

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY POLICY AND PROCEDURES ON MERIT PAY DISTRIBUTION

(As approved by faculty vote December 8, 2010)

These policies and procedures on distribution of merit pay in the Department of Sociology are developed according to campus requirements and guidelines articulated in the document "UMCP Policy on Merit Pay Distribution," as approved by President Kirwan on April 4, 1992, and amended February 19, 2002 and April 29, 2010.

General Policy

In keeping with the UMCP policy, the Chair of the department, with the approval of the Dean, has the authority and responsibility to determine merit increases. It is, however, the responsibility of the Chair to follow the procedures developed in this document and approved by majority vote of the faculty. These procedures call for participation by a Faculty Merit Pay Committee in evaluation of faculty performance and for distribution of merit pool monies according to agreed upon proportions for specified dimensions of professional activity.

Proportional Distribution for Dimensions of Professional Activity

Of the total merit pool available in a given year, twenty percent is available for the Chair to assign to individuals as she/he sees fit to take into account special contributions or circumstances (e.g. promotions) or equity issues not addressed by the regular committee procedures; the Chair may also use some of this 20% amount to build up salaries attached to vacant lines. Eighty percent of the total merit pool will be distributed according to the evaluation ratings assigned by the Faculty Merit Pay Committee. Of this eighty percent, 50% will be distributed according to the mean ratings for research performance, 30% according to the mean ratings for teaching performance, 10% according to the mean ratings for service performance within the university, and 10% according to the mean ratings for service performance outside the university (e.g., to professional associations, government agencies).

Composition and Role of the Faculty Merit Pay Committee

The Faculty Merit Pay Committee shall consist of the three outgoing faculty members of the departmental Policy Committee. There are two faculty members from each rank on the Policy Committee and three new members are elected each year by faculty at their respective ranks for two-year terms. Thus the three outgoing members who would form the Faculty Merit Pay Committee will include one Assistant Professor, one Associate Professor, and one Full Professor. In addition, the Chair of the department will participate as a member of this committee.

The Faculty Merit Pay Committee shall meet with the Chair and together determine the merit points for individual faculty on the dimensions of research, within-university service, outside-university-service, and teaching according to procedures described further below. The committee may elect to delegate the evaluation of teaching to the three individuals most likely to have information about faculty performance in courses, namely the Chair, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Director of Graduate Studies. The primary source material for the evaluations will be the annual Faculty Activity Reports, a departmental review form, up-dated vitae, and copies of publications of the previous year, and other relevant research, service, and teaching materials.

Ratings on the four dimensions mentioned above will be done on a scale from 0 to 10. Merit monies allocated to each dimension will be distributed in dollar amounts per points received, rather than as a percentage of current salary.

Since merit pools vary from year to year, average points received over the most recent three years of evaluation will constitute the basis for determining merit increases in any one year. If two or more years of no merit pay would cause any particular evaluation year to be included in less than two averages, the averaging period will be extended to four years or as many years as needed to ensure that every evaluation year is included in at least two averages. If year to year fluctuation in the merit pools is so severe that some individuals are still left without relatively appropriate rewards for particularly productive years, the Chair should seek to address this problem through special allocations from her/his 20% pool.

While 80% of the merit pool is to be allocated according to the mean ratings of the Merit Pay Committee and 20% can be allocated by the Chair directly, the Chair should report to the Merit Pay Committee her or his final salary recommendations.

The Chair will communicate the final determination of each faculty member's merit points to that faculty member in writing. This letter will also report the number of points received in the each category and the average per faculty member.

Appeals Process

Although the Chair is not expected to make public the results of the Merit Pay Committee ratings, at any point in the review process she/he should be available to discuss salary with any faculty member who so requests.

If the faculty member, after consulting with the Chair, remains aggrieved at the merit points result, she/he can appeal in writing to the full Policy Committee within two weeks of the receipt of the Chair's letter. The full Policy Committee can either confirm the judgment of the Merit Pay Committee or raise the number of points awarded in any category.

Evaluation Guidelines for Rating Performance

Each member of the Merit Pay Committee is expected to independently arrive at a preliminary rating for each faculty eligible for merit increase on the four dimensions on which merit is allocated. However, each member will be assigned special responsibility for in depth review of a portion of the faculty list. At the meeting, each faculty member is discussed one by one and the final ratings and the mean rating are recorded.

Although each member of the committee may use their professional judgment in assessing the value of various contributions and unusual contributions may well deserve points beyond those mentioned below, the following guidelines have been helpful for enabling consistency in the use of the ten point scales.

1 Raters are encouraged to utilize the full range of points (from 0 to 10) in their evaluations.

2 In the evaluation and rating of research performance, the following activities and ranges for point allocations are suggested for consideration if present: books (1-8); refereed articles (1-3); book chapters (1-2); reviews (0-1); reports (0-2); grants and grant proposals (1-3). The prestige and quality of the publication outlet can be taken into account as well as the quality of the work itself. Textbooks (unless they represent innovative integration of a specialty area in the discipline) are not to be counted as much, if at all, as substantive monographs.

3 In the evaluation and rating of "within" service performance, the following activities and ranges for point allocations are suggested for consideration if present: minor or routine department, campus, or University committee work (0-3); major or extraordinary department, campus, or University committee work (1-7); program, department, campus, or University administrative positions (1-7).

4 In the evaluation and rating of "outside" service performance, the following activities and ranges for point allocations are suggested for consideration if present: committee work for local, regional, or national professional associations (0-3); elected positions in local, regional, or national professional associations (1-5); editorships (1-5); review work for journals or grant agencies (1-3); speeches or consulting for local or national agencies (0-3).

5 In the evaluation and rating of teaching performance, the following facets of teaching are suggested for consideration if present: overall quality of teaching (0-5); extent of writing essay exams, term papers) required in classes (0-3); innovations in teaching methods or courses (0-3); unusually high numbers of students or courses (0-3); chairing of thesis or dissertations (1-5); advisory work on thesis or dissertation committees (0-3); mentoring activity for either undergraduate or graduate students (0-3).

Evaluation and Modification of Merit Policy and Procedures

At the end of every two-year period, the Policy Committee shall review these procedures and make recommendations for any needed modifications. For the modifications to be accepted, they must first be approved by a majority vote of the faculty in a secret ballot and then reviewed and approved by the office of the Dean of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

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Addendum recommended by Spring 2011 Merit Review Committee:

Research:

1. Articles published online before actual print publication (like most journals these days) don't count until the year of their printed publication date. As usual, you only get credit for publications actually submitted (loaned!) to the merit pay committee.
2. External proposal writing gets a point, even a re-submission. Getting a grant award gets a point. Internal (UMd) proposal writing does not get points, but an award does get a point.
3. External grant proposals written or awarded get points only if the University gets some \$ [whether directly through ORAA or as payments for faculty release time, RAs, etc.].

Teaching:

4. Teaching a regular classroom course gets at least a point (i.e., a regular 2-2 load gets 4 points). A summer or winter course also gets a point. New preparations or innovative revisions generally get an additional point. Very large classes generally get an additional point.
5. Courses given for joint appointment departments are treated the same as Sociology courses if the department is responsible for 100% of the faculty member's merit pay.
6. An undergraduate honors thesis gets a point for the year it is completed.
7. Supervision of undergraduate internships, service learning, and 1-credit courses will be considered for merit points depending on the number of students, the extent of involvement required, and the innovativeness and excellence of the undergraduate experience.
8. Dissertation, 2nd year papers, and graduate student advising get points only in the year the dissertation is finished (chair=3 points), the dissertation proposal is approved (chair=1 point), or the 2nd year paper is accepted (chair=2 points). Membership on a committee, either dissertation or 2nd year paper, gets a point in the year it is completed.
9. Chairing comps committees [and if counted at all, service on comps committees], will be counted in teaching, not service (1 point). Similarly, chairing specialty areas will count for teaching, not service (up to 1 point).
10. Textbook publications will be counted in teaching, not research. A new textbook generally gets 2 points, a revised edition generally up to 1 point, a new edited collection 1 point. Copies should be submitted along with the research publications.
11. Teaching and mentorship awards will generally count a point.

Service:

12. Many (most?) faculty forget to list committees they served on in the spring of the previous academic year (e.g., spring of the 2009-10 year for the 2010 form). In the future, the chair will send out the committee lists as an attachment to the merit review request.
13. Mentoring junior faculty counts as internal service.
14. Committee work (e.g., searches, APTs) lasting only one semester will be counted only for the calendar year in which the work was done.

15. Graduate committee work gets an extra point for service in the spring semester.
16. “Service”, both internal and external, will include “awards” (we will modify the form to make that clear). Except, teaching and mentoring awards will be counted for Teaching.
17. In the future, we will ask for both the names and numbers of reviews for journals, proposals, etc. Please keep track over the year. No more “etc.”