomplishment(s) Number:

Research Position Evaluation Case Writeup (Cover Sheet)	Name of Employee	Date
	Title	Series and Grade
	Organization	Peer Group Alpha Code
Supervisor	Title	

Privacy Act Notification

General

This information is provided pursuant to the Privacy Act for individuals supplying information for inclusion in a system of records. Section 5107, Title 5, United States Code, authorizes agencies to place positions in the appropriate grade and series in conformance with standards published by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). The Research Grade-Evaluation Guide (RGEG) published by OPM in accordance with Section 5105, Title 5, provides guidance/criteria for evaluation of research positions. Providing information for Factor 4 is voluntary, but essential to the classification process.

Purposes and Uses

Factor 4 collects information needed to provide a Research Position Evaluation Panel with essential incumbent facts to evaluate the position against RGEG criteria. This information may be disclosed to appropriate officials/employees of the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), USDA Office of Human Capital Management, and OPM, involved in the research position classification process. These data may also be used to aid decisions on placement of research scientists within ARS.

Effects of Nondisclosure

Because Factor 4 of the case writeup contains information which the panel uses to classify your position, providing complete and specific information for each element of the factor is in your best interest. Omission of an item may result in a lower score than otherwise appropriate.

_____

Employee's Signature Date

Clearance

I have reviewed this case writeup and find it to be accurate, complete, and in the prescribed format.

_____

Supervisor's Signature Date

_____

Area Director's Signature Date

RPES Case Writeup Review, Approval, and Submission Procedures

1. Research Position Evaluation (RPE) Staff schedules case for panel review and issues formal notice to Area Office, establishing official Area Office and RPE Staff cutoff dates for final writeup.

2. Area Office notifies supervisor, AO, and secretary and establishes date for submission of draft writeup for preliminary review (NLT 30 calendar days before official cutoff date).

3. Researcher drafts case writeup, adhering to format and content specifications in Manual 431.3-ARS.

4. Research Leader (RL) reviews draft for format adherence, completeness, and accuracy, and returns to researcher for revision.

5. Researcher revises draft and returns to RL, who forwards draft through line management to Area Office.

6. Area Office staff reviews draft for format and administrative compliance, then Area Director (AD) or designee reviews the draft for technical content/accuracy and makes recommendations for improvement or directs changes in event of noncompliance with Manual specifications.

   Note 1: Major disagreements over writeup content will be resolved by the AD as provided in P&P 431.3-ARS, Section 8.

   Note 2: No entry at variance with prescribed format will be accepted. Noncompliant writeups will not be accepted by the Area Office. Delays due to improper case preparation may cause cutoff dates to be missed and result in panel review being rescheduled.

7. Area Office returns draft through line management to the RL, who supervises finalization by the researcher.

   Note: Above steps may be accomplished using any media (hard copy or electronic) the Area Office desires.

8. Incumbent and RL sign ARS-514 certifying completeness and accuracy, RL signs AD-332, then forwards the writeup package through line management to AD for approval and signature. Case package submission media are specified in the table below on the following page:

Case Package Submission Media

Document	Medium
• ARS-514, case writeup cover sheet • AD-332, p.d. cover sheet	• Paper • Original signatures required • Not distributed by RPE staff
• ARS-570, IDR Contact Sheet • ARS-229, Special Form-RGEG Factor 4 (for SG Panel only)	• Converted to PDF format; on CD • Converted to PDF format; on CD
• Factors 1-4 (body of writeup)	• Converted to PDF format; on CD
Type of exhibit: • Journal article/report • Supporting statement • Book • Model on disc • Videotape	 • PDF scanned; on CD • PDF scanned; on CD • Hard copy for IDR; PDF-scanned title page and TOC on CD for other panelists • Disc • Videocassette

Instructions for preparing ARS-514:

- Enter scientist's name, title, **present** series and grade, research unit, duty station, immediate supervisor's name and working title, peer group (**use only current alpha code** shown in P&P 431.3-ARS) and the date the case writeup is signed.
- Employee, immediate supervisor, and AD sign the form; intermediate supervisor may initial.

Instructions for preparing the ARS-570:

- Designate (by number) which accomplishment(s) from Factor 4-A each contact is knowledgeable about.
- If the contact is a general (multi-accomplishment or career long) contact, enter the word "General" rather than accomplishment number(s).
- **Be sure to include the immediate supervisor and Assistant AD, MWA (see checklist on page 2).**
- Assure the telephone number for each contact is **current**.
- If the contact has an electronic mail address, include it with the telephone number, and assure that it is **current**. This information can facilitate arranging interviews and reduce "telephone tag".
- List a wide variety of contacts; do **not** restrict contacts to ARS personnel. Possible selections are National Program Staff scientists, ADs, Technology Transfer Coordinators,

cooperating scientists, etc. At least some persons from USDA and other actions agencies, State agencies, user groups, academia, and others outside ARS, should be listed.

9. Area Office uploads to Sharepoint or mails final approved documents to RPE Staff for review and distribution. **Place only one scientist's RPES case package per CD if sending more than one package.**

   Note: It is no longer necessary to mail a separate copy of the publications list to the National Agricultural Library when you submit your case writeup.

10. RPE Staff reviews case package for completeness and compliance with Manual specifications; notifies Area Office by e-mail of noncompliant section(s) requiring revision.

    Note: The Associate Administrator for Research Operations and Management (AA-ROM) will hold Area Offices strictly accountable for writeup compliance with Manual specifications. RPE Staff will track and report quarterly to the AA-ROM the number of instances of noncompliant cases from each Area Office.

11. RPE Staff consolidates the CDs for each case assigned to a given panel, copies all cases onto a single master CD, duplicates the master, and mails to individual panelists along with any "hard" exhibits (books, videocassettes, etc.).

12. Scientist may update any portion of the case (but not to substitute Demonstrated Accomplishments or exhibits) writeup up to the day the panel actually meets (approximately 2 months after the cutoff date). E-mail updates directly to the RPE Staff with a copy to the AD.

For more information, please see the updated RPES Manual (on-line) at http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/PDF/431-3M-ARS.pdf

File Naming Conventions

SharePoint has features that limit file naming. Improperly named files simply will not load. To avoid such problems, please follow these naming conventions:

File	Naming Convention	Note(s)
General: Except as noted below, all files must be converted or scanned into **PDF** format before uploading.		
ARS-570	ARS-570.pdf	Do not include the scientist's name in **any** file name.
Case Writeup	Case Writeup.pdf	N/A
Standard convention	Ex 1A 18.pdf	• **CRITICAL**: Do **not** use special characters such as pound (#), ampersand (&), or slash (/ or \) symbols in numbering exhibits; SharePoint will refuse to upload files containing such symbols. • **Leave a space** between the exhibit number and Publications list number. • Do **not** distinguish *type* of exhibit (patent, supporting statement, etc.) in the file name.
Single exhibit	Ex 3 25.pdf	Scientist submitted only one exhibit for a Demonstrated Accomplishment. Do not use "3A" if there is no "3B."
Supporting statement	Ex 8A.pdf	There is no citation to the Publications list.
Executable (.exe) file	Ex 5B 44.zip	SharePoint will refuse to upload .exe files. Change the file name extension to .zip.

REVIEWING CASE WRITEUPS

Use the RPES Review Checklist to review cases. In the upper right hand corner on the Checklist, write the name and grade of the individual whose case you are reviewing. This way if it gets detached from the rest of the packet, it can be matched up again. Place a checkmark on the line preceding each section of the case as you review.

References:

RPES Home Page http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/rpes/

RPES P&P 431.3-ARS http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/PDF/431-3-ARS.pdf

RPES Manual http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/ppweb/PDF/431-3M-ARS.pdf

HELPFUL HINTS:

1. Center Director's/RL's name and title should be typed on AD-332 as Second Line Supervisor. Example: PETER B. JOHNSEN
   Center Director

2. Factor 1, E. Supervisory Responsibilities. The verbiage for this paragraph should be taken verbatim from the Manual; the number and type of employees supervised, which comprises the first sentence, will be unique for each SY. (Title & grade of ARS employees; nature of supervision given [technical/administrative]); EEO statement from P&P.

3. Under each of the Demonstrated Accomplishments, be sure that the **Accomplishment, Role,** and **Impact** are in bold. At the end of each accomplishment, insure the scientist cites Exhibits (maximum of 2 per accomplishment), e.g. (Exhibit 1a, #6; Exhibit 1b, #9; and #24, #28, #42). **NOTE:** Cross reference the actual Exhibit with the way it is cited in the Publications list. Check authors, title, journal, page numbers, and year published for accuracy. Make sure that Exhibits are labeled appropriately, e.g. Exhibit 1a, #6, and so on.

4. Some things are neither right nor wrong, just insure there is consistency.

5. Insure Bold Headers, Underscored Subheaders, and indentation is uniform throughout.

6. Use a Times New Roman 12 point font; 1 inch margins.

7. Don't let a heading/subheading hang on a page by itself. Hold it together with at least two lines of text. Same applies for paragraphs and publications. Don't let one line hang on a page by itself. There should be at least two lines if the paragraph gets separated by a page break.