

## FACULTY MERIT POLICY AND GUIDELINES

### Preamble:

Seton Hall University has an array of faculty awards and opportunities for professional advancement. These include Teacher of the Year, Researcher of the Year, sabbaticals, special release time awards, and University Research Council awards. The faculty merit program, now in its third year, supports the University's continuing commitment to recognize and reward high-performing faculty members who make significant contributions to the mission and academic enterprise of Seton Hall University. The intention of the merit program is to recognize outstanding contributions in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. To be clear, a candidate for merit must document accomplishments at “**above expected**” levels of performance of faculty members in their department, as defined in department criteria and scoring rubrics, to be considered meritorious. This outstanding performance should be in all applicable categories, with consideration given to the nature of one's academic appointment

### A. Eligibility for Merit Consideration:

1. The following members of the Seton Hall University faculty are eligible to apply for merit:
  - a. All members of the faculty who have earned tenure.
  - b. All members of the faculty who hold the rank of Faculty Associate, Senior Faculty Associate, or who hold a Clinical or Lecturer appointment, are also eligible to apply for merit compensation at the beginning of their sixth year of full-time service to the University. Receipt of merit is contingent upon renewal of an applicant's contract for the subsequent academic year.
  - c. All full-time faculty members of the School of Health and Medical Sciences are eligible to apply for merit compensation at the beginning of their sixth year of full-time service to the University. Receipt of merit is contingent upon renewal of an applicant's contract for the subsequent academic year.
  - d. All full-time faculty members of the Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology are eligible to apply for merit compensation at the beginning of their sixth year of full-time service to the University. Receipt of merit is contingent upon renewal of an applicant's contract for the subsequent academic year.
2. Merit compensation for Department Chairpersons, or functional equivalents, will be of two kinds, and shall be determined as follows:
  - a. Standard merit compensation shall be based on assessment of
    - i. Teaching a reduced course load that must be approved annually by the Dean, with the concurrence of the Provost
    - ii. Service (not including the Chair responsibilities), and
    - iii. Scholarship, using the same criteria used for other members of the faculty.The Chair shall be assessed for merit compensation by a department committee (60%) and the Dean (40%).
  - b. Chairs will also be eligible to apply for a bonus on their stipend based upon demonstrated excellence in their administrative role as evaluated by a department committee (40%) and the Dean (60%). Each School/College will develop a rubric for assessing Chairpersons for their administrative performance based on the Chair

Responsibilities and Duties listed in Articles 7 and 10.3 of the *Faculty Guide* (last revised June 2017), as well as any additional duties as required by the Department, School/College, and/or the University. This rubric will be approved by the Dean.

3. All term faculty members not previously mentioned in Article A.1, as well as all probationary faculty members, are not eligible to apply for merit compensation.
4. Probationary and adjunct faculty members will continue to benefit from existing programs (Researcher of the Year, Teacher of the Year, Adjunct Teacher of the Year, and University Research Council) that foster faculty excellence and development, and offer opportunities for supplemental compensation, support for conference attendance, and so forth.
5. Members of the Law School and Medical School faculty are not eligible to apply for merit. Full time, merit eligible faculty may serve as an adjunct in a school where faculty members are ineligible for this program of merit consideration. Any application for merit should be strictly based on one's full time position and responsibilities.

B. Development and Approval of Criteria for Merit:

1. The faculty of each academic unit will create a committee, which is to be comprised exclusively of merit-eligible faculty members from within that academic unit, to make recommendations to its Dean. At the outset of this process, the Dean will charge the committee, as well as identify accreditation issues or other special circumstances that must inform the work of the committee.
2. The aforementioned faculty committee of each academic unit will develop recommendations and rubrics pertaining to criteria that define excellence in scholarship, teaching, and service. For all academic units, it is recommended that Boyer's Model of Scholarship be applied when developing criteria for each of these categories.
3. Recommendations regarding service should pertain to tasks or responsibilities performed in one's faculty role or in relation to one's scholarly discipline. Ordinary duties, which are expected of all faculty in Article 7.2 of the *Faculty Guide*, should not be included in the application. In addition, service, which is compensated, should be noted on the application. In schools and colleges with multiple departments, it is advisable to have a committee to review the rubrics of the various departments for consistency.
4. The Office of the Provost will review and evaluate the proposed criteria put forth by the Dean of each unit.
5. No criteria and associated rubrics may officially be enacted without prior approval from the Office of the Provost.

C. Peer Review Committee

1. Size and composition of the Peer Review Committee, whose role in the evaluation of applications for merit is described in Article E.1.a of these Guidelines. For the purpose of merit compensation, a faculty member may document her/his accomplishments on the application/rubric, which is discussed in Article D.4 of these Guidelines, and have those accomplishments considered as part of the evaluation process. While certain activities may take place over several years, the activity to be considered can only be considered once and had to have occurred in the performance year.
  - a. Whether application of the remaining 20% weighting (see Articles B.4 and B.5 below) resides with the applicant, the department, or at the school/college level.

2. Recommendations of the committee will be approved by a majority of the full-time, merit-eligible faculty members of the academic unit. A draft version of the recommendations will be sent to the Dean for her/his review and approval.
3. Minimum standards for each of the weightings is as follows: Teaching 30% ; Scholarship 30%; Service 20%. It is anticipated that the criteria set forth in Article 4 of the *Faculty Guide*, pertaining to the standards for promotion and tenure, will inform and be consistent with the aforementioned deliberations.

D. Application for Merit:

1. The process should be available to all members of the faculty who wish to participate. Therefore, each unit must establish a method of evaluation, and no unit (department or school/college) possesses the right to opt out of the process in its entirety.
2. Individual faculty members may reserve the right not to apply in a given academic year.
3. A faculty member on sabbatical during the merit year may be considered for an award. It is the faculty member's responsibility to provide comprehensive documentation as to how he/she satisfied the teaching and service requirements during the sabbatical for the just concluded academic year.
4. A faculty merit application form and/or rubric must be created by each academic unit as a mechanism that may be used by individual members of the faculty when applying. These application forms and/or rubrics will be reviewed, evaluated, and approved by the Office of the Provost alongside the proposed guidelines of each unit.
5. The remaining 20% weight must be assigned to the three aforementioned categories: Scholarship, Teaching, and/or Service. No more than an additional 5% may be added to Service, bringing that weighting to a maximum of 25%.
6. The process for assigning the remaining 20% weighting is to be made by the faculty committee of each academic unit in conjunction with the Dean.
7. Alternate minimum standards for weightings may be determined for Faculty Associates, Lecturers and Clinical Faculty.

E. Evaluation of Faculty Applications:

1. The merit compensation process for all Colleges and Schools (with the exception of the Medical School and the Law School) at Seton Hall University will consist of the following three levels of review<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup>The University Libraries will utilize the following variation: A Peer Review Committee will be elected by the faculty of University Libraries and the individual ratings from the Libraries' Peer Review Committee will comprise a total of 60% of an applicant's final score. The Dean of University Libraries will be provided the Peer Review Committee's rating and her/his rating will comprise 40% of an applicant's final score. All remaining portions of these Guidelines apply to the University Libraries' process.

- a. Review of Peer Committee: A Peer Review Committee is to be elected by the faculty of each unit (by department, sets of departments, or school/college), with the appropriate size and composition of the Committee to be proposed by each unit. Members of each Committee may meet to evaluate and discuss each application for merit from within the respective academic unit. However, each member of the Peer Review Committee will provide his/her rating of each merit applicant independently to the Office of Institutional Research. Ratings from all members of the Peer Review Committee will form an aggregate rating that comprises 50% of an applicant's final score.

\*Please note that members of the Peer Review Committee are prohibited from evaluating and/or rating their own merit applications.

i. To avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest, any faculty members applying for merit should recuse themselves from the process. In other words, nobody applying for faculty merit, including any chairperson, should score applications. In the case of a chairperson, the department should identify a senior faculty member to assume the chair's responsibilities in the merit process. If this is not possible, the peer review committee for the department and the chairperson should consult with the dean regarding alternatives. Any deviations from the usual process or timeline should be communicated to the Office of Institutional Research.

ii. All participants are expected to keep scoring results confidential

iii. Departments within a unit sharing some disciplinary congruence may join together for the purpose of the review. This arrangement should be approved by the respective dean.

iv. The names of the Peer Review Committee members should be sent to the Office of Institutional Research before May 15, 2019 to facilitate the flow of information. (See F.9.)

iii. Applications for merit should be submitted to the Peer Review Committee, the Chairperson and the Dean simultaneously.

- b. Review of Chairperson (or functional equivalent): Each Chairperson will be provided the Peer Review Committee's aggregate rating by the Office of Institutional Research. Upon receipt of that rating, she/he will then evaluate and provide to the Office of Institutional Research her/his own rating for the applicant. Ratings furnished by a Chairperson will comprise 25% of an applicant's final score.
- c. In cases where a department chair applies for standard merit, the dean, in consultation with the Peer Review Committee, will determine a senior department faculty member who will perform the evaluations as noted in E.1.a.i above.
- d. Review by Dean: Each Dean will be provided both the Peer Review Committee's and Chairperson's ratings by the Office of Institutional Research. Upon receipt of those ratings, she/he will then evaluate and provide to the Office of Institutional Research her/his own rating for the applicant. Ratings furnished by a dean will comprise 25% of an applicant's final score.

#### F. Process of Tabulating and Disseminating Individual

##### Results:

1. Applicants will be reviewed and rated on a scale of 0 – 5, to the tenth-of-a-point (i.e. 4.1), with the top score an applicant may receive for any criterion being 5.0.
2. At each level of the process, ratings for each applicant are to be submitted to the
  - a. Office of Institutional Research (OIR) for tabulation.
3. Each academic unit will be required to provide the Office of Institutional Research the names of the Peer Review Committee members and the appropriate weightings for each faculty applicant so that tabulations may be accurately and efficiently performed.
4. At each intermediate level, the scores of the applicant are confidential.
5. Upon receipt of ratings at each level of the process, scores will be tabulated against previously reported weightings and disseminated to the next appropriate individual in the process.
6. Upon receipt of the dean's ratings for each applicant in his/her unit, the Office of Institutional Research will tabulate final composite scores for each faculty applicant and return all individual and composite scores to the appropriate Dean. Those individual composite scores will be used as the basis for awarding merit compensation.
7. The Office of the Provost will also receive from the Office of Institutional Research all scores for faculty members, both individual and composite, by academic unit, at the time that composite ratings are shared with the respective Dean. The Office of the Provost will refer to these scores when verifying that each academic unit has adhered to all procedures and guidelines related to merit awards, and that each academic unit's distribution of merit compensation is in accordance with all procedures and guidelines related to merit, as well as any parameters as set forth by the Office of the Provost.
8. Once all scores have been received, tabulated, and disseminated accordingly, faculty applicants will be informed by their Dean of their final composite score, as well their aggregate scores for teaching, scholarship, and service.
9. Flowchart for exchange of merit ratings:



10. In the spirit of shared governance, all parties to the review must participate and make recommendations. The failure of the review committee, chair, or dean to act by the indicated deadlines will stop the process of consideration of the merit application. Therefore, it is important that members of the Peer Review Committee agree to perform the reviews according to the schedule provided. An alternate may be selected in the event that a faculty member is unable to fulfill his/her obligation.
11. An example of the tabulation process is included as Appendix A at the end of this document.

#### G. Appeals:

1. Applicants may appeal only if they believe that the process established by their academic unit, as approved by the Office of the Provost, was not appropriately followed. Applicants may not appeal decisions pertaining to ratings or scoring.
2. Appeals will be submitted to, and evaluated by, the Office of the Provost.
3. An appellant must submit to the Office of the Provost his/her appeal within 21 days of receiving from her/his Dean final scores and notification of the appellant's denial of merit.
4. The Office of the Provost will assess whether all aforementioned policies and procedures pertaining to the appellant's application for merit, the evaluation of the appellant's application at all levels of the review process, and tabulation of the appellant's ratings, were adhered to.
5. The decision of the Office of the Provost will be final.

H. Miscellaneous:

1. Decisions related to merit compensation can be included on an application for promotion and/or tenure. It must be realized that merit is a snapshot on performance for a particular year and promotion and/or tenure submissions are based on much longer horizons.
2. Ratings and decisions pertaining to merit cannot be grieved.
3. Chairs merit compensation will be in the form of a stipend. All other merit awards will be added to the base salary for all recipients, with the exception of those members of the faculty who are also members of the priest community. In such cases, merit will be awarded in the form of a stipend and not added to the recipient's base salary.
4. The timeline for the merit application and evaluation process coincides with the academic year, with all applicants and reviewers adhering to the following timetable (or the nearest business day that follows the prescribed date at each point in the timetable):
  - a. Merit applications due to academic unit no later than June 7. Applications should cover the period from July 1 of the previous year to June 30 of the year in which one is applying for merit.
  - b. Evaluations from all members of the Peer Review Committees (P.R.C.) due to the Office of Institutional Research (O.I.R.) no later than June 21.
  - c. O.I.R. tabulates weighted, aggregate P.R.C. scores and forwards those scores to the appropriate Chairperson no later than July 8.
  - d. Chairperson evaluations are submitted to the O.I.R. no later than July 21.
  - e. O.I.R. tabulates the weighted Chairpersons' scores and forwards both the aggregate, weighted P.R.C. scores and the weighted Chairpersons' scores to the appropriate Dean no later than August 4.
  - f. Dean evaluations are submitted to the O.I.R. no later than August 18.
  - g. O.I.R. tabulates the applicants' overall composite scores, as outlined in Articles D and E, as well as Appendix A, of these Guidelines. Those composite scores will then be shared with the appropriate Deans, as well as the Office of the Provost, no later than September 1.
5. The following will be determined by the Office of the Provost prior to the commencement of the Merit Program each year:
  - a. Merit allocations will be apportioned to each School and College according to the number of merit eligible faculty members, per school/college.
  - b. The size and sustainability of the merit pool each year will be determined by the

Office of the Provost.

- c. The maximum award that may be bestowed on a merit recipient.
- 6. In no case can an individual award exceed the maximum set by the Office of the Provost each year. Deans may propose a change to the distribution based on the documented strengths of the candidates for merit.
- 7. The Faculty Merit Task Force will reconvene and de-brief in a regular and ongoing manner, following the first implementation of the merit process, to review and assess the policy and all related processes.
- 8. The names of the merit recipients from the just concluded academic year will be published in the Convocation program of the new academic year.

The following is a hypothetical example of the tabulation process that will be followed by the Office of Institutional Research, with categorical weightings of Teaching 40%, Scholarship 40%; Service 20% and ratings being submitted by a four-person Peer Review Committee, Chairperson, and Dean.

	Independent Ratings by Category & Member		
<b>Peer Review Committee</b>	<b>Teaching</b>	<b>Scholarship</b>	<b>Service</b>
Peer Review Committee Members	3.9	4.2	4.8
Peer Review Committee Members	4.6	3.7	4.8
Peer Review Committee Members	4.4	3.9	4.5
Peer Review Committee Members	4.3	3.8	4.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>18.8</b>
<b>Aggregate Score by</b>	4.3	3.9	4.7

	Weighting	Committee-		Chairperson		Dean	
		<u>Rating</u>	<u>Wt.</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Wt.</u>	<u>Rating</u>	<u>Wt.</u>
Teaching	0.4	<u>Rating</u>		<u>Rating</u>		3.8	
		4.3		4.2		4.2	1.52
Scholarship	0.4	1.72		1.68		4.2	<u>1.68</u>
		3.9		4.1			4.04
Service	0.2	1.56		1.64			
		4.7		4.5		0.25	1.01
		0.94		0.9			

Overall Composite Score: 4.175





