

Approved Guidelines for Merit Reviews in the School of Arts & Sciences
With New Section on Directors

(approved by A&S faculty vote on April 25, 2012)

(revised by A&S faculty vote on March 18, 2015)

General Policies

The School of Arts and Sciences requires faculty members in continuing positions to have a merit review every year. Department chairs and the deans use the merit review process to mentor colleagues in developing as teachers, scholars and citizens of the university. The merit review is a critical factor in determining any salary increases. A faculty member who does not submit a dossier for a merit review is not eligible for a salary increase.

Process and Timeline

By the end of June, or at the chair's request, each faculty member must submit a dossier to the chair. The elements of a complete dossier are set out below. The chair may request and review other evidence of the faculty member's performance, for example, student evaluation of teaching, manuscripts in progress, conference papers, grant proposals, course syllabi; however, only the dossier will be submitted to the Dean's office.

Each October, Academic Council will dedicate one meeting to allow department chairs to meet in small groups to discuss discipline-sensitive benchmarks for applying the merit rubric. Individual cases will not be discussed in these meetings.

The chair of the department will complete a Chair's Evaluation for each faculty member in the department. Using the merit rubric, the chair will assign a category for teaching, scholarship, and service, and recommend an overall score. In less than 1,000 words, the chair will contextualize and calibrate the faculty member's accomplishments and discuss goals for the upcoming year. In a meeting with the faculty member, the chair will discuss the faculty member's accomplishments and goals. The Chair may request a meeting with the dean to discuss the department evaluations before submitting them to the dean's office.

On the first Monday in November, the chairs will submit the dossiers and the Chair's Evaluations to the dean's office. The dean will review the dossiers and the chairs' evaluations. Having reviewed the dossier and considered the chairs' evaluations, the dean will assign an overall merit category for each faculty member. If the dean assigns a different category than the chair, the dean will document the reason for the difference and share this with the chair.

The dean will develop a framework for distributing merit salary increases based on merit reviews. The dean will review the proposed merit increase for each faculty member with the provost for approval. No later than three weeks after the Board of Trustees have met to approve the salary budget, the dean will send to each faculty member a letter that sets out salary and compensation for the subsequent year, beginning in August.

The Chair's Evaluation and the dean's revision, if any, will be shared with the faculty member.

Elements of a Dossier

- Narrative reflection on teaching, scholarship, and service, that discusses accomplishments and sets goals for upcoming year(s) (less than 1500 words)
- Curriculum vitae

For the year under review (June 1 to May 31), please list:

- Courses taught and enrollments mentoring or advising responsibilities
- Scholarly presentations, productions, or publications for the past year
- Departmental, Arts & Sciences, or university service roles and responsibilities
- Professional or community service responsibilities, awards, recognitions, or other achievements.

Special Provision: Assistant Professors

For a tenure-track faculty member, the Chair's Evaluation should offer recommendations for goals and priorities in preparation for the tenure review. The Chair's report should not anticipate any decision of the Tenure & Promotion Committee.

Special Provision: Triennial Schedule of Merit Reviews for Tenured Faculty

In consultation with the chair, tenured faculty members in a department may elect a triennial schedule of merit reviews. The schedule will allow each faculty member to have a typical merit review in Year A, with short reviews in Years B and C. Year A of a faculty member's triennial schedule should be, whenever possible, a year in which the faculty member was on campus and involved in teaching activities.

A short review dossier does not require either a narrative reflection by the faculty member or an evaluation by the chair. The dossier for a short review is otherwise the same as for a typical review. Following a short review, for the purpose of any salary increase, the dean will assign the merit category that the faculty member attained in Year A. A tenured faculty member may include reflections on accomplishments in teaching, scholarship and service in the preceding cycle as context for the merit evaluation of a dossier submitted in the next Year A.

A tenured faculty member may elect in any year to have a typical merit review for a merit score based on that review. The chair or the dean may require a faculty member in any year to have a typical merit review for a merit score based on that review. However, such interim reviews do not change the triennial schedule for the faculty member.

The dean's office, in consultation with the chair, will record the triennial review schedule for each department, as desired.

(Special provision approved by A&S faculty vote on April 25, 2012.)

Special Provision: Faculty Directors and Triennial Schedules

A faculty director should submit a current position description with the required materials for typical merit review. The chair should tailor the evaluation based on the director's responsibilities.

In consultation with the department chair, a faculty director (faculty of practice), who has successfully served ten semesters in the department, may join the department's triennial schedule of merit reviews. The dean's office will assign a designated Year A for the faculty director.

In any event, the chair or the dean may require a faculty director in any year to have a typical merit review. Additional reviews do not change the triennial schedule for the faculty member.

(Special provision approved by A&S faculty vote on March 18, 2015.)