

**Recommendations of the UWT Faculty Affairs Committee Regarding
Merit and Raise Determination in Units**

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Committee members: Donald Chinn (chair), Katie Adamson, Chris Demaske, Rupinder Jindal, Matthew Weinstein, Anne Wessels

1. Introduction

The Executive Council of Faculty Assembly at UW Tacoma charged the Faculty Affairs committee to investigate and report on the state of merit and raise determination in academic units at UW Tacoma and to provide recommendations for them. It is up to individual academic units to develop policies and procedures that are consistent with the Faculty Code. The purpose of this report is to provide information and guidance that can help units revisit and revise their existing policies and procedures. Note that the Faculty Code refers to academic “units,” which at UW Tacoma generally means programs, and we do so here.

The organization of the remainder of this document is as follows. Section 2 describes current policy regarding merit and raises as specified in the Faculty Code. The Code provides a framework for implementing practices within units. Section 2 also provides information on the budget principles that guide allocation of funds at levels above individual academic units. Section 3 provides suggestions for policy and practice through specific examples at UW Seattle and UW Tacoma. Section 4 provides a suggested list of questions that units should ask when they determine their merit and raise policies.

2. Faculty Code

The Faculty Code provides guidelines for units to develop policy and practice regarding merit and raise determination. The Faculty Code can be found online as part of what is now called the UW Policy Directory at <http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/>. Two important points: (1) The Faculty Code is state law, and (2) Determination of merit and raises is an important duty of university faculty and administration.

At the Faculty Assembly workshop on merit and raises held on Friday, Nov. 2, 2012, in the Tacoma Room, Jim Gregory (chair of UW Senate), Jack Lee (vice-chair of UW Senate) and Marcia Killien (secretary of UW Faculty) explained the merit and raise process. Academic units have flexibility within the framework specified by the Code.

There are five different pots of money that can go towards salary increases. They are:

1. Regular merit. This money is allocated to faculty who were deemed meritorious. Units do not have discretion (other than merit determination) with this money.
2. Additional merit. A unit can allocate this money any way it sees fit.

3. Unit adjustments. This money is additional money that a Dean or Chancellor can allocate to a specific unit for a specific reason (for example, to reward outstanding research or teaching, to address compression issues within the unit, or to address inequity issues across peer institutions). The Provost has similar discretion in allocating money to schools and colleges.
4. Retention. This is money specifically earmarked for retaining faculty. (See Executive Order 64, which refers to Section 24-71 of the Faculty Code (see 24-71, B.3. in particular).)
5. Promotion. Money for raises when a faculty member is promoted in rank.

Notes:

- There is currently a proposal at the Provost level that all meritorious faculty shall receive no less than a 2% raise and that at least half of the total amount of money in pots 1 and 2 (regular and additional merit) must be allocated to pot 1 (regular merit). The “at least half” rule would only take effect if the combined allocation of pots 1 and 2 was greater than 4%. (Executive Orders 64 and 29 say that regular merit is the first priority in funding.) The Provost will be discussing this with the UW Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting in mid-January.
- During the salary freeze, pots 1, 2, and 3 (regular and additional merit and unit adjustments) were frozen, but pots 4 and 5 (retention and promotion) still operated as usual. Pot 2 (additional merit) can be used in any way by a unit, including “extrameritorious” performance, compression, or any other inequity. Pot 3 (unit adjustments) often will be allocated by the Provost or Deans with specific recommendations for its use, and units typically consider this in their recommendations. Faculty recommendations at the unit level pertain to the money in Pots 1, 2, and 3.

The relevant sections of the Faculty Code are the following:

- Section 24-55 (procedures).
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/FCG/FCCH24.html#2455>
- Executive Order 64.
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/PO/EO64.html>
- Executive Order 29 (suspends parts of EO 64).
<http://www.washington.edu/admin/rules/policies/PO/EO29.html>

Note: Section 24-55 (A.2.) specifically mentions that the salary of faculty members is to be used as part of the deliberations, since that is relevant to salary compression or inversion issues that a unit might address.

Here are some additional points Marcia Killien makes regarding the Faculty Code.

- Units should use caution if they develop their own policies and practices regarding “merit-based” salary increases and “market gap” salary increases. Since the Code does change from time to time, unit policies can fall out of compliance with the Code if they are not linked to the actual Code language.
- Each year the specific instructions on what factors need to be considered for salary increases might change, based on decisions by the legislature, the Provost, etc. Therefore any unit-level policies and practices need to take this into account.
- Salary increases are the result of several factors, some of which are required (“shall”) and some of which are possible, but are considered only if the Provost directs them to be considered in a given year (“may”). How the “mays” get considered and what proportion of

funds are available to fund “mays” is determined by the Provost in his/her directions to the Deans and Chancellors.

- There is an important difference between “merit determination” (performance based) and “merit-based salary increases.” Merit determinations must be performed annually, whether or not there is any “merit based salary increase.”
- An individual’s merit must be considered in making a salary increase recommendation, but an individual’s current salary should NOT be used to determine merit.
- Merit is determined based on evaluation of an individual related to standards of performance and the individual’s goals (derived from annual/regular conferences with the chair/dean). See 24-55, first paragraph, and 24-57.

The following documents provide additional information regarding budget principles (as articulated by the UW Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting) and the general principles and responsibilities of both the faculty and administration at UW Tacoma in the process (as articulated by the UW Tacoma Strategic Budget Committee).

Principles and Recommendations for Crafting UW’s 2012-13 Budget
Guiding Principles, UWT Budget

These two documents accompany this document as reference. Other documents on the Faculty Affairs web site provide suggestions and ideas for developing policy and practice.

3. Sample Practices

In this section, we provide some practices across the UW system (Seattle and Tacoma) to provide units some models and ideas as they develop or refine their policies and practices.

Perhaps the simplest approach is to allocate additional merit money (pot 2) equally (in terms of percentage raise in salary, not absolute dollar amount) among all faculty who are deemed meritorious. Units that do something more complicated need to address procedural issues in determining raises.

The Construction Management department at UW Seattle uses a system similar to the generic policy and procedure in Appendix A of this report. It is a relatively small department (10 full-time faculty and about 18 part-time lecturers).

By contrast, the Mathematics department at UW Seattle is large department (more than 50 faculty). They have a committee specifically formed for faculty evaluation. They qualitatively rate each faculty on a scale of 0 to 5 in increments of 0.5 on each of research, teaching, and service. These numbers are combined in a non-formulaic way to produce an overall merit number. The merit numbers, current salaries, and the amount of money available are used to calculate the raises for all faculty by an agreed formula. Some portion of the allocated money is used to address compression. A spreadsheet with all of the calculations is used to manage their formulas. They also have a formulaic way of calculating workload for each faculty member.

For more information, please refer to the ADVANCE PowerPoint slides that accompany this report.

In Appendix A of this document, there is a description of a generic merit and raise policy. What follows are ways in which some academic units at UW Tacoma differ from that generic policy. Although none of these practices are inconsistent with Faculty Code, the specific units associated with each item below are deliberately not identified here. In the process of revising their practices or policies, units might wish to adopt or adapt some of these.

- Tenured faculty at the Associate Professor and Professor ranks are not necessarily evaluated on their teaching every year.
- The current salaries of faculty are typically not disseminated as part of the deliberations.
- Determination of merit is done by ballot and online. No substantial face-to-face discussion occurs.
- Materials of *all* faculty members are available for review by *all* faculty (not just those above in rank), although only faculty above in rank are eligible to vote for merit and raise determination.
- The Director provides an independent recommendation (that is, independent from the recommendation provided by faculty higher in rank) to the VCAA/Chancellor.
- Extrameritorious determination is made through a nomination process. A faculty member can self-nominate or another faculty member within the unit can nominate. Whatever materials or justification for that nomination is made available as part of the deliberation process.

One of the important functions of a raise policy is to address inequities in salary due to compression or inversion within a unit and/or a significant deviation from salaries at peer institutions. Some challenges in implementing this aspect of a raise policy are:

- How is a need to address compression and inversion determined?
- If peer institutions are used to determine compression, which peers are used and how are the normative salaries calculated?
- What part of the money allocated to the entire raise process is allocated to address compression and inversion?

4. Recommendations and Questions to Consider

Each academic unit should develop policies and practices that suit its goals and culture. What follows is a list of questions and principles that can guide such development.

Determining Merit

1. How are collegial evaluations of teaching performed? Does every faculty member know what this process is?
2. Does your unit have a set of criteria in place to evaluate merit?
3. How specific is the criteria?
4. Do faculty know what this set of criteria is? Or, to put it another way, how often does the unit have substantial conversations about merit criteria?
5. What materials does each faculty member submit for evaluation?

6. What is the relative weight place on different kinds of research, teaching and service in the unit?
7. What important elements do the current policies for merit not reflect or fail to take into account? Are these elements measurable? If so, how can they be measured and accounted for in the future merit/raise decisions?
8. Are any elements in your current merit review process over-emphasized? Is there a way to reduce their influence?

Determining Status Other Than Regular Merit

1. How are raises outside of regular merit decided?
2. How does your unit consider compression issues? If so, is that process transparent to the faculty?
3. Does your unit have an “extrameritorious” process? If so, what does that process entail?

Awarding Merit

1. How are the results of the merit discussion transmitted to individual faculty members?
2. Does the Director communicate the substance of the merit/raise discussion in his/her annual meeting with each faculty member?
3. Does the Director write a letter summarizing the substance of that meeting?
4. Are the results of all merit and raise determinations known to any faculty other than the faculty member and those above in rank?

Appendix A

A Generic Policy for UWT Units Regarding Merit and Raise Determination

The purpose of this Appendix is to describe a general policy regarding merit and raise determination within units at UWT so that we can more easily describe what sorts of policies and practices individual units at UWT have that might be of value or interest to other units. The intent is that units, as they deliberate on augmenting their current merit and raise policies, can consider ideas that other units have put into practice. The generic policy described here is, as far as is known, not the policy of any unit at UWT currently.

What follows is the description of the generic merit and raise policy. Throughout the description, the abbreviation “fmur” will refer to the faculty member under review.

Faculty submission of materials for review

- Each fmur submits to the Director/Dean or Program Administrator an annual activity report, which describes all the research, teaching, and service activities for that faculty member for the previous year.
- Each faculty member also submits a current cv.

Materials used for evaluation

- The cumulative academic record of the fmur, including collegial teaching evaluations.
- The current salary of the fmur. (Used for “market gap” salary increases.)

Collegial teaching evaluation

- The annual collegial teaching evaluation (as specified in the University Code) consists of a classroom visit by colleagues (called here the “teaching evaluation committee”) typically, but not necessarily, consisting of faculty senior in rank to the fmur.
- The evaluation also includes an evaluation of course materials the fmur uses and teaching reflections in the annual report.
- A discussion between the teaching evaluation committee and the fmur occurs.
- The teaching evaluation committee writes a report, summarizing their evaluation of the fmur.

Merit determination and salary increase determination

- Materials of a given faculty member are only made available to faculty higher in rank to the fmur.
- Materials are reviewed by all faculty higher in rank to the fmur.
- A face-to-face discussion occurs among all faculty higher in rank to the fmur. A decision of merit is made.
- Extrameritorious: Any faculty higher in rank can nominate the fmur to be deemed “extrameritorious” as part of the merit discussions.
- Based on the merit determination and current salaries, raises for all faculty are calculated.

Discussion with the Director/Dean

- The merit determination discussion (including raise information) and the Director/Dean’s own perspective form the basis of the face-to-face discussion between the fmur and the

Director/Dean. This discussion includes past accomplishments and goals for the coming academic years and beyond.

- A formal letter is drafted by the Director/Dean that summarizes the substance of the discussion between the fmur and the Director/Dean. The letter may be composed through edit iterations between the fmur and the Director/Dean until consensus occurs. If no consensus is reached, then the Director/Dean writes a letter and the fmur may write a response letter. The resulting letter(s) will become part of the faculty member's file.

Applying the results of merit and raise determination

- The Director/Dean transmits the recommendation of merit to the VCAA/Chancellor, who then applies the recommendation as they deem appropriate. Since the product of the process is a recommendation, the VCAA/Chancellor may decide on a result different from the recommendation.

Notification to the faculty

- A letter from the VCAA/Chancellor summarizing his/her merit and raise decision is sent to the fmur, which becomes part of that person's file.

The following diagram illustrates the process, along with (in parentheses) who has knowledge of the result of each stage of the process.

