

Physics Merit Procedure

October 2019

Revision Approved by the Office of the Provost – October 31, 2019

Glossary:

- TRF – Tenure-related Faculty, i.e. tenure-track or tenured officers of instruction
- NTTF – Non-tenure related faculty
- CNTTF – Career NTTF
- CAS – College of Arts and Sciences
- DH – Physics Department Head

General Principles:

1. All faculty must be evaluated for merit. It is not permitted to opt out.
2. Regardless of type of appointment or FTE, each faculty member is eligible for consideration for the highest merit rating.
3. All faculty who meet or exceed expectations will receive some merit increase.

The following describes the process used for determining merit pay raises for TRF and CNTTF (and other NTTF when eligible). The evaluation of faculty for merit is based primarily on the annual reports submitted by faculty, along with their current CV. The *Physics Department Annual Evaluation Guidelines* for producing and evaluating annual reports begins on the next page.

The current merit procedure is outlined as follows:

- Reports are evaluated and merit is calculated using the period of employment starting at the time of the previous merit raise, unless there is a clear intention to do otherwise.
- The Personnel Committee (PC) evaluates faculty according to their duties. For research tenure-related faculty, the evaluation categories are (1) research, (2) teaching, and (3) service. See the Guidelines document for details. Every year, the PC determines a score of 0 to 10 with a mean of 5 in each category, and a composite score based on the ratio 2:1:1 for weighting the categories research:teaching:service. NTTF and non-research TRF are evaluated by categories and weightings consistent with their position duties and contract. When multiple years are being used to evaluate merit, the composite scores are averaged over the relevant number of years by the DH.
- Sabbaticals and leaves: For terms with no assigned teaching as a result of a sabbatical or funded course release (e.g. through OHC or the Dean's office) or an external grant, then the faculty member's composite score ratio will be adjusted to remove the teaching component. If a faculty member is on sabbatical or funded leave and has no required service, then the faculty member's composite score ratio will be similarly adjusted to remove the service component. Faculty on prolonged medical or family leave will have their composite score adjusted accordingly for that period. However, any research published during a medical/family leave will be taken into account during the next merit review period after the leave so that faculty who have publications during illness do not lose the benefit of them in the merit process.
- In current practice, the composite score S is converted to a percentage P of the current base salary, based on the formula

$$P = \langle R \rangle [1 + 2(S - \langle S \rangle) / 3\sigma]$$

where $\langle S \rangle$ and σ are the mean and standard deviation, respectively, of the composite scores in the merit pool, and $\langle R \rangle$ is the average percent raise of the relevant merit pool as defined by the Provost. The threshold for faculty performance which meets expectations is determined as a composite score one and one-half standard deviations below the mean. Scores below this threshold result in a negative

formula result; these negative percentage raises are then converted to zero. Faculty members with composite scores above this threshold are considered to be meeting or exceeding expectations. We prefer to apply the raises as a percentage of the current base salary, as opposed to a raise in absolute dollars, as a way to compound the effect of merit over time. The percentage raises obtained from this method are then all scaled by a constant factor chosen such that the total dollar amount distributed as raises equals the total dollar amount received by the Department from the College for this purpose. It is understood that future PCs and DHs may decide to use a different method

- The DH reviews the recommended raises with the chair of the PC before they are submitted to CAS.
- Once approved by CAS, the resulting merit raise for each individual eligible to receive the raise will be reported to that individual.
- Merit decisions will be tracked by storing them on the Physics server. The decisions will be stored by date and topic.

Physics Department Annual Evaluation Guidelines

The research programs of our Department have national and international impact and competitiveness, we strive to provide excellent instruction to our undergraduate and graduate students and innovative course development, and we value high quality service to the Department, University, and external scientific community. Usually in the winter term, all Physics faculty are asked to submit an annual report that describes their activities in each of these areas for the previous calendar year. These reports are reviewed by the Physics Department Personnel Committee, which then produces annual evaluations of all faculty. Average scores, standard deviations, and histograms resulting from this process are made available to the faculty in a timely manner.

Research evaluation: As a research intensive department, the annual evaluation places great emphasis on scientific achievement, except in cases where the nature and intent of the appointment precludes major research activities. Factors to be considered by the Personnel Committee in the annual evaluation of research include:

- quality and number of scientific publications,
- external funding at a level required to do competitive research in the candidate's sub-discipline,
- support and supervision of graduate students in their research,
- external evidence of national and international impact demonstrated through participation in conferences and workshops, invited talks, and citation and impact rankings of publications.

Teaching evaluation:

(NOTE (Added by the Office of the Provost): For all reviews to be decided Fall 2020 or later, any references to standards or metrics for teaching quality are replaced by Section 9 of the August 2019 MOU between the university and United Academics that defines standards for teaching quality. The standards defined in the MOU are to remain in place unless and until the unit modifies those standards in accordance with the MOU and the CBA defined process for modifying unit policies. MOU can be found at <https://hr.uoregon.edu/ua-mou-course-evaluations-article-20.pdf>)

The Physics Department expects all faculty to spend a substantial fraction of their time on teaching-related activities, and to strive for excellence in this area. Factors to be considered by the Personnel Committee in the annual evaluation of teaching include:

- course materials, including syllabi, web pages, exams, etc.,
- developing new courses, pedagogies, demonstrations, hands-on activities,
- authoring new textbooks and other curricular materials,

- student course evaluations, if administered during review period, and Student Experience Surveys
- advising undergraduate students in research,
- overload teaching, for example, in the Honors College, should be considered as a component of the teaching portfolio, but faculty members cannot be penalized for declining an overload assignment;
- peer teaching evaluations.

Faculty annual reports should include a list of courses taught, students under advisement, and any other facts relevant for the evaluation of teaching. It is the responsibility of the faculty to provide assessment materials to the Personnel Committee.

Service evaluation: For junior faculty substantial service activity within the Department is expected and some level of University service is encouraged though not required. For senior faculty, extensive service within the Department and the University as well as within the faculty member's scientific community is expected. Examples of activities to be considered by the Personnel Committee in the annual evaluation of service include:

- membership on and particularly leadership of Departmental and University committees,
- membership and leadership of graduate student thesis committees,
- inviting and hosting speakers for colloquia and seminars,
- leadership of Centers and Institutes,
- other *ad hoc* service around the University,
- membership on advisory and review committees at funding agencies, foundations, societies, facilities, other universities etc.,
- editorship of scientific journals,
- review of papers submitted to journals and grant proposals submitted to funding agencies,
- organization of conferences, conference sessions, and workshops,
- general public and K-12 outreach activities,
- other scientific activities not directly related to the faculty member's research and teaching activities.

For each faculty, research, teaching, and service activities are each given a numerical ranking with a forced average of 50% of the maximum, e.g., a score between 0 and 10 with an average of 5. A composite score is then calculated. For regular tenure-related, research faculty, the customary weighting of research:teaching:service is 2:1:1.

Exceptions and variations:

Our mission and faculty are diverse, and we acknowledge that no single set of evaluation criteria can be exclusively applied. Exceptions to the above criteria include:

- For faculty having appointments that preclude major research activities, evaluations are based instead on teaching, service, and a third category appropriate to the appointment. For example, an instructor with duties supporting lecture demonstrations might have a third category of instructional support. An instructor undertaking significant K-12 activities could have outreach as a third category. The service category, which normally combines UO-internal and external components for faculty with appointments involving significant research, may be viewed differently for instructor rank faculty. In consultation with the Personnel Committee and the personnel involved, the Department Head will identify and weight these categories on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with individual faculty workload expectations.

- 100-level literacy and 200-level service courses are a particularly important component of the Department's teaching portfolio. These classes are generally considered to be difficult teaching assignments. Faculty who teach these classes will have their teaching scores multiplied by factors of 1.1 and 1.2 for 100-level and 200-level classes, respectively, weighted by the number of such courses they teach during the year.