

MERIT AWARDS/PSA Review Procedures for Faculty Members

PREAMBLE UBC and UBC Science are committed to ensure a fair and uniform process for Merit awards and Performance Salary Adjustments (PSA) for faculty members in all its units (departments and research units) and for faculty jointly appointed in two or more units.

To assure robust review procedures and transparency, particularly on expectations and criteria for the review processⁱ, each unit should have written merit/PSA guidelines (“policy”) which must be based on UBC policy/ the Collective Agreement.*

The unit policy has to

- outline the review procedures and review committee’s structure,
- explain the processes underlying merit/PSA determination, and
- provide a template for the annual activity report each faculty member has to submit annually.ⁱⁱ

PRINCIPLES In each unit, faculty members should be given the opportunity to provide input into the policy Procedures prior to ratification by the department.ⁱⁱⁱ

Heads and directors must provide sufficient notice including distribution of the written procedures/instructions to eligible faculty members.^{iv} A list of those members who are awarded merit/PSA – same as faculty members who are awarded retention – shall be distributed individually to all members of the unit.^v

The following components should be included in each unit policy:

- Eligibility** • All full-time faculty members who are continuing members of the bargaining unit and active during the period reviewed are eligible to be considered for merit and PSA^{vi}, including faculty on maternity/parent/adoptive or sabbatical leave.
- Review committee** • The composition of the review committee should be, as much as possible, representative of
 - the ranks^{vii} (for example, including representatives of both the full-time teaching and the research streams, and of both junior and senior faculty),
 - the unit’s sub-disciplines, and
 - the demographic diversity of the unit’s faculty
- The size of the review committee will depend on the unit’s size.
- Usually the review committee membership will be shared with the faculty at the time that awards are announced, if not before. In the case that the membership is not announced, the reasons will be communicated to the faculty.
- Membership on the review committee should rotate periodically (typically annually or biannually) to provide an opportunity to all faculty to experience and understand the process. The length of service should be communicated to faculty.
- The committee members review all faculty activity reports and CVs or a set number thereof.
- Review process** • The committee members rank faculty performance – consistently between faculty peers and from year to year – based on a concrete, specific and transparent assessment of combined, weighted duties appropriate for research-stream and teaching-stream faculty, respectively. Criteria and weights are set and communicated prior to review. The weighting can be distributed unequally (e.g., for research stream: 50% research, 30% teaching, 20% service) or equally (e.g., based on five marks given on each of research, teaching, service contributions). Alternatives include providing one mark on a merit scale

that is based on a consistent combined weighting scheme for all appropriate contributions.

- The ranking must be based on the duties expected of a faculty member in the period in question (i.e. service and teaching, or service, teaching and research) including those faculty members exempt from part of the criteria typically reviewed (e.g., teaching). This necessitates taking factors such as leaves, differences in research and teaching streams, and distribution of workload into account.^{viii}
- Exceptions and additions to assessment rules set above should be spelled out; e.g.,
 - if merit is assigned for someone excelling in one area such as service (e.g., significant advising, mentoring or leadership duties);
 - if contributions outside the unit are to be taken into account.
- Information on ranking procedures should include whether
 - the review committee members submit individual marks to unit head or
 - the review committee meets to discuss rankings;
 - the members of the committee will be ranked by the unit head or by each other.

Annual Activity Report

- The merit review template (for activity report) should include a common form (set questions) and an open section for further explanations.
- There should be two types of merit review templates, one for teaching-stream faculty (teaching and service) and one for research faculty (research, teaching and service).

Joint appointments

- The departmental policy must address the process for joint appointees. Primary responsibility for ensuring that the process is properly followed for a joint appointee rests with the head/director of the home unit.*
- Joint-appointed faculty (cross-appointed within and outside of Science) should be evaluated by each of their units and in consultation with the other unit's head.
- Whether annual sharing of merit awards or alternating between unit award pools from year to year, the process should be pre-arranged and communicated to joint appointees at time of appointment.
- For all faculty including for joint appointees, merit awards can be composed of 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, or 3.0 units; the total cannot be a fraction of a unit.^{ix}

Teaching evaluations

- When considering teaching performance, the review must be based on formal procedures, such as student and peer evaluations.^{x/*}
Student teaching evaluations should be considered from past and current year (if necessary to alleviate timing issue with second-term evaluations of current year). Sharing student scores from teaching evaluations with the committee is common practice. The policy should outline if student comments will be seen by the committee as well, and whether faculty's permission will be required for that.

ACCESSIBILITY and UP-DATES

- All departments should notify their faculty annually and post their written, clear and transparent Merit Review and PSA procedures ("policy") on their inter-/intranet.
- The policy should be filed with the dean's office. Any new or revised departmental policy should be provided to the dean's office for review with Faculty Relations (on compliance with the Collective Agreement) and approval before implementation in the department.

*www.hr.ubc.ca/faculty-relations/compensation/faculty-salary-increases/merit-and-performance-salary-adjustment



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- i Departments should be reminded of the criteria for Performance Salary Adjustments (PSA)
CA, Part 2, Art. 2.05:
“Recommendations for PSA awards are made having regard to overall performance. (...) Factors that should be taken into account include: I) performance over a period of time which is worthy of recognition; II) the relationship of a member's salary to that of other members taking into consideration total years of service at UBC; and III) market considerations.”
- ii From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.e/2.05.c:
“All members eligible for consideration for merit/PSA shall submit to the Head a summary of their relevant scholarly, teaching and service activities and may include an indication of the nature and significance of the activities.”
- iii From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.c/2.05.a
“Prior to finalizing the unit's policy on allocation of merit/PSA, the Head shall consult with a reasonable number of colleagues representative of each of the ranks in the unit.”
- iv From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.d/2.05.b:
“Once finalized, the policy and the procedures, including procedures for members holding joint appointments, to be used within a unit for making recommendations by the Head on the award of merit/PSA shall be distributed annually to all members of the unit.”
- v From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.f/2.05.d:
“A list of those members who are awarded merit/PSA shall be distributed individually to all members of the unit.”
From CA, Part 2, Art. 6.01:
“A list of those faculty members who are awarded retention shall be distributed individually to all members of the unit.”
- vi From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.b & 2.05:
“Each continuing member of the bargaining unit shall be considered for a merit award, taking into consideration the criteria set out in Article 4 of Part 4: Conditions of Appointment for Faculty, namely teaching, scholarly activity, and service to the University and to the community...”
“The salary of each continuing member of the bargaining unit shall be considered to determine whether PSA is appropriate...”
- vii From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.b & 2.05:
“The Head shall consult with a reasonable number of colleagues representative of each of the ranks in the unit before making a recommendation on the award of merit.”
“Heads shall take advice on individual's performance from a reasonable number of colleagues representative of each of the ranks in the unit before deciding whether or not to recommend PSA.”
- viii From CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.b:
“Judgments shall be based on the duties expected of a member in the period in question and shall not be based on activities in which the member had not the opportunity to engage.”
- ix CA, Part 2, Art. 2.04.a:
“Merit awards shall be comprised of 1, 1-1/2, 2, 2-1/2, or 3 units, the value of 1 unit to be the same as that of a CPI unit...”
- x From CA, Part 4, Art. 4.02:
“The methods of teaching evaluation may vary; they may include student opinion, assessment by colleagues of performance in university lectures, (...) When the opinions of students or of colleagues are sought, this shall be done through formal procedures.”

