

Guidelines for Three-Year Salary Reviews

July, 2013

Background

Grinnell College has a merit-based salary system. Faculty legislation in 2004 established a process for recommending faculty raises based on “merit scores” that are established on a periodic (usually three-year) basis. Each review establishes a score that will determine the merit portion of a faculty member’s salary for the coming three years. While the actual amount of merit pay attached to each score can vary from year to year depending on the total size of the salary pool, the same merit score is used until the next review establishes a new score. Merit scores range from 0 to 5. They result from evaluation of teaching, scholarship, and service.

While the merit review process is clearly important for determining salaries and appropriately rewarding faculty for hard work and significant accomplishments, the process provides an equally important opportunity for professional growth of faculty members at all stages of their careers. Faculty members are encouraged to engage in self-reflection and examination of their accomplishments with the goal of charting an ambitious but realistic path for the next three years. The previous review document is a good place to start, and examination of achievements over the past three years in light of this document can help form a solid plan for the upcoming three years. A review dossier containing the review document which incorporates information about accomplishments over the preceding three years and commentary from both the faculty under review and the departmental reviewer, an updated C.V., and a summary paragraph from the Faculty Salary Committee’s provides a basis for a substantive meeting between the Dean and the faculty member to devise strategies and find resources that can transform plans into new accomplishments.

Directions for Individual Faculty Members

Faculty members should submit the following items to the department chair or designated reviewer by a date suggested by the reviewer, but no later than the third week of October:

- A completed Faculty Salary Review form (available for download from Academic Support Assistants). Please make certain your most recent Sedona information has been entered before downloading the form.
- Updated Curriculum Vitae.

In establishing future goals, faculty members are highly encouraged to reflect on the goals set forth there and what was actually accomplished over the past three years on one’s professional career.

Directions for Department Chairs

First, the department should establish whether the department chair or a designated colleague will coordinate the review. One to three class visits should take place as part of a merit review. Either the review chair will visit the class, as traditionally done, or else the review chair, in response to a request by the person under review, may agree to invite a different faculty

colleague to come in and visit at least one class at some point during the three-year period covered by the review. If someone other than the chair visits the class, this colleague should, in addition to consulting directly with the faculty member, provide a brief report to the review chair on how effectively the faculty member is engaged and continuing to develop as a teacher. The invited colleague should be someone especially well-suited to comment on a focused aspect of teaching that the person under review would like to develop.

Since it is mandatory that the reviewer observe at least one class period, if the person undergoing merit review is scheduled to be on leave or away from campus during the semester of the review, the department should plan ahead and do class visits before the leave begins. If this has not been done, the person conducting the review should consult the chair of the faculty on whether class visits can be arranged in time for Faculty Salary Committee consideration in the spring.

The department chair or designated reviewer, after meeting with the colleague to discuss accomplishments and goals set forth in the Faculty Salary Review form, will provide comments as indicated on the form.

This form is due in the Dean's Office by the first Monday in December.

Faculty Salary Committee Recommendation

The Faculty Salary Committee will make a recommendation of a merit score for the next three years and will provide this information to the Dean along with a brief (one paragraph) rationale for the merit score. This rationale will be conveyed to the faculty member at the conclusion of the review.

Meeting with the Dean

After the review, faculty members who have been reviewed will be invited to meet individually with the Dean for discussion of the review, their accomplishments, and the new goals. This meeting will emphasize professional growth and development. Reviewing successes over the previous three years, especially in light of the previous review documents, may serve as a useful touchstone in setting goals for the next several years that are both significant and achievable. This is also the appropriate time to discuss with the Dean the institutional and external resources that could be needed to meet the faculty member's professional goals for the next stage of his or her career.

Merit Scores Based on Contract Renewal or Promotion Reviews

For faculty members whose merit scores will be established by a contract renewal or promotion review, the department does not need to prepare a report separate from the personnel review dossier. Directly after their vote on the recommendation to renew the contract (or to promote), the Personnel Committee will establish a merit score to be communicated to and used by the Faculty Salary Committee.

Associate Professors who have had a merit score established as part of a tenure and/or promotion review will undergo the first salary merit review in the third year following the year of the tenure review, and will continue with the three-year merit cycle from there.

An Associate Professor may undergo review for promotion to the rank of Professor at any point in the three-year cycle of salary reviews regularly conducted by the Faculty Salary Committee. At the end of a review for promotion to Professor, consistent with other faculty reviews, the Personnel Committee will establish a merit score for that faculty member according to the rating system used by the Budget Committee. In the year following review for promotion to Professor, the faculty member will enter a new three-year review cycle with the merit score set by Personnel Committee. However, if there is an overlap of one or two years between the old and new cycles, the merit score that determines salary increment during the overlapping period shall be the higher of the two.

Like other long-serving faculty members, the regular Assistant and Associate Professors on renewable contracts e.g., P.E. and Library will have merit scores established on a three year rotation. For them, merit scores are set by the Personnel Committee in years of their six-year interim reviews for contract renewal, and by the Faculty Salary Committee at the three-year midpoint of this contract cycle. Tenure-track Assistant Professors and other regular, continuing faculty members not on six-year contracts will normally have their merit scores established by the Personnel Committee as a part of the contract renewal or promotion review process. All faculty merit scores are then used by the Faculty Salary Committee in calculating the merit portion of annual salary increases.