

GVPT Policy on Merit Pay
December 5, 2012 (Revised)
April 12, 2017 (Revised adding 5th merit category)
September 13, 2017 (Revised changing “Below Expectations” to “Low Merit”)
October 4, 2017 (Appendices for Professional Track Faculty Merit Pay Policy Checklist)

I. Policy

A financial merit award to a member of the faculty should reflect that individual’s contributions to the scholarly community, the department, and the university. Unlike COLA, merit pay is not divided equally, but should, without competitive ranking, be assigned to a faculty member as a reward for meritorious performance. Merit pay is to be awarded in dollar increments rather than as a percentage of salary.

Merit pay should reflect primarily an individual’s published contributions during the previous calendar year. Since averaging over a series of years evens out peaks and valleys in the available merit pool, some assessment of performance in the two previous years should also be made. In-press and forthcoming work will count when it is published.

Faculty contributions should be judged in three areas: research and scholarship, teaching, and service. Only excellence should be counted toward merit pay awards. The formula for weighting the three areas may vary by individual circumstance.

For years when merit pay is not available, the overall evaluations of the faculty members will be taken into consideration during the next year in which merit pay is available. The Department Chair will be responsible for aggregating the past evaluations for which no merit pay was available and the evaluation of the next year in which merit pay is available. Each of these annual evaluations will be weighted equally.

This Merit Pay Plan was approved by a majority of the tenured/tenure track faculty of the unit based on a secret ballot vote taken on (date of faculty meeting and/or vote).

A. Research and Scholarship

Every member of the faculty has the obligation to engage in scholarly research and writing, and merit pay will not be awarded for normal performance of expected duty. While merit pay for excellence in scholarly research will thus apply to those members of the faculty who excel above and beyond normal expectations, the Department recognizes that junior faculty may incur necessary lags in publications. Evaluation of such excellence should, whenever possible, be based on objective criteria. For example, the following could be ways to measure excellence in research and scholarship:

- (1) Research activities: quantity and quality of peer-reviewed publications.
- (2) Funded research activity: quantity and quality of research grants and grant activities.
- (3) Awards and honors for scholarship.

B. Teaching

Every member of the faculty has the obligation to perform his/her teaching duties conscientiously, and merit pay will not be awarded for normal performance of expected duty. Merit pay for excellence in teaching will thus apply to those members of the faculty who excel above and beyond normal expectations. Evaluation of such excellence should, whenever possible, be based on objective criteria. For example, the following could be ways to measure excellence in teaching:

- (1) Student evaluations.
- (2) Teaching of service courses and development of new courses and approaches.

- (3) Quantity and quality of undergraduate student counseling in specialized courses, advanced courses, and in directing honors theses.
- (4) Quantity and quality of graduate student mentorship: recruitment, training, and placement of PhD's.
- (5) Awards and honors for teaching.

C. Service

Every member of the faculty has the obligation to conscientiously perform his/her service to the department, university, profession, and general public, and merit pay will not be awarded for such performance of expected duty. Merit pay for excellence in service will thus apply to those members of the faculty who excel above and beyond normal expectations, for example, to those performing departmental administrative responsibilities not already adequately compensated by course release and stipend. Evaluation of such excellence should, whenever possible, be based on objective criteria. For example, the following could be ways to measure excellence in service:

- (1) Service to the Department: Administrative appointments within the Department and membership on departmental committees. Compensation should take account of the importance of committees, time required to serve on committees, and performance of duties few other members of the department are willing to undertake.
- (2) Service to the College-Campus-University: Election to and service in College-Campus-University deliberative bodies, elective appointment to and service in College-Campus-University committees.
- (3) Service to the Profession: Time given to service on professional committees, time given to prepare scholarly evaluations, review of manuscripts, editorial board memberships and editorships.
- (4) Service to the General Community: Public lectures, expert testimony before congressional or state legislative committees, service on public advisory boards and task forces, significant pro bono contributions to practical government at Federal, state, and local levels.
- (5) Honors and awards for service.

II. Procedure

A. Collection of data

At the time of evaluation for merit pay, every member of the faculty should have had a chance to review and correct his/her Faculty Activity Report and vitae. These documents, together with teaching evaluation data, should serve as the basis for merit pay evaluation. For all three areas, faculty members can supply supporting evidence, including programs, publications, and unsolicited letters of support. The chair and/or the salary committee may request additional documentation.

B. Merit Pay Committee

The Department shall elect a Merit Pay Committee of five (5) members by secret ballot for a one year term. The Executive Committee will present a slate of at least five (5) candidates, although faculty may nominate and vote for candidates not on the slate. Faculty shall vote for five (5) nominees, no more than two (2) from any one rank. At least one (1) member of the Merit Pay Committee must be from each rank, and a run-off election will be held if this requirement is not satisfied. The Merit Pay Committee should reflect, insofar as possible, the gender and racial composition of the department as well as the various sub-fields within the discipline. Each year, the Chair shall review the makeup of the Merit Pay Committee over the previous five years to assure that a reasonable representation of faculty diversity has been achieved. If diversity has not been achieved, the Chair will seek recommendations from the Executive Committee for appropriate actions to rectify the situation. The Chair will implement the changes he or she deems appropriate and continue to monitor diversity on an annual basis. Members of the Merit Pay Committee are not eligible for immediate reelection but may serve after one year's hiatus.

The committee elected in the early spring semester will assume responsibilities for salary evaluations in mid spring. The Chair will call the first meeting of the committee. The committee elects its own chair. Members of the Merit Pay Committee will be evaluated by the remaining four members of the committee.

After each member of the Merit Pay Committee has reviewed the relevant merit pay data and made an independent evaluation, the Merit Pay Committee will meet and jointly evaluate each member of the departmental faculty and assign to him/her a rating in each of the three areas of research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

Members of the Merit Pay Committee will evaluate each faculty member based on a four-point rating: (1) no merit, (2) low merit, (3) merit, (4) high merit, and (5) exceptional merit. For the majority of the faculty, who will perform their duties conscientiously in at least one or perhaps two areas without, however, the special excellence that serves as the basis for merit pay, committee members should note simply "merit" in the respective area. For those deserving merit pay in one or more areas, committee members should note either "high merit" or "exceptional merit" in the relevant area.

Any differences among the independent evaluations of the committee members should be discussed and resolved on the basis of the standards enunciated in this policy.

C. Dissemination

Individual evaluations and cumulative committee evaluations should be reported to the Chair. The Committee and the Chair must meet to discuss the committee's evaluations.

The committee shall report its final results with a written justification of its general standards for assigning four-point ratings. It must also provide a written justification of each faculty member's ratings that further serves as a record of the committee's deliberations.

The report of the Merit Pay Committee will be forwarded to the Chair, who will consider it in making his/her merit pay recommendations to the Dean.

The Chair must report his/her final merit recommendations to the Merit Pay Committee. Thereafter, the Chair must inform each faculty member of both the committee's evaluation and the Chair's decision, and be available to discuss both with the faculty member.

The Merit Pay Committee and Chair will each certify that they have followed the unit's Merit Pay Distribution Plan or will indicate areas where they have deviated with a rationale.

The Chair will annually evaluate the salary structure of the department and consult with the appropriate administrators (Dean or the Provost) to address salary compression or salary inequities that have developed in the unit.

D. Appeals

Faculty members who object either to the committee's evaluation or the Chair's decision (or both), can appeal to the Merit Pay Committee and the Chair for reconsideration. Each faculty member has the right to request the Merit Pay Committee and the Chair to review his/her salary to determine if there is an equity problem.