

Merit Policy

Part II: Academic Unit Criteria, Standards, and Processes

Academic Unit: Department of Physics and Astronomy

1. Merit Criteria, Performance Indicators and Expectations

This section describes performance indicators in each area: Teaching, Research/Creative Activity, and Service. The expectation levels on each of the performance indicators are intended to capture how the Department defines exceeding expectations, meeting expectations, and failing to meet expectations for performance, as well as what constitutes unacceptable performance:

Exceeds expectations for merit: Activities in area cumulatively exceed expectations, i.e. reflect a clear and significant level of accomplishment beyond what is normally expected for an individual with a given faculty rank in the Department.

Meets expectations for merit: Activities in area cumulatively meet expectations of performance for the Department.

Does not meet expectations for merit: Activities in area cumulatively do not meet expectations of performance for the Department.

Unacceptable: Performance is below acceptable professional standards (in an area in which the faculty member has some allocation of effort).

The table entries below are intended to be illustrative examples of performance expectations, not definitive requirements. These examples are for a 40/40/20 (teaching/research/service) allocation of effort for an associate professor. Appropriate adjustments to expectations should be made for different allocations of effort and ranks.

Teaching

It is expected that each faculty member will contribute to the teaching mission of the Department. As a minimum standard a faculty member is expected to carry out assigned teaching responsibilities according to appropriate professional norms. Such norms include (but are not limited to): setting appropriate academic standards for classes, meeting all assigned classes (outside of illness or emergency), being prepared to conduct classes, being available to students outside of class, and responding appropriately to reasonable student questions or complaints. Besides failing to meet such norms, indicators of unsatisfactory teaching would include (but are not limited to): persistent legitimate student complaints, substantially negative student evaluations, and substantially weak peer evaluations. Indicators of effective teaching include (but are not limited to): substantially positive student evaluations, substantially positive peer evaluations, development/use of innovative pedagogy, course/laboratory/curriculum development, conducting independent study courses, supervising undergraduate and graduate student research (especially when the research leads to publication or professional presentation),

advising theses/dissertations, serving on thesis/dissertation committees, teaching awards, and participation in teaching conferences.

Adequate teaching is regarded as meeting the minimum standard described above and lacking any of the unsatisfactory indicators. It is expected that a faculty member will surpass that minimum by achieving one or more indicator(s) of effective teaching. As a faculty member progresses through ranks and gains experience in the classroom, it is expected that teaching activities beyond the basic classroom will increase. For example, an Instructor/Assistant Professor would be considered to meet expectations by meeting the minimum standard described above and lacking any of the unsatisfactory indicators, together with achieving one or more of the classroom-based indicators of effective teaching (such as use and evaluation of innovative pedagogy). At higher ranks, a faculty member would be expected to demonstrate a more diverse range of indicators of effective teaching, such as curriculum development, conducting independent study courses, and participation in teaching professional development.

Rating Category	Example Performance Indicators and Expectations*	Range of Merit Scores
Exceeds Expectations	Exceeds the minimum standard; substantially positive quantitative and qualitative student evaluations; very positive peer evaluations; numerous, regular other indicators of effective teaching (see above)	3.1 – 5.0
Meets Expectations	Meets or exceeds the minimum standard; quantitative student evaluations approximate Department averages for similar courses and qualitative comments are generally positive; substantially positive peer evaluations; multiple other indicators of effective teaching	2.0 – 3.0
Does not meet expectations	One or more of the following: fails to meet the minimum standard; substantially negative student evaluations; substantially weak peer evaluations; few if any indicators of effective teaching	1.1 – 1.9
Unacceptable	All of the following: fails to meet the minimum standard; substantially negative student evaluations; substantially weak peer evaluations (if available); no classroom-based indicators of effective teaching	1.0

*These are intended as examples, not requirements.

Research

Tenured and tenure-track faculty members are normally expected to establish and maintain a sustained independent program in research/creative activity. The two primary indications of research/creative productivity normally include peer-reviewed journal articles and external funding. Where applicable, the creation, adaptation, and installation of planetarium programs is

also a primary indicator partially or wholly in place of peer-reviewed publications, with one show being roughly equivalent to one peer-reviewed journal article.

Articles with a BGSU affiliation will receive higher weight, as will papers in which the candidate had a leading role. The value of the published work will be judged based on such criteria as the journal's impact factor, the role of the faculty member in the published work, and the length of the article. Papers submitted but not yet accepted, non-refereed professional papers (e.g. conference papers), and book chapters are comparable to each other and carry lower weight than refereed publications.

Expectations for external funding will vary according to the faculty member's needs, and ideally funding should be sufficient to maintain a productive research program. External funding is defined here to consist of any support from outside BGSU that contributes to and advances the candidate's scholarly production. This can consist of funding from government, business, foundation, or other agencies, as well as in-kind support such as donated equipment or software or time granted at an external facility.

Other indicators of productivity in research/creative activity include (but are not limited to):

- research awards (such as named scholarships and grants, career awards, society awards),
- invited talks on research/creative activity presented at meetings or other universities,
- research/creative collaborations with academic or industrial partners,
- patent applications, and
- editorships (e.g. of journals or conference proceedings).

NTTF cannot receive a rating of unacceptable in research.

Rating Category	Example Performance Indicators and Expectations*	Range of Merit Scores
Exceeds Expectations	2 or more peer-reviewed journal articles plus 1 or more conference papers; direct or indirect external funding typically of \$25K or more; several invited talks or one other research indicator (see above)	3.1 – 5.0
Meets Expectations	1 peer-reviewed journal article plus 1 conference paper; some grant activity, such as internal funding, small external funding, or submitted external proposals; one invited talk or other research indicator	2.0– 3.0
Does not meet expectations	No peer-reviewed journal articles, no conference papers; no active grants or submitted grant proposals; no other research indicators	1.1 – 1.9
Unacceptable	No submitted professional publications, no active grants or submitted grant proposals, no conference attendance, no other research indicators or evidence of creative activity	1.0

*These are intended as examples, not requirements.

Service

It is expected that each faculty member will contribute through appropriate modes of service. At the Instructor or Assistant Professor level, the service expectations are modest, but with advancing rank, it is expected that service activities will broaden in scope and involve a larger time commitment. For example, an Instructor/Assistant Professor would typically be considered to meet expectations by serving on one significant Department committee (e.g. the Tenure and Promotion Selection Committee or Staff Evaluation Committee) and representing the Department at one outreach or public event (e.g. Preview Days, President's Day, or commencement). Faculty at higher ranks would be expected to take on more roles at the Department, College, University, and/or professional levels.

In addition to committee work and specific service appointments (e.g. graduate coordinator or library representative), examples of service include (but are by no means limited to) recruitment activities, the delivery of public science presentations, and management, development, and maintenance of facilities used for outreach or other Department, College, or University activities. Service to the professional community at the local, state, national, or international levels might include (but is not limited to) professional journal or grant refereeing, holding society offices, editorships, committee service, and hosting conferences and meetings.

In evaluating and comparing the very wide range of service activities, the weight of a given activity will be based on the time commitment involved (relative to the assigned workload) and the perceived impact on or value to the Department, College, University, and/or professional community.

Rating Category	Example Performance Indicators and Expectations*	Range of Merit Scores
Exceeds Expectations	Significant service in multiple areas (Department, College, University, profession), or extraordinary service in at least one area and notable service in at least one other area	3.1 – 5.0
Meets Expectations	Significant service in at least one area	2.0 – 3.0
Does not meet expectations	Little service in any area	1.1 – 1.9
Unacceptable	No service in any area	1.0

*These are intended as examples, not requirements.

2. Merit Committee Composition and the Election//Appointment Process

The committees responsible for merit evaluation shall be the Staff Evaluation Committee (SEC) for tenured and tenure-track faculty (TTF) and, when called for, the Instructor Evaluation Committee (IEC) for non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF). The SEC shall normally be comprised of three TTF elected by all full-time faculty to staggered three-year terms. The IEC shall normally be comprised of three NTTF elected by all full-time faculty to staggered three-year terms. If there are three or four NTTF beyond their first year, the IEC shall consist of all NTTF. If there are two or fewer NTTF beyond their first year, the evaluation of the NTTF shall be made by the SEC and no IEC shall be convened. In that case, NTTF shall be eligible for election to the SEC

that year. If the IEC is convened in subsequent years, any NTTF on the SEC shall leave the SEC and move to the IEC to complete the remainder of their three-year terms and any vacancies on the SEC shall be filled by TTF.

3. Elements of the Merit Dossier

The submitted merit dossier must include an Annual Faculty Update, in substantively the same format as the standard College form, to report his or her professional activity for the preceding year. Optionally, faculty may also include a brief (one-page) description of their performance that highlights or explains specific items for the committee's information. Such details as hours spent in a tutorial or readings course or in various service activities are especially useful. In addition, the Chair shall provide to the committee each faculty member's allocation of effort and student teaching evaluations from the preceding year.

4. Calculation of Overall Merit Score

The process for arriving at the final overall scores is as follows:

- a. Merit committee members will review information submitted for each faculty member to assign a numerical score for each area using the rating scale described above in section 1. Merit committee members will meet as a committee to review and reach consensus on component scores for each area.
- b. The three component scores in teaching, research/creative work, and service shall be averaged, weighted by the faculty member's allocation of effort to form an overall merit score. I.e.,

$$[\text{Teaching Score} * \text{Allocation of Effort}] + [\text{Research/Creative Work Score} * \text{Allocation of Effort}] + [\text{Service Score} * \text{Allocation of Effort}] = \text{Overall Merit Score}.$$

The meaning of the overall merit score for merit is shown in the following table:

Overall Score	Rating Category
1.0	Unacceptable
1.1 – 1.9	Does not meet expectations; not eligible for merit
2.0 – 3.0	Meets expectations; eligible for merit
3.1 – 5.0	Exceeds expectations; eligible for merit

- c. Prior to transmitting scores to the Chair, the merit committee shall provide each faculty member with his/her merit scores (the three component scores and the overall score) and an informative explanation. Faculty members may appeal the merit scores they received by submitting a written appeal to the committee within three business days. The merit committee shall review each appeal and provide those faculty members with the final merit scores assigned. Should the faculty member not be satisfied with the result of the appeal, he or she may submit an appeal of the committee's decision to the chair, following the timeline in Part I.
- d. After consideration of any appeals, if the committee assigns an unacceptable rating in any area, the faculty member is recommended as not eligible for merit in the current year. The assignment of this score and the reasons behind it shall be communicated to the Chair.

- e. After consideration of any appeals, the merit committee shall determine the three-year rolling average composite score for each faculty member using the composite scores from the two previous merit periods.
- f. The committee shall recommend raises based on the three-year average composite scores by the following method. For the purposes of calculating recommended raises, the merit pool is considered to be the appropriate percentage for merit specified in the CBA applied to the Bargaining Unit Faculty Members in the Department. For the calculation below, this overall pool shall normally be divided into two separate pools, one for tenured and tenure-track faculty and one for non-tenure-track faculty, with the amount in each pool proportional to the total salaries of the faculty in each group. In the case where there are two or fewer NTTF beyond their first year, the merit pool shall not be divided, but rather remain as a single pool.

The recommended raise for faculty members in their first year will be the percentage merit raise in the CBA. After subtracting this amount (if any) from the pool, the overall merit scores shall be used to determine a recommended merit raise for each remaining faculty member. The number S_i is the composite merit score (2 to 5) for individual i . In counting the equivalent number of full-time faculty in the pool ($n = \sum w_i$), most faculty members will count with weight $w_i = 1$. Someone with a part-time assignment outside the Department shall count with weight w_i corresponding to the fraction of his or her salary included in calculating the pool. (E.g., if 60% of a person's salary was included in calculating the pool, that person would count with weight $w_i = 0.6$.) Individual recommended merit raises M_i are determined from the formula:

$$M_i = w_i[L + m(S_i - 2)]$$

where:

M_i = individual recommended merit raise;

w_i = individual weighting factor;

L = lowest possible raise;

S_i = individual composite merit score; and

m = a slope to be calculated.


The lowest possible raise, L , would be awarded for $S_i = 2.0$ (no merit raises are awarded for scores less than 2.0), and is set to $L = 0.25T/n$, where T is the total pool available and $n = \sum w_i$. The slope m is calculated so that all of the raises add up to the total pool: $\sum M_i = T$. Thus

$$m = \frac{T - nL}{(\sum w_i S_i) - 2n}$$


- g. The committee shall transmit the merit scores (in each area and the composite for the current year and the three-year average composite) and recommended raise for each

- faculty member to the Chair along with summarized documentation supporting the scores, following the timeline in Part I.
- h. The Chair will assign merit scores independently of the merit committee(s), but following the same precepts as the committee(s).
 - i. Prior to transmitting scores to the Dean, the Chair will provide each faculty member with his/her merit scores and an informative explanation. Faculty members may appeal the merit scores they received by submitting a written appeal to the Chair within three business days. The Chair will review each appeal and provide those faculty members with the final merit scores assigned. Should the faculty member not be satisfied with the result of the appeal, he or she may submit an appeal of the Chair's decision to the Dean, following the timeline in Part I.
 - j. After consideration of any appeals, the Chair shall determine the three-year rolling average composite score for each faculty member using the chair's composite scores from the two previous merit periods and shall recommend raises based on these three-year average composite scores, following the method described in section 4.f above. The Chair shall submit to the Dean the merit scores and recommended raise for each faculty member as determined by the merit committee (SEC or IEC) and as determined by the Chair.

Approved by the Department of Physics and Astronomy faculty February 8, 2017.


 _____ Date 3/15/17
 John B. Laird, Chair/Director

Approved: 
 _____ Date 3/17/17
 Raymond A. Craig, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences

Approved: 
 _____ Date 3/17/17
 Rodney Rogers, Provost/ Senior VP

