

Merit Review Process and Criteria  
 Faculty Affairs Committee (Updated September 2018)  
 Educational Psychology

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## **Preamble**

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Merit reviews are an important part of the annual review process conducted by EDP, but do not represent the totality of the evaluation process. The criteria for merit are aligned with criteria for promotion, for example, but the promotion process is conducted at many levels at the University, and faculty should not assume that criteria for merit automatically equates to criteria for promotion.

The distinction between merit and promotion is critical for faculty. The purpose of annual faculty review at the pre-tenure Assistant Professor level is to assure that the faculty member is performing at a level consistent with continuation of their contract and consistent with the criteria necessary for attaining promotion to the rank of Associate Professor with tenure. The faculty annual review provides the foundation for determining merit salary increases when the faculty member is eligible. Criteria for promotion with tenure prioritize scholarship and teaching. Although these criteria continue to be the priority going forward through the ranks, criteria and expectations related to merit also broaden to include, for example, service.

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## **Introduction**

This report was compiled by Toni Falbo as chair of the Faculty Affairs EDP Committee with the input of members of her committee: Tasha Beretvas, Kevin Stark, Stephanie Rude, Barbara Dodd, Gigi Awad, Delida Sanchez, with Cindy Carlson (ex-officio). The committee was formed during the spring 2014 semester, and was tasked with the job of “tweaking” the Merit Review Process and Criteria (Points), with the added requirement of defining the Unsatisfactory Category. We had two face-to-face meetings (April and August), frequently circulated electronic drafts with requests for input, had informal conversations, shared more drafts, and made revisions, over and over. It is our expectation that the process and points system we end up with for use this year will need revisions in the future, as the understanding of faculty merit evolves. To facilitate discussion and future use of this product, we have divided this report into two sections: I. Merit Review Criteria (Points); II. Merit Review Process. Part III. Criteria for Unsatisfactory Category.

## Part I: Merit Review Criteria (Points)

**Proposed Teaching Merit Evaluation Refinements – Teaching merit reviews comprise the following components:**

**1. CIS**

When considering CIS ratings, **the location of the bulk** of the average scores for each course should be used to represent the faculty member's CIS ratings. In this way, scores that are outliers for the faculty member will not affect the overall rating for the 3-year period. Faculty can make notations on their CV regarding CIS scores that are outside their typical CIS range and for innovative teaching activities.

We recommend that this evaluation should not depend solely on the CIS Overall Instructor and Course averages. The faculty member's individual **instruction load** should also be taken into consideration. The review committee should also request, from the faculty member or the Chair, to review student comments from the faculty's CIS.

## CIS Scale

We are using "Overall Instructor" evaluations. The words anchoring the numbers are:

Excellent = 5

Very Good= 4

Satisfactory = 3

Unsatisfactory= 2

Very Unsatisfactory = 1

Merit Points For Associates and Fulls:

**Zero points** for average\* (or bulk) of overall ratings below 3.

**One point** for average\* (or bulk) of overall ratings between 3-3.9,

**Two points** for average\* (or bulk) of overall ratings between 4-4.5

**Three points** for average\* (or bulk) of overall ratings greater than 4.5

For Assistants

First Two Years: **Zero** points for average\* (or bulk) of ratings below 2.

Years Thereafter: **Zero** points for average\* (or bulk) of ratings below 3.

**One point** for first 2 years, assistants can get one point for averaging\* around 3.

After that, they get one point for averaging between 3-3.9.

**Two points** for averaging\* (or bulk) between 4 and 4.5.

**Three points** for averaging\* (or bulk) greater than 4.5.

\*Rounded average to one decimal place because this is what is reported on CIS reports.

**2. Individual instruction (dissertation, thesis, masters report supervision, qualifying process, undergraduate supervision for course credit, etc.).** The merit committee should evaluate the faculty members' individual instruction activity compared to other faculty at the same rank and within the same program area. The committee may adjust merit ratings in this category up or down based on the level of individual instruction activity (for example, teaching merit scores may be lowered by .5 if the faculty members' level of individual instruction is particularly low).

**3. Teaching Innovation** The committee should also review faculty for evidence of teaching innovation. Examples of innovative teaching include obtaining funding to enhance course development, new course development, teaching signature or flag courses, developing a large enrollment undergraduate course, etc. Innovative teaching does not include regular updates of curriculum that are expected of faculty.

NOTE: Committees are requested to identify faculty deserving of nominations for teaching awards upon completion of their review.

### **Proposed Scholarship Merit Evaluation Refinements**

While merit points are awarded for teaching based on a holistic rating of teaching activities across three years, merit for scholarship is calculated by awarding different levels of points for each scholarly product produced by the faculty member. Points awarded per year are then averaged across the three years to determine the faculty members overall merit rating using criteria described below.

The **basic unit** for merit awards in scholarship is 1 point for each article published in a referred journal in a given year. This assumes the faculty is the primary or sole author of a research article published that year in a peer-reviewed journal. Of course, all scholarly products are not equivalent, and therefore different weights can be awarded to each scholarly product using criteria described below.

In order to be competitive for promotion, assistant professors should publish 3 or more articles per year, with an emphasis on empirical articles in higher prestige research journals. A similar level of productivity is expected at the associate level; however, type of publication may be more varied. Other criteria such as teaching and service may be weighted differently at this level for promotion.

As a general rule, 2 merit points per year is designated as Meeting Expectations. As noted above, for the purpose of merit points, the premise that each journal published in a given year generates one merit point. Merit is typically assigned for the year in which an article appears in press. Recognizing that (1) many articles appear on-line well before appearing in press, and (2) assistant professors early in their career may wish to include in press articles as evidence of merit, it is possible that **merit points may be awarded for manuscripts accepted for publication but not yet appearing in press**. It is important to note however that such publications counted before appearing in press should not generate additional merit points once they do appear in press.

While **the starting point for awarding merit points is a 1 for each scholarly product**, actual merit points awarded to a given faculty member should take into account the contribution represented by each scholarly product and adjust merit points upward or downward. In general, adjustments to the points awarded for a given scholarly product include position of authorship, the nature of the product (research studies vs. other types of scholarship), and the prestige of the

journal (impact factor, H statistics, or journal rejection rates). Specific guidelines are listed below:

### ***Journal Articles***

If the faculty member is the first author, then the merit value assigned to this publication should be at least 1.0 point. For senior faculty, articles in which a student(s) is first author and the faculty is a co-author are also worth at least 1.0 point. For clarification, a faculty would get one point for co-authoring a publication with one or more students, regardless of their position of authorship. The faculty should clarify in their CV when this is the case.

Research articles in which the faculty is second author should also be considered worth one point, particularly in prestigious journals. However, some discretion is allowed in terms of assigning merit points for scholarship. For example, first authors would receive more than one point if the article is published in a highly competitive journal, especially if the nature of the study is such that it will broadly impact the field (i.e., a publication involving a series of studies). Conversely, a faculty who is third author in a publication in a less competitive journal might only receive 0.5 points.

Caveats for assistant professors: While the above criteria are used to calculate merit points for faculty across the ranks, to be competitive for tenure a minimum of 50% of the articles produced over the course of the 5 years should have the assistant professor as the first author. Note that assistant professors who wish to get tenure can have a small number of articles with mentors or senior faculty as first authors on their vitae and these will count for merit evaluation and to some degree, promotion. However, the University's requirements for promotion are focused on the assistant professor establishing his/her own area of expertise and scholarship independent of that of others.

### ***Books and Book Chapters***

Unlike the merit points for articles, merit points for books and book chapters are not weighted equally across the ranks. This is because assistant professors are expected to focus their energy on peer-reviewed research articles. Therefore, for associate and full professors, writing entire books count as 2 points or 3 points (if warranted by length, prestige, etc.) in the year that they are published. However, for assistant professors, books count for 1 merit point (or 2 points

depending on the scope of the work and contribution to the field). Faculty receiving a book award should receive an additional merit point in the year of the award. For example, a faculty might have published a book worth 3 points in one year. The book might receive an award the next year, and the faculty would receive an extra merit point for the award that year.

Editing a book gets faculty 2 merit points (in the year of the edited book's publication), and publishing a chapter in the editor's own book gets an additional 0.5 points/per chapter. Writing a chapter in a major book edited by someone else may yield 1 or 2 merit points, depending on the size and prominence of the book. Assistant professors can only earn one merit point per year for writing book chapters (to align with criteria for earning points for chapters) while there is no limit for associate and full professors.

In general, writing a textbook or textbook revision earns 1-2 points in the year of the book's publication. 2 points would typically be awarded for first authorship of a new textbook or substantive revision of a textbook (i.e., a major revision after a book has been out for longer than 5 years). 1 point is awarded for co-authoring a textbook or a revision of textbook that has only been out fewer than 5 years.

***Awarding additional merit points for encyclopedia entries, commentaries, book reviews, and editorials***

Additional points can be earned in the following two categories: conference presentations and editorials, book reviews, etc. Note that faculty cannot be awarded more than 0.5 merit points total for a set of conference presentations in a year nor can they earn more than 0.5 points total for writing editorials, book reviews, etc. The total possible merit points earned across these additional categories each year is 1. Please note: these activities can earn faculty merit points, but are not weighted heavily in consideration for promotion.

***Conference Presentations***

Faculty presenting research at scholarly meetings should receive some publication credit. Suggested points: a poster, for example, may earn at the 0.25 level. Two posters would yield  $2 \times .25 = .50$ . A 15-minute presentation should also count 0.25. These points are capped at 0.5 per year, to avoid the possibility that individual faculty make large numbers of these presentations in lieu of other scholarly activities.

***Encyclopedia entries, commentaries, book reviews, and editorials***

These scholarly products would typically be worth no more than .25 points each and total points for this category are capped at 0.5 points per year.

**Assigning Scholarship Merit Points.**

**Zero Points.** Faculty publishing nothing at all will get zero points.

**One Point.** *Third Year On Assistant, Associate and Full Professors:* Average publication count that *rounds* to 1 (0.5 to 1.49)

*Assistant Professors in first Two years:* Average publication count between 1 and 1.9.

**Two Points.** *Third Year On Assistant, Associate and Full Professors:* Average publication count that *rounds* to 2 (1.5 to 2.49)

*Assistant Professors in First Two years:* Average publication count between 2.0 and 2.9.

**Three points.** *Third Year On Assistant, Associate and Full Professors:* Average publication count that *rounds* to 3 (2.5 and up)

*Assistant Professors in First Two years:* Average publication points of 3.0 and higher.



### **Assigning Funding Merit Points.**

#### For Associates and Fulls

**Zero** points for not applying for or receiving external funding.

**One** point for applying for external funding.\*

**1.5** points for receiving (total\*\*) external funds less than \$50,000 a year.

**Two** points for receiving (total\*\*) external funds averaging \$50,000-75,000 a year.

**Three** points for receiving (total\*\*) external funds greater than \$75,000 a year.

#### For Assistants in their first two years:

**Zero** points for not engaging in grant funding preparation activities, such as workshops or other opportunities provided to develop fundable grant ideas, applications for an SRA, pilot study, boot camp, etc.

**One** point for engaging in grant funding preparation activities, such as workshops or other opportunities provided to develop fundable grant ideas, applications for an SRA, pilot study, boot camp, etc. These should be noted in the merit grid.

**Two** points for successfully submitting an application for external funding. Grant submissions should be noted in the merit grid.

**Three** points for receiving external funds.

#### For Assistants in rank more than two years:

**Zero** points for not engaging in grant preparation activities or applying for external funding.

**One** point for applying for external funding\*.

**Two** points for receiving (total\*\*) average external funds less than \$50K year.

**Three** points for receiving (total\*\*) average external funds greater than \$50K year.

*\* You get a 1 in this category if you seek funding during the year as PI or co-I for NIH, or PI or co-PI for IES”)*

*\*\*Total here means that the combined money your funded projects bring into the university. Faculty could have more than one funded project. Note also that faculty members get funding merit points if they are PI or co-I for NIH, or PI, co-PI, or co-I for IES).*

Earning points for “no-cost” extensions is appropriate only if the extension involves bringing in money within the 2-3 points range. This would be rare. If the extension is indeed no cost, meaning no more money is coming into the university, then no extra merit points are appropriate.

Example of how to evaluate funding (this applies to endowments, too):

**Example of Annual Review in 2014:**

2012	2013	2014
None	None	\$200,000

Scoring: Average funding (first year) =  $200000/3 = \$66,666.66$

If a Full or Associate professor brings in this total amount, he or she gets 2 points, because the amount brought in is greater than \$50K. An Assistant professor would get 3 points.

**Example of Annual Review in 2015**

2013	2014	2015
None	\$200,000	\$200,000

Scoring: Average funding (second year) =  $400000/3 = \$133,333.33$ .

For a Full or Associate professor, this amount is above \$100K, therefore the faculty member gets 3 points. An assistant professor would get 3 points.

**Example of Annual Review in 2016 (last year of funding)**

2014	2015	2016
\$200,000	None	None

Average funding (last year) =  $200000/3 = \$66,666.66$

This amount is greater than \$50K: full and associates will get 2 merit points, while assistants will earn 3 points.

**Assigning Service Merit Points.**

For this category only, the ratings need to be determined a year at a time and then averaged across the last three years. **This is different than the other merit categories that are evaluated in a three-year block.** The reason for this change is so that someone who serves in a leadership position for one year can be distinguished from someone who served in a leadership role for all three years. Faculty members who are serving in leadership roles, but are **not** receiving course reductions, should receive more merit points for their administrative service.

**There are different standards for evaluating service merit depending on rank.** In particular, during their first two years, assistant professors are not expected to be contributing service to the department, college, and university, other than attending faculty meetings. Assistant professors should receive a score of 2 (Meets Expectations) if they show up to faculty meetings, and otherwise participate in the decision making processes of the department. Participation below this threshold would be awarded 1 point. However, it is possible that an assistant professor might make a contribution to the field by editing a special issue of a journal, providing consistent service by being an ad hoc reviewer for journals (at least several reviews per year) or have a position in the professional organization at the national level. For those who provide this type of service, a merit rating of 3 should be awarded.

**Assigning Service Merit Points**

**Zero Points.** Faculty member attends department meetings irregularly; does not participate in departmental, College, university and national service committees.

**One Point.** Faculty member attends departmental meetings regularly; supports program and department needs through service on committees or individually; serves on university/college committees; serves on professional association committees and serves as an ad hoc reviewer for professional journals, conferences or grants program panels.

**Two Points.** Faculty member does the service described above plus more department or program committee member work as well as serving on multiple Editorial Boards or serving as an associate editor for a recognized professional journal: 2 points.

**Three Points.** In addition to serving in ways that meet the service level described above, the faculty also does one of the following:

---- Holds several significant administrative assignments in the department.

---Chairs one or more significant university or college committees OR Has been recognized for service at the university or college level.

---Serves as editor or as associate editor of one or more recognized professional journals, editor of a special issue of a journal or handbook OR Chairs one or more significant committees at the regional or national level; OR Serves in an elected position for a national organization relevant to the EdP OR Is recognized for service at the regional or national level.

## Part II: Merit Review Process

*General Rule:* EDP faculty are reviewed annually within rank by a committee comprised of tenured faculty. The purposes of the review include evaluation for promotion and tenure, as well as merit salary recommendations. Since 2010, the percentage of faculty who can receive merit increases has been determined by the Provost Office.

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Last Year: This last year (2013-2014), the Merit Review Committee (MRC) members read the grids provided by faculty and assigned merit points based on the information provided by the grids. Each faculty member received the attention of two MRC members. The first MRC member created a draft of the evaluation and the second MRC member checked the work of the first faculty evaluator. If the two evaluators disagreed, they were supposed to meet and resolve the disagreements.

Suggested Changes: Members of the MRC will continue to be selected by the EDP Department Chair (representing the Budget Council) to serve for 2-year terms. The members of the MRC should be told that they are expected to take this job seriously and spend time thoroughly understanding the merit of their colleagues, and they are expected to communicate regularly with other members of the MRC. The membership of the MRC committees, when feasible, should reflect the 4 areas and programs of the department as a whole. Review of assistant professors should include both full professors and associate professors. The full professors must evaluate the associate and other full professors. The terms of the members of this committee should be staggered so that there is continuity of at least one committee member remaining on the committee in the next year.

### Promoting Feedback Loops

It has been suggested that this fall (2014) we give faculty members the task of not only completing their own grids, but also the task of generating a draft of the evaluations of their grids, including the task of assigning themselves merit points. The goal of this self-evaluation process is to inform faculty about the issues involved in assigning merit points. The MRC will consider both the grid and the self-evaluation when doing their work. The self-evaluation will be useful for MRC members when they are assigning merit points to specific publications, and other domains of the merit evaluation system.

We are recommending that the task of assigning oneself merit points be optional, but handing in the grid is not. Faculty can decide for themselves whether they wish to submit their own merit point evaluation along with their grid. The self-evaluation can be accompanied by a written justification of these points.

Faculty will be notified of their merit review scores and written feedback in a timely manner. If the faculty member disagrees with the merit review score they have received, they are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the EDP Chair, who will have the responsibility of resolving any disagreements. It is within the purview of the EDP Chair to consult with the Associate EDP Chair and/or the Chair of the MRC. If the faculty member is dissatisfied with the resolution of the disagreement, he or she can contact the University's ombudsperson.

Nonetheless, when the merit grids have all been evaluated and the summary sheets completed for all faculty members, the chair of each MRC should meet to review the overall results with the EDP Chair to inform the EDP Chair about issues surrounding the merit criteria and of modifications of these criteria that may be needed.

Definition of Unsatisfactory Category

<b>UNSATISFACTORY</b>	To Qualify, the faculty member must have unsatisfactory ratings in all areas described below
<b>Teaching</b>	CIS ratings below 3 (average) Comments are predominantly negative; no clear sign of improvement across time.
Peer Evaluations	Peer reviews identify multiple and/or substantive problems in teaching (e.g., failure to cover aspects of the subject matter that are widely agreed by the profession to be core; consistent pattern of repeatedly cancelling class without making adequate alternative arrangements) AND It has been demonstrated that the faculty member has been unresponsive to feedback about problems.
Supervision of Students	Refuses to supervise students or fails to meet minimum standards for adequacy and timeliness of supervision, or behaves unethically with students (abusive or exploitive behavior)
Load/Levels	Shows a pattern of noncompliance with department expectations that are in line with expectations for the faculty as a whole (e.g., refuses to teach at different levels and/or refuses reasonable requests to cover particular courses).
<b>Scholarship</b>	No evidence of scholarly work.
<b>Funding</b>	No grants applied for.
<b>Service</b>	
Department, College, Regional & National	Does not serve on committees when asked or refuses to participate. Attends faculty meetings infrequently and/or performs only minimally in committee work (e.g., chronically late and/or sloppy work). Not Available for Office Hours



**Annual Review of Faculty Summary**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Member/Years Reviewed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Unsatisfactory = 0; Below Expectations = 1; Meets Expectations = 2; Exceeds = 3

**Rating**

**I. Overall Teaching rating across three-year span** \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: The rating for this category is based on teaching across the three years.*

Please also note if faculty should be considered for teaching award based on high course ratings, instruction of undergraduates, innovative teaching, etc.

Comments clarifying the ratings:

**II. Scholarship rating across three-year span** \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: Rating for this category is based on cumulative points across the three years and then averaged for the three year period.*

Comments clarifying the rating:

**III. Funding rating across three-year span** \_\_\_\_\_

*NOTE: The rating for this category is based on cumulative dollars brought in across the three years and then averaged for the three year period.*

Comments clarifying the ratings:

**Rating**

**IV. Service rating across three-year span**

*NOTE: A rating should be given for each year, then averaged for three year score.*

Rating Year 1:      Rating Year 2:      Rating Year 3:

Comments clarifying the ratings:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Merit Score (sum of ratings for the four categories)**

**Summary Statement** (including particular areas of strength and concern):

\_\_\_\_\_