

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Merit Pay

Approved: 2011

Policy 1001

Department of Physics and Astronomy

Evaluation and Merit Raise Procedures

Purpose

This document describes the methods and procedures used in the annual evaluation of faculty and the determination of merit raises. It was approved by the faculty in June 2008 and by the administration in August 2008. Amendments were approved by the faculty on February 11, 2011.

Definitions

None.

Applicability

This procedure applies to all RTA, Tenured, and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

Policy

The annual evaluation shall consider the performance of the faculty member both within and outside the department in the areas of teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service. To provide the Department Head with this information, each faculty member will provide two documents:

- The [Anticipated Activities Plan](#) (AAP) outlines their professional plans and direction for the next three years
- The [Annual Activities Report](#) (AAR) catalogs accomplishments for the previous year.

The AAP and AAR are kept in the faculty member's file in the department office. Templates are provided for both document. The evaluation year runs from May 16 of the previous year to May 15 of the current year. The AAP and AAR must be submitted electronically to the Department Head by May 15 each year. The faculty AARs provide the basis for the Annual Report of the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

The Department Head and PAC will consult with faculty members to insure that the nature and scope of the effort and its distribution among the three performance areas is appropriate. The determination of what is appropriate is based on the nature of the faculty member's appointment and their AAP. These performance area minima are also outlined in the [Faculty Expectations](#) document presented to all tenure-track faculty at the beginning of their appointment.

Procedures

Department Head's Initial Evaluation:

The Department Head begins the evaluation process by comparing the current AAR with that of the previous year for evidence of continuity. The AAR is then examined in the context of the goals state in the AAP and the level of activity in teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service. Significant activities are understood to be those consistent with the department tenure and promotion guidelines found in the [Criteria and Standards](#) document and represent progress toward tenure and/or promotion. Putting forth a reasonable, cogent plan and making minimal progress, by this definition, represents satisfactory performance.

In addition to these two documents, the Department Head will also consider the students and peer evaluation of teaching evaluations.

Evaluations in each of the three performance areas and the overall evaluation are made on a scale with five categories:

1. Excellent
2. Noteworthy
3. Satisfactory
4. Marginal
5. Unsatisfactory

Deviations from satisfactory (up or down) are determined by evidence of significant progress (or the lack thereof) toward the goals in the AAP and the [Criteria and Standards](#) document in each of the three areas. Although formal multiyear averages are not done, increases or decreases in ratings each year are limited, reflecting the expected continuity of effort and to allow for an occasional anomalous year.

Personnel Advisory Committee Evaluation:

The Department Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) then makes its evaluation of the faculty as described in the [Criteria and Standards](#) document. The results of this evaluation forwarded to the Department Head will include an evaluation of each faculty member in teaching, scholarly achievement and professional qualifications, and professional service and a summary of the performance. This summary will address problems, successes or other considerations that the PAC determined to be significant.

Final Evaluation:

The Department Head next combines the input from the PAC with his initial evaluation. Adjustments are made to reconcile meaningful differences between the two points of view. At this point each faculty member has a rating in teaching, scholarly achievement and

professional qualifications, and professional service ranging from unsatisfactory to excellent.

Appeal:

Before the Department Head submits the official written evaluation to the Dean, the faculty member has the opportunity to review and appeal the evaluation to the Department PAC. The faculty member has a maximum of seven days following receipt of the official written evaluation to make the appeal in writing. Failure to file a timely written appeal will result in the evaluation being sent forward to the dean with no further appeal rights available.

In considering an appeal, the crucial questions for the PAC are whether all relevant information was objectively reviewed by the Department Head and whether the Department Head evaluated similar achievements among similarly situated faculty using the same standard of judgement. The appeals process must be completed by October 21. The evaluation process is not complete until any appeals are completed.

Merit Raise Determination:

Merit raises are derived from the evaluations using the five category rating scale in each of the three performance areas. The merit raise pool for the department is divided into two parts. The larger portion, the *Satisfactory Merit Pool*, represents 55-75% of the total amount. The Satisfactory Merit Pool is divided among all faculty as a uniform percentage of his/her salary and represents the merit raise for satisfactory performance.

For example, if the merit raise pool is 3% of the total faculty salaries and the Satisfactory Merit Pool is 67% (2/3) of this, then the Satisfactory Merit Pool is 2% of the total merit pool. In this case, each faculty member gets a merit raise of 2% of his/her salary for satisfactory performance.

The remaining 25-45% of the total merit pool, the *Incremental Merit Pool* is used to increase or decrease this base raise according to each faculty member's evaluations in fixed dollar increments. Each of the five rankings are assigned a numerical *Incremental Merit point* value as follows:

Rating	Incremental Merit Points
Excellent	+2/3
Noteworthy	+1/3
Satisfactory	0
Marginal	-1/3

The Incremental Merit Points for all faculty are summed. The total Incremental Merit Pool is divided by the total Incremental Merit Points to give the raise/Incremental Merit Point. This is multiplied by the number of merit points each faculty member has received to determine the additional increment for each faculty member. This addition may be a positive or negative change in the base merit pay for satisfactory performance.

For example, if the total number of Incremental Merit Points for all faculty is 12 and the Incremental Merit Pool is \$12,000, then the raise/Incremental Merit point is \$1,000. A faculty member with ratings of Excellent, Noteworthy and Satisfactory in the three performance areas would get $(2/3 + 1/3 + 0) * \$1,000 = \$1,000$ added to the percentage already awarded for satisfactory performance.

Occasionally, there are situations where supplemental raise money is available or there are special circumstances for a particular faculty member. In these cases, special adjustments may be made in consultation with the Dean to rectify historical inequities or address unusual situations.

Responsibilities

The faculty member and the Department Head will sign the final evaluation and the Department Head will send a copy of the Dean by October 21. If the faculty member does not sign the final evaluation, the Department Head will forward it to the Dean with a notation of the failure to sign.

Sanctions

None.

Exclusions

None.