

725 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
T 617-353-2401 F 617-353-5374

Date: February 28, 2014
To: CAS Department Chairs and Program Directors
From: Virginia Sapiro, Dean
Subject: Provisional 2014 Merit Review Guidelines

It is time to begin work on the annual merit exercise. While we do not yet have information on the salary pools or even schedules we cannot wait for those details to begin the assessment of faculty contributions that will later be converted into actual salary numbers. Merit assessments of your department's faculty, justification statements for those assessments, and a description of each department's merit and equity review procedures should be submitted by e-mail to Richard Wright (rwright@bu.edu) by Tuesday April 15, 2014.

Once we have information about the merit pools and the Provost's due date for final merit decisions we must be prepared to "plug in the numbers" (although it involves more than that). You will find instructions for this process below.

Please note that while the University payroll process has shifted to a July to June (fiscal year) cycle, merit increases will continue to take effect on September 1 each year. This means that faculty paid over twelve months will receive an increased paycheck in September that includes the merit increase portion for the months of July and August, as well as September.

Please feel free to contact Richard Wright, Alexandra Adams, or your appropriate divisional Associate Dean for further information or assistance.

This memo begins by laying out the principles and processes that you should use to do the merit exercise. Then it guides you through the "no dollar" merit exercise due by April 15. This memo will be posted on line at the CAS website; all faculty are welcome to read it.

General Principles

Our annual salary review is a merit-based process, and should be framed by the general principles laid out in previous years by the Provost: *The commitment to be merit-based reflects the fundamental reality that we are a meritocracy and that our excellence depends on hiring, rewarding, and retaining the best faculty. Each unit should establish an open, transparent, and fair means of evaluating the relative merits of its individual faculty members, and should seek to*

align the salaries accordingly. The faculty should be fully informed of the process used by the unit. Assessment of merit, while being sensitive to accomplishments during the most recent review period, must also reflect long-term and continuing contributions.

Through the merit review we seek to reward faculty members for their contributions in teaching, research, and professional service; to advise faculty of areas needing improvement; and to take action as far as possible to correct such inequities as gender differentials, salary compression within and across ranks, and inadequately recognized prior merit.

Merit evaluation should include the following criteria, applied as appropriate given expectations based on the individual's discipline(s) and department/program, job title and expectations, rank and time in rank, and other institutional roles and obligations:

- Contributions to teaching and curriculum development, including teaching effectiveness, number of students taught, curricular and pedagogical innovation, contribution to core teaching needs *both inside the department and across the College and University*;
- Advising, counseling, and mentoring of undergraduate and graduate students;
- Research and other scholarly productivity, as evidenced by work both published and in progress;
- Service to the programs and administrative work of the University other than teaching and research (be sure to take account of and reward the service your colleagues provide outside the department on College and University assignments);
- Professional service and contributions beyond the University;
- Professional recognition, honors, and awards;
- Success in generating external funding in support of research or other programs;
- Other contributions and activities as appropriate.

Although these criteria are not weighted equally in the merit process, they should all be considered, and in your explanation of the departmental process you should indicate the weight assigned to each component you consider. It is essential that you properly value each component among teaching, research, and service.

Guidelines for evaluation of scholarship: Departments should be clear about the circumstances under which they reward particular scholarly projects in order to avoid counting and rewarding the same work multiple times. Obviously, it is not appropriate to reward a faculty member three times for a work that is listed as contracted one year, forthcoming another year, and in print in a third year. The department should agree and act equitably on clear norms about the credit for merit purposes it gives scholarship at the different stages of its generation: for example, receiving a grant, producing papers and manuscripts, and actually having an article or book

appear in print. The major credit for a publication should be given for the year in which the actual publication occurred, not in advance while it is “in press.” Departments should distinguish clearly between works they regard as original works of scholarship, other scholarly activities, and other kinds of intellectual and creative work and publication.

The basis of evaluation and assessment: In all cases, assessment should be based on evidence rather than on general impressions. Evaluations should draw on the Faculty Annual Report and the CV as well as other available documentation such as peer and student teaching evaluations, evidence of the impact of scholarly work such as reviews of publications or proposals, professional honors, and evidence of the quality of service. *Because merit evaluations are based on documentation, faculty who do not complete a FAR are normally not eligible for merit increases.*

The salary review process is a comparative judgment aimed at equity—“equal pay for equal merit”—and therefore should consider expectations and outcomes in terms of rank and time in rank, taking account of the different expectations that can reasonably be made of the progress of very junior and more senior faculty, while being sure they do not represent irrelevant factors such as gender directly or indirectly.

Salary equity and the timeframe for analysis: Our goal, ultimately, is to create a fair salary structure that recognizes accomplishments and contributions appropriately, and is refreshed annually through the merit exercise. Although our annual salary review process emphasizes contributions from the prior calendar year, achieving equity also requires paying attention to long-term achievement and salary inequities that develop incrementally over time. Please be sure to assess the departmental salary structure for inequities and compression that may have developed over the years, and make a special effort to address equity issues to bring the target salary structure in line. Data analysis still reveals gaps between the salaries of men and women, especially at the more senior ranks, even accounting for time in rank, and these should receive close attention.

Correcting inequities or market misalignments can sometimes take multiple years. It is therefore important to plan corrections and pay attention to prior adjustment agreements and progress every year. Please work with the Dean to plan corrections that will take multiple years. If a faculty member was promised a salary adjustment over a period of years, and that adjustment has not been completed, that should be included as part of this year’s recommendation. The department chair is responsible for developing plans for addressing equity and market problems.

Recognizing all of a faculty member’s professional accomplishments, in and outside of the home department: Although the merit exercise originates in a faculty member’s home department, faculty should be evaluated and rewarded on the basis of their full range of professional contributions regardless of whether it takes place specifically in the home department, in another department or program, or in the College or wider university. Departments should request input from programs and other departments that have had an opportunity to observe or benefit from the contributions of their faculty. The chairs and directors of those programs and departments, in turn, should proactively provide brief evaluations of these contributions to the faculty member’s home department.

Collective salary issues: Faculty salaries in some Boston University departments are systematically behind those at peer institutions, especially at the more senior levels. Moreover, some inequities have emerged among similar departments within CAS so that the salary differences between faculty at similar levels of achievement in two different departments seem to be due to inequities that have developed over time. We are seeking to address these problems, but they cannot be ameliorated within the merit pools generated by a single department. Only when the size of the merit pool funds held back by the College and Provost to deal with special cases allows can we focus on changing the structural imbalances. Departments are welcome to discuss these collective equity and market issues, but they should not be included as part of any individual faculty member's evaluation. To make a case that all or many of your department salaries are systematically behind those of your peers inside or outside the university, indicate the specific departments or institutions you are using for comparison and provide the evidence or indicate the sources of information. You should state what you believe is the degree of differential, and who in the department is most affected.

Salary compression and rank considerations: Salary compression is a situation in which the salary differential between faculty of different ranks or levels of experience is *smaller than it should be*, or even inverted. Please be on your guard to avoid inappropriate salary compression among junior faculty that results from starting salaries that rise faster than merit pools.

- Assistant professor issues: Allowing productive assistant professors to lag behind their more junior colleagues when starting salaries rise sends the wrong signal to them about their progress toward tenure and about Boston University's commitment to them. Moreover, allocating a less than average salary increase to assistant professors sends the message that they are not making appropriate progress toward tenure. Avoid sending that message unless it is appropriate. Faculty who have been denied tenure are technically eligible for merit increases, but merit increases are investments in the future and not just rewards for the previous year, thus it is appropriate not to increase the salaries of these faculty.
- Associate professor issues: Salary compression may affect associate professors as the starting salaries of new assistant professors rise, and it is important to be careful about creating inequity. On the other hand, the salaries of long-term associate professors -- those who, after an unusually long time in rank, have not yet compiled a record that supports promotion to the rank of professor -- are likely eventually to lag behind some salaries within their rank and will increasingly lag behind the faculty of their generation who have been promoted. In these cases the lag in salary is due to the same cause as the delay in promotion. It is important to pay attention to fairness and equity at all levels, but the merit exercise is not designed to reward years in rank or years of employment *per se*.
- Full professor issues: The salaries of the higher-paid full professors should not be treated as "milk cows" for the rest of the faculty. All faculty should receive appropriate merit increases. The Provost's Office examines the results of the merit exercise to see whether the three ranks receive roughly equivalent collective percentage increases. Although faculty with retirement agreements are eligible for merit increases, merit increases should

be treated as investments in the future, and thus especially if in the closing year of a retirement agreement faculty are beginning to withdraw or have moved to a part-time workload, the merit increase will reflect this changed status.

Departments are fully responsible for creating and communicating clear norms and practices about typical annual expectations, as well as grounds for merit assessment for faculty who are outside of the tenure track, including practitioner faculty and faculty whose positions do not include expectations about research.

Funding Pools

We do not know the details about what the size of this year's merit pool will be, but we are assuming that there will be pools for regular merit and for promotions/tenure, as in previous years. In addition, there may be a third pool to address "special" merit. The pools may break down as follows:

- 1) A *regular merit pool* distributed to the College from which I am likely to hold back some funding as usual for special individual and departmental merit and/or equity cases;
- 2) A *promotion pool* centrally held and automatically awarded to those whose promotion will take effect during the 2014 cycle. Those promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor with tenure will receive an automatic 10% salary increase, and those promoted from Associate Professor to full Professor will receive an automatic 6% increase. These increases are calculated on the current year salary; in addition, merit increases are calculated on the current salary and are added to the promotion increase. These are two separate increases. No department should reduce the assessment of merit because it knows a faculty member will receive a promotion increase.
- 3) A *special pool* might be available to address exceptional equity and market issues that cannot be adequately addressed from the department pool. This pool will be generated by both the Dean and the Provost by holding back some funds for the purpose if there are sufficient funds to do so. Guidelines for distribution from these pools usually specify that only a very limited number of cases may be sent forward for consideration. Last year the Provost's Office required that we devote this pool especially to correcting problems of gender inequity.

Note that there are no sources of salary increase other than this annual merit increase and the pools specifically defined by it.

Departmental Merit Review Process

Each department may design its own process for arriving at salary recommendations, but the process must in all cases be based on appropriate principles, and all faculty members must be informed about the review process and the criteria used in determining salary recommendations. In some units, for example, the Chair performs the review; in others a faculty committee appointed by the Chair or elected by the faculty may be enlisted to provide recommendations to the Chair. Chairs should also consult with their counterparts in other units where faculty

members perform significant teaching, research, or service. Regardless of the process used at the department level, the Dean holds the Chair responsible for the final departmental recommendation. After the new salaries are announced, the Chair should invite each faculty member to discuss the evaluation in his or her case. The Chair *should not* inform faculty about the specific dollar amount recommended to the Dean. That recommendation is only a recommendation.

The Chair of each unit conveys recommendations to the Dean, together with one-paragraph justifications of the merit and equity assessment for each faculty member. The Dean will review these recommendations, adjust as appropriate, and then make final recommendations to the Provost. The Dean performs the review of Chairs, Directors, and Associate Deans serving during the merit review period.

Part-Time, Research, Clinical and Other Faculty

Recommendations should also be made at this time for part-time, research, and clinical faculty. The part-time faculty group includes both those at regular or modified professorial ranks but with less than 100% effort. Increases recommended for part-time, research, and clinical faculty, including grant-funded positions, should remain consistent with the University's general salary policy and recommended amounts may need to be adjusted to reflect the University's salary norms as stated in this year's final salary pools.

Your merit submission should also include any requests to increase the per-course rates for part-time lecturers in your department. If you make a request to increase the per-course rate, please include recent, local market data for comparative purposes.

Only under unusual circumstances will visiting and other short-term faculty (those on limited, non-renewable contracts) be considered for merit increases.

What You Submit by April 15, 2014: Non-Dollar Ratings, Blurbs, Process Explanation

Every department should submit three things by April 15, 2014: (1) merit evaluations by category for each faculty member; (2) "blurbs" or brief but specific explanations of the merit assessment of each faculty member; (3) an explanation of the department merit process

(1) Merit evaluations for each faculty member:

The annual merit pool is determined as a percentage of this year's salary base that will be added to next year's salaries. That pool determines the overall average salary increase for next year. We do not know what the pool will be. In order to be fully prepared for the final merit exercise, which has a short time frame, we will again use the "ratings in lieu of dollars" exercise, an evaluation system arranged around a concept of the departmental norm or average, corresponding to the average merit in the department.

Every faculty member must be assigned a rating according to the following evaluations, designed to indicate comparative assessments of faculty within the department, against the department norm:

Categories for Evaluation of Faculty Against the Department Norm

1. Did not fulfill the obligations of the position, inadequate or low quality teaching, scholarship, and/or professional service this year. This individual will receive little or no merit increase.
2. Performance in teaching, scholarship, and/or professional service this year was somewhat below the departmental norm; and/or the salary of this individual is inequitably high compared with departmental peers. In the merit exercise, this individual will receive somewhat below the departmental average merit.
3. Performance in teaching, scholarship, and professional service this year was around the norm for the department; fulfilled departmental expectations for normal performance. In the merit exercise, this individual's salary increase will be around the departmental average.
4. Performance in teaching, scholarship, or professional service was above the departmental norm this year; it might have been an especially strong publishing year or an especially strong year of contributions in other areas; and/or national or international recognition or market factors suggests the need for above average merit; and/or the salary of this individual is inequitably low compared with departmental peers whose performance is at the same level. In the merit exercise, this individual's salary increase will be above the departmental average.
5. This is a recommendation for extraordinary merit because of unusual performance, recognition, equity or market factors. These are the people for whom your recommendation would require help from special merit pools held back by the Dean or Provost. No more than 5% of your cases should be ranked in this category. *Please add to this 5% the names of any faculty members who received a retention offer that will take effect this fall.*

Please note: If everyone in your department won the Nobel Prize this year and is equally accomplished in all other ways and you have no equity problems, everyone in your department would receive a "3." This does not mean they are all "just average," but that if you are in a situation of needing to divide your pool equally among everyone in the department, everyone in your department will be at the norm. If you assign everyone a "5" because they are all so brilliant, you are advising me to do an across-the-board merit increase which, because of arithmetic, will mean that everyone gets the average increase. Likewise, if everyone in your department just does what is necessary and no more, you would also be evaluating everyone as at the norm for your department.

As soon as the merit pool is available we will provide the appropriate materials to department chairs who will be asked to assign actual numbers on the basis of these evaluations. Please note that as in previous years this could happen during the summer and with a very quick turn-around time when the department chair is away. Every department must have a designated back-up person, such as an associate chair, who will be able to do the merit exercise in a timely way if the chair is away.

(2) “Blurbs,” or brief written explanations of the evaluations of each faculty member:

The blurbs should be only a few sentences in length, but they should deliver clear summaries of the rationale for the merit judgment. Eventually, they will be submitted online to accompany and will serve to explain the actual dollar recommendations; *the blurbs should not include any salary or increase figures, or the numerical score.* At the appropriate time, Richard Wright or Alexandra Adams will be in contact to explain how to do the online entry method for these “blurbs”.

(3) Explanation of the merit process

This should explain the merit process in your department including who is involved, what the stages of evaluation are, and the process and metrics your department uses for evaluating faculty.

For help or answers to questions, please contact Richard Wright or Alexandra Adams.

Cc CAS Department/Program Administrators
Susan Jackson, Senior Associate Dean
Geoffrey M. Cooper, Associate Dean of the Faculty
Patricia J. Johnson, Associate Dean of the Faculty
Strom Thacker, Associate Dean of the Faculty
Juliana Walsh Kaiser, Associate Dean
Richard Wright, Assistant Dean, Faculty Actions
Alexandra Adams, Director, Faculty Actions
Paula Wasson, Business Office