

TO: Andrew Marcus, Acting Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

DATE: May 19, 2014

FROM: Rebecca Dorsey, Head
Department of Geological Sciences

SUBJECT: Departmental Merit Review and Salary Adjustment Procedures

Cc: Dana Johnston, Associate Dean for Natural Sciences

Overview

Evaluation of faculty members for merit-based salary increases in the Department of Geological Sciences is carried out by the Department Head, under advisement of an appointed ad-hoc personnel committee. The evaluation for merit raises is based on recent performance reviews, the current CV, and teaching evaluations. The committee reviews all materials and gives their recommendation to the Department Head in the form of a report with performance ratings and explanatory text for each faculty member under review (excluding the committee members themselves and anyone else with whom the committee may have a conflict of interest). The Department Head may make adjustments based on additional information and knowledge of faculty performance. The Department Head uses these data to create a spreadsheet with numerical performance ratings for all faculty and staff under review, and the numerical ratings are used to calculate merit salary increases. The actual amounts are scaled as needed to match the total amount allocated for merit raises in the online spreadsheet tool. The spreadsheet used for this purpose is archived to allow for appropriate follow-up or review if questions arise later.

All faculty are evaluated for merit; no one is permitted to opt out. Regardless of type of appointment or FTE, each faculty member is eligible for consideration for the highest merit rating. All faculty who meet or exceed expectations will receive some merit increase. Faculty will be informed of their raises after they have been approved. The criteria and expectations for satisfactory performance are explained below.

Procedures

The Department of Geological Sciences currently consists of about 18 tenured or tenure-track faculty (including two with a 0.5 FTE appointment), one 0.5 FTE tenured senior instructor, one full-time NTTF senior instructor, several part-time adjunct and career-track NTTF instructors, one Officer of Administration (OA) and three Officers of Research (OR's). The procedures for evaluating performance of individuals in these categories are explained below. The Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure in our department, approved by our faculty, provide additional detailed evaluation criteria that are used to supplement the broad procedures outlined below.

Tenure-Track Faculty

In evaluating individuals for merit increases, performance in the three traditional areas of research, teaching, and service is considered. Under normal circumstances, equal weight is given to research and teaching (approximately 40% each) and ~20% is assigned to service contributions. In accordance with our promotion and tenure guidelines, in some cases faculty members may ask to adjust the relative weighting to reflect changing focus of their career through time. This may lead to greater emphasis being given to teaching or service activities than to research, at the discretion of the ad-hoc committee and Dept. Head.

Research:

Publications and funded research grants are the two primary metrics by which research productivity is evaluated. Greater weight is given to publications on which the faculty member (or their student or postdoc) is first or second author, compared to those for which the faculty member is lower down the list of authors. The quality of the journal, proceedings volume, map, or book is also evaluated. Papers appearing in journals not deemed to be in the first tier are given less weight, and abstracts are not considered except insofar as they indicate active participation in scientific meetings. Invited talks and lectures are also considered. In some cases, scholarship other than research papers, such as maps or field trip guidebooks, may be considered on par with journal articles or book chapters.

Grant funding provides another measure of research success, since grants are awarded through the peer-review process. An attempt is made to arrive at an overall picture of the level of grant activity, grant-funded student, postdoc and faculty support, research productivity, and a faculty member's standing in his or her sub-discipline as indicated by their record of competitive grant funding. Because different fields have different monetary needs, grant dollar amounts are considered secondarily.

Teaching and Graduate/Postdoc Advising:

Teaching is evaluated primarily through numerical student evaluations, although other factors such as signed narrative comments, quantity of teaching, new versus previously taught classes, and peer reviews of teaching are also considered. An attempt is made to quantify teaching performance by averaging the numerical scores for all classes taught during the review period, to arrive at a single numerical score. Faculty members are rated on the basis of these scores. The department head may adjust this rating somewhat on the basis of the other factors considered.

Education, training and mentoring of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars is an important part of our teaching mission. Accordingly, the number of graduate students and postdocs advised, and the quality of that advising, is assessed as part of our teaching effort. This assessment includes students currently in the degree program as well as any that may have graduated during the review period.

Service:

This category evaluates service to one's department, the university, professional societies, schools other than the UO, and the general public. Professional service may include serving on journal editorial boards, grant review panels, steering committees, elected office in professional societies, etc. Faculty submit vitae listing their service activities during the review period, and the ad-hoc committee assesses the magnitude of the service assignment and the quality of service rendered. Faculty are rated using a simple system explained below. The rating may be modified to reflect different service expectations for junior versus senior faculty or other similar considerations, as outlined in our departmental Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure document.

After considering all factors described above, based on a comparison of performance by tenure-track faculty members in the department, faculty are rated one of: "outstanding" (3), "good" (2), or "fair" (1) in each category (research, teaching, and service). These ratings are combined to create a total score that is used to assign relative merit raises, as explained below.

Instructors (including tenured, career, and adjuncts)

The individual position descriptions for instructors state that their efforts are to be focused on teaching and teaching-related scholarship, with most of the remaining effort directed toward service activities, advising, writing, etc. Performance expectations are outlined in contracts and position descriptions. Teaching and service activities of instructors are evaluated in the same way as that of tenure-track faculty, and their performance is rated in the same pool. Assessment of teaching-related scholarship places greater emphasis on publication in teaching- and outreach-related books and journals and participation in workshops etc., than in external grant funding, although this latter activity is valued.

Officers of Research (OR's): Includes Research Staff and Postdocs

Performance reviews of research-related NTTFs (officers of research) will be carried out by the Department Head with input from the supervising faculty member(s). Reviews will evaluate the performance of duties, tasks, and responsibilities described in the contract language and job descriptions for each position. Merit increase recommendations will be based on the extent to which the individual has met, failed to meet, or exceeded the expectations for performance of her/his assigned duties and responsibilities as documented in the performance reviews.

Officer of Administration (OA)

There is one OA in the Department of Geological Sciences. The Department Head will base his/her merit increase recommendation on the performance reviews of the OA during the relevant evaluation period. If there has not been a performance review within the past year, the Department Head will undertake such a review. The review will evaluate the OA's performance of the duties and responsibilities described in the OA's position description and his/her current job duties. While OA reviews are conducted by the Department Head,

they may also consider, when possible, feedback from relevant constituent groups both internal and external to the department or program. The Department Head's merit increase recommendation will be based on the extent to which the OA has met or exceeded expected performance of her/his assigned duties and responsibilities, as indicated by the relevant performance reviews.

Overall Rating

Overall ratings for tenure-track faculty are determined by combining the individual ratings for research, teaching, and service, giving approximately 40% weight to research and teaching and ~20% to service (40-40-20). These weightings serve as the default values unless a faculty member has requested another weighting scheme. Different weightings are applied to Instructors, with roughly 66% applied to teaching and teaching-related scholarship and 34 % to service and related activities (unless an instructor member has requested a different ratio). Ratings for officers of research and officers of administration are determined using the criteria above.

Salary Increase Recommendations

The ratings described above serve as the primary guide in determining merit salary increase recommendations to be made to the Dean. Raises are assigned as a percent of faculty salary, and are ranked according to the numerical ratings. Final small adjustments may be necessary to compensate for the effects of distributing percentage raises across a group of faculty with different salaries. Any final adjustments are scaled and pro-rated to retain the relative ratings determined using the criteria and methods described above.