

Subject: Faculty Merit Memo 2014

Boston University Office of the Provost

TO: CRC Deans and Directors

FROM: Jean Morrison, University Provost and Chief Academic Officer 

DATE: May 1, 2014

SUBJECT: Annual Faculty Merit Review and Salary Recommendation Processes

Assessment and recognition of the accomplishments of our faculty through a fair and balanced annual merit review process is one of our most important responsibilities. In addition, the allocation of any funds that are available to increase faculty salaries, while accomplished in a separate process, is a similarly important responsibility. The outcomes of these two processes are related as allocation of resources should a) correlate with merit, b) be unbiased with respect to gender and diversity, and c) be market-driven. Guidelines regarding these processes are given below.

Faculty Merit Review Process

Each unit should have an open, transparent, and fair means of evaluating the relative merits of its individual faculty members. The faculty should be fully informed of the process used by the unit. Assessment of merit should reflect both accomplishments during the most recent review period, as well as long-term and continuing contributions. Merit evaluations for individual faculty members in your unit should be based on a substantive evaluation of that faculty member's merit *vis-à-vis* departmental peers.

Please provide me with a detailed explanation of how the merit review is conducted within your unit when you submit your salary recommendations. If your school or college consists of several departments, please detail your procedures at the departmental level. Whatever the methods and criteria, all faculty members in a school or college should be informed about the merit review process and the criteria used in determining their relative merit, and all need individual, substantive feedback about their performance. This is often best accomplished by a face-to-face meeting with the Chair.

Promotion Raises

As in the past, faculty members who have been promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor will receive a 10% salary increase, and those promoted from Associate Professor to Professor will receive a 6% increase; these increases are funded centrally from a separate promotion raise pool. Promoted faculty should be recommended for an additional salary adjustment from the standard merit pool based on evaluation through the merit process. Please enter the promotion raise for all eligible faculty in the "Promotion" field as you make your salary increase recommendations for each person. We will contact you with any questions. Requests that are submitted after our process is complete are hard to accommodate.

Salary Recommendation Process

For FY15 the standard faculty merit raise pool is 2.50%. This is a 0.25% increase, compared to last year. Your school or college pool is based on the salary total for eligible faculty, and the amount will be sent to you under separate cover. For those faculty who receive any portion of their salary from grants or other external sources, it is assumed that those sources will pay the corresponding portion of any increases. Faculty members with “Visiting” or “Adjunct” titles are not ordinarily eligible for any increase from the faculty merit raise pool.

Your recommendations will need to address all considerations pertaining to merit increases (except promotion raises), and must fit within the total increase pool for your school or college. As usual, you will be expected to supply justifications for your salary recommendations that take into account factors from the merit evaluations, including scholarly productivity, teaching excellence, service, and other factors. *Please provide a detailed explanation for each individual recommendation for a 0.5% increase or less, including a brief notation if the absence of an increase is tied to a retirement agreement or non-reappointment.*

Distribution of the Pool Across Ranks (expanded for this year)

Our standard expectation is that the same pool percentage (2.50%) will be distributed across the members of each professorial rank in each unit. That unit is either the department or the whole school or college, depending on the size of the faculty population and the custom of the school. While there may be exceptions when the number of faculty at a rank in a unit is very small, it is not acceptable to routinely recommend below average increases to highly paid faculty members who have performed well, in order to redistribute the savings among faculty at other ranks. Our distinguished, successful, highly paid faculty should receive commensurate merit increases. Please submit a list with your recommended percentage increase by rank by unit, and an explanation for averages that fall below 2.5%. You may be asked to revise all of the recommendations for a unit if the recommended distribution of the pool deviates significantly from these instructions.

Equity Considerations – significant alteration for this year

Please provide recommendations to us for the distribution of an additional 0.25% “equity pool,” that is in addition to the 2.50% general pool. While we are more strictly enforcing the distribution of the regular pool across ranks this year, we have relaxed the requirement on the number of faculty you recommend for equity adjustments using the 0.25% equity pool. You may choose to concentrate the increases to adjust a few faculty members’ salaries as in the past, or you may decide that you can do the most good by providing smaller adjustments for a larger number of faculty members in a given unit. Within the next few days we will provide figures illustrating the current salaries of your faculty by rank, gender, and time in rank to assist you. These will be linked to an Excel spreadsheet, showing the names and dollar amounts. As you make recommendations for the additional 0.25%, please pay special attention to potential gender inequities, and provide a brief (one or two sentence) rationale for each equity recommendation. Although those you recommend for equity increases should be meritorious, the extra 0.25% is *not* to be used to simply augment the merit pool. Your recommendations for increases from the equity pool should be used to redress inequities, not to reward someone who has had an especially productive year.

Research and Part-time Faculty

Recommended increases for Research faculty and part-time faculty should also be submitted at this time, and the average increase for all of your faculty in these categories should not exceed the 2.50% salary increase average for full-time faculty. *This is the case even when funds are present in an*

individual grant or contract budget for a larger increase. Salary increases for Research faculty will be funded by the external sponsors, and increases for part-time faculty are funded by a central pool. Please do not include any requests to add new part-time faculty, make changes in the percent time for part-time faculty, or make any changes in per-course rates. Changes in per course rates or in the percent time for part-time faculty need to be managed within your current budget, or proposed during the annual budget process if central funds are requested. Please also note that staff members with secondary faculty appointments are not eligible for an increase as part of the faculty merit process. Rather, any merit increase for this category of employees should be provided through the staff merit process, taking into account all of their duties.

Deadlines and Meetings

The deadline for submitting your merit evaluations, salary recommendations, justification statements, and Faculty Annual Report forms is June 6, 2014. Because we are able to announce the pool earlier this year than last year, we can provide more time for you to complete your recommendations after receipt of this memo and still meet our deadline of late July to complete the entire process. We look forward to an efficient process, and we will be in touch if we need to schedule a meeting to discuss your recommendations after June 6th. We expect that many of your submissions can again be handled without the need for a meeting, particularly if the rationales for all very low raises, distribution of the pool across ranks, and equity recommendations are complete.

We will continue to work aggressively with all levels of the academic leadership to resolve any gender- or diversity- related inequities in our salary structures. Please feel free to contact me or Julie Sandell if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your participation in this important process.



Boston University Office of the Provost
1 Silber Way, 8th Floor, Boston MA 02215
617-353-2230
www.bu.edu/provost