

Full-Time Faculty Handbook for Compensation and Workload

Appendix 5: Merit Pay

Faculty Merit Pay Application Process

For those of you interested in applying for merit pay, please read the following and use it as a guide to your application. Those who do not apply will not be considered for merit pay. Merit will be added to base compensation beginning July 1.

Standards of professional responsibility for full-time faculty are specified in Section V of the Academic Freedom, Professional Responsibility, and Tenure policy and procedures. The principle of merit pay asserts that employees should be compensated for work beyond standard performance expectations. Thus, a faculty member who is a valued contributor may not necessarily receive pay for merit, nor should it be assumed that all faculty who receive merit pay will receive the same amount. In assessing merit, members of the Review committees will be asked to assess the degree to which employees exceed performance standards. They will use the merit application (see below) as an aid to make this assessment. The amount of merit pay awarded to a faculty member will depend on factors such as the amount of money in the merit pool, the number of people who qualify for merit, the number of faculty who apply for merit, the assessment of Review Committee members, and the merit allocation process used by the Review committees. A common process will be used throughout the College and by each Department Review Committee.

Process to Apply for Merit Pay

Meritorious Service

It is intended that compensation for merit be paid when there is evidence of performance that consistently exceeds standards of professional responsibility during the merit review period. The merit review period is defined as the academic year for which a merit evaluation is conducted. As an institution of higher learning that seeks to focus efforts on student learning, and to be consistent with College and School values, meritorious performance is demonstrated through exemplary performance that contributes to student success.

Qualifications to be considered for Merit Pay

1. Demonstration of performance that exceeds standards of professional responsibility articulated in Section V of the Academic Freedom, Professional Responsibility and Tenure policy and procedures.
2. Must be a tenured, tenure track, or otherwise continuing faculty member with an expectation of a full-time faculty contract during the following the contract year.
3. Must not have received a Letter of Concern during the merit review period.

4. Must not have received formal disciplinary action during the merit review period that resulted in evidence of that action being placed in the employee's personnel file.
5. Must submit an application for merit pay.

Application

Applications may be submitted via e-mail or paper by the assigned date and time. Submit your merit pay application to your Academic Administrator. The letter of application should be no longer than one page, single-spaced, and no more than 10-point font. Up to four pages of supporting evidence may be attached to the letter of application. The letter of application and supporting material may be in any format you choose, such as narrative, bulleted, data, etc., although you should use any or all of the following performance categories to group your responses:

- Teaching
- Professional Activity
- Service

The application should focus on your performance during the merit review period that you believe exceeded the standard performance expected of faculty.

Use any of the items under C.2 of the Academic Freedom, Professional Responsibility, and Tenure policy and procedures to guide your response (items are included below):

- (a) Excellence in teaching
- (b) Professional or occupational development
- (c) Leadership and professional service contributions to the department, division, school, and College
- (d) Student consultation
- (e) Attainment of creditable academic degrees and/or certificates in one's chosen field of professional responsibility
- (f) Evidence of professional experience
- (g) Depth of understanding in the chosen field and contribution to knowledge
- (h) The individual's general attitude* toward work, students, and colleagues

*CLARIFICATION: the term "general attitude" should be interpreted to mean "professional demeanor and relations" (toward work and with students and colleagues).

Faculty Merit Application Procedures for Deans and Faculty Merit Review Committee

1. The Dean is responsible for the communication and execution of the merit process for the faculty within their schools.
 - a. The Deans will receive a listing of the faculty for each of their departments and/or Divisions with potential merit designation of No Merit, Merit, and Exceptional.
 - b. Each Faculty Merit Review committee will make its recommendations for the eligible faculty on merit designation.

- c. All merit designations for faculty are due to the Provost Office no later than noon April 30.
2. Considerations:
 - a. No more than 33% of the faculty assigned to any one school may be placed in the highest, or Exceptional category.
 - b. If the independent assessment of the faculty yields a total greater than 33%, the Dean is charged to provide additional assessments such that the number of faculty placed within the Exceptional category meets the 33% upper limit.
 - i. There are no percentage weights assigned to the bottom two categories: “Not Qualified for Merit” and “Meritorious.”
 - c. Letters of Concern and Disciplinary Actions:
 - i. No faculty members are awarded merit if they have received a letter of concern or have pending a letter of concern or other disciplinary actions.
 - ii. If faculty members have received letters of concern or disciplinary action within the previous two years of academic years no merit may be assigned unless a specific exception is requested.
 - iii. To request an exception: The Dean must provide to the Office of the Provost written assurance that the concern has been fully remedied as well as specific justification for the award of Merit. The Provost will review and determine whether the exception will be granted. The Dean will be notified by the Provost of the decision.
3. Faculty Merit Appeals:
 - a. If a faculty member believes they have been prejudicially or capriciously assigned to a merit category of were unable to submit a timely application for reasons beyond their control, the individual may appeal in writing directly to the Provost.
 - i. Procedures: The appeal must be submitted no later than the close of business on July 15. The Provost will review all submitted material in consultation with an appeal committee comprised of the Provost, the Faculty Association President (or a representative designated by the Faculty Association President), and the Senate President (or a representative designated by the Senate President).
 - ii. The decisions of the appeal committee will be considered final.
 - iii. The Dean will be notified of the decision.
4. Provost of Academic Affairs reserves the right to return any particular faculty member’s merit assignment for reconsideration.

Faculty Merit Review Process

1. Review Committee will be composed as follows:
 - a. Dean
 - b. Academic Administrator

- c. Department faculty or staff member chosen by the department.
2. Faculty who serve on Review committees will be reviewed by an alternate faculty member.
3. Review Committee members will conduct an independent review of each applicant.
4. Review Committee members will consider performance during the present academic year that consistently exceeds standards of professional responsibility and that contributes to student success in any or all of the following three performance categories: 1) teaching; 2) professional activity; and 3) service. In assessing performance, review committee members will use their knowledge of the applicant's performance, the applicant's submitted information, and appropriate items of Section V of the tenure policy.
5. Review Committee members will assign applicants to one of three merit categories:
 - a. Not qualified for merit pay – even though the employee meets performance standards and is a valued faculty member at SLCC. Evidence of non-sustained performance that exceeds expectations may be present.
 - b. Meritorious – faculty member consistently exceeds standards of professional responsibility in at least one of the three performance categories identified in Item 4 above.
 - c. Exceptional – faculty member has distinguished herself/himself through performance that consistently exceeds standards of professional responsibility in at least two of the three performance categories identified in Item 4 above. Performance has contributed to significant advancement of department, school, or college initiatives, goals, and/or objectives. Not more than 33% of faculty within any one school may be assigned an exceptional rating.
6. Review Committee members will meet to discuss their independent ratings.
7. Placement in a merit category will be made as follows:
 - a. The assignment will be made to the category in which at least two of the three Review Committee members assess performance.
 - b. If Review Committee members assess performance into all three categories, the faculty member will be placed in the meritorious category.
 - c. If Review Committee members assess more than 33% into the Exceptional category, an additional assessment will need to be conducted to reassign the additional percentage to the meritorious category.
8. In determining merit pay dollars, the Office of the Provost will consider the number of faculty placed in each category and the total dollar amount available for merit within that category. Based on this review, the Office of the Provost will recommend award allocations for each merit category. The Office of the Provost will compile results and submit merit dollar allocations to HR based on the merit category.