

UO Department of Economics Procedures & Criteria for Merit Review & Salary Adjustment

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The procedures for making recommendations on the distribution of merit funds in Economics have been essentially unchanged since 1978. After receiving instructions from UO administration, the department head will, in consultation with the economics executive committee, carry out merit reviews and make merit increase recommendations for economics TTF, NTTF, and OAs. (The executive committee is composed of three or more tenured economics faculty who are elected in spring quarter to one-year terms that start the first day of summer session.) The formal evaluation period for merit review is as specified by the instructions received. Whether merit increase recommendations are expressed as a percentage of base salary, flat dollar amounts, or a combination of each is left to the discretion of the department head so as to allow for greater flexibility in responding to relative merit considerations. The department head will discuss final recommendations with those executive committee members who are available to meet in a timely fashion. In the unlikely event of unresolved disagreements between department head and executive committee, the executive committee may submit a separate set of recommendations. Actual merit increases will depend on funding availability and university criteria. All faculty 1) must be evaluated for merit and are not permitted to opt out, 2) are eligible for consideration for the highest merit rating regardless of appointment type or FTE, 3) will receive some merit increase if they meet or exceed expectations, 4) will have the basis of their evaluation include recent performance review(s) and the current CV, and 5) will be informed of their raises after they have been approved. The basis for final recommendations will be documented.

TTF Merit Review

Merit increases are provided for performance in each of the three areas of research, teaching, and service – where the full profile of contributions during the evaluation period, not just the rate of contribution per year, is considered. In “normal” circumstances we evaluate research, teaching, and service with respective weights of 40%, 40%, and 20%. These weights are adjusted as appropriate to reflect changes in a faculty member’s effective appointment due to factors such as course releases for service assignments. To provide the information necessary for these evaluations, faculty submit detailed “Faculty Activity Reports” once a year, along with activity updates to the most recent annual report and a current cv. The descriptive standards of “exceeds,” “meets,” or “below expectations” are used to characterize contributions, although numerical scoring may be used when a finer resolution is desired. These standards will be comparable in spirit to those used in making promotion and tenure decisions.

Research - Research in economics, particularly for members of Ph.D.-granting departments, is evaluated primarily on the basis of the publication of significant and influential work in high-quality scholarly economics journals, which are formally refereed and open to all researchers. The peer review process, the necessity for meticulous reporting of results, the requirement to share data to permit replications, and the formal opportunity to challenge or support work published in a journal are crucial elements of the scientific process. Books and book reviews,

research monographs, conference papers, articles in “in-house” journals or journals with a more popular perspective, work in progress, invited presentations, grants and grant applications, and the like are also important and evaluated accordingly, but in a Ph.D. granting department of economics these outlets are imperfect substitutes for research published in scholarly economics journals. Extraordinary contributions to the profession that do not fit into the categories above may also be classified as “research,” though such classification in a given evaluation period requires approval of both the department head and a majority of the executive committee. Accessibility to colleagues for research interactions is also an important “public good” in academic departments and is a factor in research evaluations. Accessibility is a difficult criterion to define and measure, but is crucial to the research mission of the department – as is also the case for the teaching and service missions. Extreme examples (both positive and negative) are usually obvious, and are evaluated accordingly.

Teaching - The teaching category consists of classroom instruction, supervision of student research, and other instructional activities, as well as general availability to serve department needs in each of these areas. Classroom instruction is regularly evaluated by formal student evaluations and by inspection of course syllabi and other course materials. Factors such as the size and level of a class are used to place such evaluations in proper context. Supervision of student research refers to supervision of Ph.D. field papers and dissertations, Masters research papers and theses, and undergraduate honors papers. Both the number of students supervised in each of these categories and a recognition that the demands of supervision differ across these categories will be used when evaluating contributions in this area. In order to help ensure that volume of undergraduate research supervision is evaluated appropriately, consideration will also be given to whether the supervised student research in question served as a lecture substitute, as is currently the case for the EC 418/419 sequence.

Service - Service is a broad area covering specific contributions to department committees and activities, university committees, and other professional activities, such as service on the editorial board of a journal, as a journal referee, as an officer of a professional organization, or sharing professional expertise in a public service capacity (e.g., speeches, media interviews, and appointed boards). Effective service is also more than merely accepting a service assignment -- it also means conscientiously pursuing the responsibilities of the position and maintaining cooperative and productive interactions with others in a manner that enhances, rather than detracts from, collective productivity. Here, as in research and teaching, general accessibility to department and university is a factor in evaluating service contributions.

NTTF Merit Review

NTTF appointments are typically dedicated to the areas of undergraduate teaching and service, although the weights on these may vary significantly across individuals due to differing contractual obligations. As with TTF, weights may also change due department-approved changes in the appointment. To provide the information necessary for these evaluations, NTTF submit detailed “Faculty Activity Reports” once a year, along with activity updates to the most recent annual report and a current cv. Performance reviews over the evaluation period, which are conducted by the department head and assess performance on duties and responsibilities as described in the NTTF’s job description, are also considered. The descriptive standards of

exceeds, meets, or below expectations are used to characterize contributions, although numerical scoring may be used when a finer resolution is desired. These standards will be comparable in spirit to those used in making promotion and tenure decisions.

Teaching - Teaching is at the undergraduate level and consists of classroom instruction, supervision of student research, and other instructional activities, as well as general availability to serve department needs in each of these areas. Classroom instruction is regularly evaluated by formal student evaluations and by inspection of course syllabi and other course materials. Factors such as the size and level of a class are used to place such evaluations in proper context. Supervision of student research refers to supervision of undergraduate honors papers. As in the TTF case, accessibility to students is a relevant factor.

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OA Merit Review

An OA's merit increase recommendation is based on the extent to which performance expectations of assigned duties and responsibilities are assessed to have been met or exceeded. As is the case for faculty, service as a representative of the department, the college, or the university is also highly valued in merit review, although it does not serve as a substitute for meeting satisfactory performance expectations. When making a merit assessment, the department head will consider the OA's performance reviews over the relevant evaluation period and the OA's personal statement summarizing accomplishments during the evaluation period. If there has not been a performance review within the past year, one will be undertaken for use in the merit review. The performance review will evaluate the OA's performance of the duties and responsibilities described in the OA's position description and current job duties and will incorporate feedback from relevant constituent groups both internal and external to the department.