

# **Merit Raise Guidelines and Criteria**

**Department of Polymer Engineering**

## **Approval Signatures and Date**

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**Sadhan C. Jana, Department Chair**

**Date**

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**Frank N. Kelley, Dean**

**Date**

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**Elizabeth J. Stroble, Provost**

**Date**

## Merit Raise Guidelines and Criteria

The guidelines and merit raise criteria presented below were developed by the bargaining unit members of the faculty of the Department of Polymer Engineering and revision voted on November 9, 2006. It appears that the relative weight assignment for teaching, research, and service in the merit raise criteria does not conform to the related workload norms established by OBR for Ph.D. granting Departments. The norms established by OBR apply to Departments offering both undergraduate and graduate programs, while the faculty of the Department of Polymer Engineering is primarily responsible for its graduate program. In fact much of our teaching effort is dedicated to individual and group instruction on research methods and practices rather than in the formal classroom setting as envisioned by the OBR norms. The workload and enrollment in the Department of Polymer Engineering is determined by the ability to support graduate students from external research grants and contracts. This in turn requires continual faculty commitment in writing grant proposals and soliciting contacts with industrial sponsors and federal funding agencies in a highly competitive setting, which impose heavy workload on the faculty. The grant writing activities and funding attainment have become priority for the faculty of the Department of Polymer Engineering as sustaining high level of research output and maintaining constant stream of graduates for polymer industry are two important mission objectives of the Department of Polymer Engineering.

### A. Merit Criteria

#### A.1 General Merit Criteria

1. Except as provided below for certain special cases, the performance measures in teaching, research, and service are to weigh respectively 30%, 50%, and 10% in the overall rating. *A weight of 10% to be assigned by the Department Chair to reflect the general overall contributions made by the faculty member including instructors, college lecturers, and non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member.*
2. Research performance will be computed as follows:
  - 34% weight to be given on number of publications in peer-reviewed journals and as book chapters in calendar year.
  - 33% weight to be given on research funding generated in calendar year.
  - 33% weight to be given on the total number of MS and Ph.D. students graduated in calendar year.
3. Teaching performance will be computed based on student evaluations received by the Department for each course taught.

4. The following items will be considered to performance in the service category:
  - Membership in Departmental Committees
  - Membership in College Committees
  - Membership in University Committees
  - Organizational activities in professional societies

It is accepted that the assigned weights to teaching, research, and service mentioned in items 1 and 2 above provide general guidance to the Department Chair for calculation of merit points for each bargaining unit faculty member. In view of a high weight (50%) assigned to research productivity in item 1, three special cases need to be considered as in **A.2**, **A.3**, and **A.4**.

#### **A.2 Non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member**

It is conceivable that a beginning faculty member may not be performing with the same level of research productivity as tenured faculty member within the first 3-4 years of being in the Department of Polymer Engineering. In view of this, a different weight system must be considered for beginning faculty members so as to calculate equivalent merit points based on their activities in teaching and service.

For beginning faculty members in their first 4 years, the performance measures in teaching, research, and service to weigh respectively 40%, 20%, and 30% in the overall rating. The beginning faculty may, however, opt to be evaluated by the general criteria within this period, in which case he/she may write a letter to the Department Chair expressing desire to be evaluated by the general criteria.

#### **A.3 College lecturer**

Although the Department of Polymer Engineering does not currently have full-time non tenure-track faculty members, it is prudent to consider this option at this time and include in the merit guidelines. The definition of “college lecturers” is given in University Rule, 3359-20-06.2. **Table 1** presents a summary of the relative weights for calculation of merit points.

#### **A.4 Instructors**

Although the Department of Polymer Engineering does not currently have an instructor, it is prudent to consider this option at this time and include in the merit guidelines. The definition of “instructor” is given in University Rule, 3359-20-03.

It is considered that an instructor’s primary responsibility is teaching although some activities in service and research categories are expected. In view of this, an instructor in the Department of Polymer Engineering will be considered for merit raise based on 60% weight on teaching, 10% weight on research, and 20% weight on service. **Table 1** presents a summary of the relative weights for calculation of merit points.

**Table 1.** *Relative weight of teaching, research, and service in calculation of merit points of bargaining unit faculty members. In each case, the total weight is 90%. Additional 10% weight will be assigned by Department Chair.*

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Relative weight</b>	<b>Subcategories</b>
<b>Teaching</b>	40% for beginning faculty in first 4 years 90% for lecturers 60% for instructors 30% for others.	Undergraduate rating based on 4.0 scale to be rescaled using College of Engineering average and Department of Polymer Engineering average.
<b>Research</b>	20% for beginning faculty in first 4 years 0% for lecturers 10% for instructors 50% for others.	34% weight on peer-reviewed publications and book chapter 33% weight on research funding 33% weight on total number of MS and Ph.D. students graduated
<b>Service</b>	30% for beginning faculty in first 4 years 0% for lecturers 20% for instructors 10% for others.	Membership in Departmental committees, College committees, University committees, organizational activities in professional societies are considered as service.

## **B. Merit Points**

The general criteria described above serve as guidance for computation of merit points in each category of teaching, research, and service. Article 16, Section 8.C indicates the following merit point assignments: “unsatisfactory” = 1; “satisfactory” = 2; “meritorious” = 3; “outstanding” = 4; “extraordinary” = 5.

### **B.1 Merit points in teaching**

A metric was voted for assignment of merit points 1-5 to teaching rating ( $T$ ) based on the Departmental average ( $m_T$ ) and standard deviation ( $\sigma_T$ ).

On a 5.0 point scale, scores below 3.0 and 2.5 for teaching respectively a graduate and undergraduate course are unsatisfactory. Since teaching rating for undergraduate classes by the College of Engineering is given on a 4.0 scale, the rating will be normalized with the engineering average up to the average of the Department of Polymer Engineering graduate course. A rating of 5.0 (maximum) is considered extraordinary. The faculty voted in unanimity to approve the method presented in **Table 2** to determine the merit points in teaching.

**Table 2.** Calculation of merit points in teaching. Teaching evaluation rating on a 5.0 point scale is  $T$ , Departmental average is  $m_T$ , and standard deviation is  $\sigma_T$ .

<b>Performance category</b>	<b>Teaching evaluation rating</b>
Unsatisfactory	Graduate course: $T < 3.0$ Undergraduate course: $T < 2.5$
Satisfactory	$(m_T - \frac{\sigma_T}{2}) \leq T < (m_T + \frac{\sigma_T}{2})$
Meritorious	$(m_T + \frac{\sigma_T}{2}) \leq T < (m_T + \sigma_T)$
Outstanding	$5.0 > T \geq (m_T + \sigma_T)$
Extraordinary	5.0

## **B.2 Merit points in research**

### **(a) Merit point in research funding**

In the category of research funding per year the following lower limits ( $L$ ) define *unsatisfactory* rating: \$10,000 or less for assistant professor, \$25,000 or less for associate professor, \$50,000 or less for professor. For ratings of satisfactory to superior, average ( $m_R$ ) and standard deviation ( $\sigma_R$ ) will be computed and compared with the dollar amount of research funding ( $R$ ) of the faculty as presented in **Table 3**. Note that the Departmental average of research funding ( $R$ ) is currently approximately \$135,000 per faculty per year.

**Table 3.** Calculation of merit points in research funding. The level of research funding per year is  $R$  with departmental yearly average is  $m_R$  and standard deviation is  $\sigma_R$ .

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Research funding level</b>
Unsatisfactory	Assistant professor $\leq \$10,000$ Associate professor $\leq \$25,000$ Professor $\leq \$50,000$
Satisfactory	$L < R < (m_R + \frac{\sigma_R}{2})$
Meritorious	$(m_R + \frac{\sigma_R}{2}) \leq R < (m_R + \sigma_R)$
Outstanding	$(m_R + \sigma_R) \leq R < (m_R + 2\sigma_R)$
Extraordinary	$R \geq (m_R + 2\sigma_R)$

***(b) Merit point in peer-reviewed publications***

Faculty agreed to adopt the method presented in **Table 4** for calculation of merit points in the category of peer-reviewed publications. It was agreed that a book chapter will be considered equivalent to one peer-reviewed publication and a book will be considered equivalent to the same number of peer-reviewed publications as the number of chapters in the book, excluding Introduction.

**Table 4.** Merit points for peer-reviewed publications.

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Number of peer-reviewed journal publications in a calendar year</b>
Unsatisfactory	No publications
Satisfactory	2
Meritorious	4
Outstanding	6
Extraordinary	>6

***(c) Merit point assignment in student graduation***

A rolling average of the total number of students graduated in a three-year period will be used to award merit points. An “*unsatisfactory*” rating will be given if no student graduated in a period of last three years. Other ratings are as presented in **Table 5**.

**Table 5.** Merit points for student graduation.

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Rolling average of number of students graduated per year over a three-year period</b>
Unsatisfactory	No student graduated
Satisfactory	1
Meritorious	2
Outstanding	3
Extraordinary	>3

**B.3 Merit points in service**

Faculty voted by majority that faculty members not involved in any service activities other than RTP committees will be rated *unsatisfactory*. Other ratings are presented in **Table 6**.

**Table 6.** *Merit points for service.*

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Number of committee assignments in a calendar year</b>
Unsatisfactory	No committee assignment other than RTP committees
Satisfactory	1 (in addition to RTP committees)
Meritorious	2 (in addition to RTP committees)
Outstanding	3 (in addition to RTP committees)
Extraordinary	>3 (in addition to RTP committees)

**B4. Merit point assignment for faculty on “professional development leave (PDL)”**

Faculty members on PDL for a period of 1-2 semesters may not contribute in either of teaching, research, or service categories as other fulltime faculty members in the Department. In view of this, a separate criterion must be adopted. Note that faculty members on PDL provide a detailed plan of work at the time of PDL application.

All faculty members on PDL are required to submit reports to the Department Chair and the Dean. The faculty voted (Yes – 9, Abstain – 1) that the Department Chair will assign “*satisfactory*” rating if all tasks in the PDL plan were met. **Table 7** presents the scope for other ratings.

**Table 7.** *Merit points for faculty on PDL.*

<b>Performance Rating</b>	<b>Completion of task as included in the plan</b>
Unsatisfactory	Task not completed
Satisfactory	Task completed as presented in the plan
Meritorious	Higher rating if activities exceed those presented in the plan. Chair uses discretion to provide higher rating.
Outstanding	
Extraordinary	

**B5. Merit point assignment for faculty on leaves other than PDL**

Faculty members on paid leave of absence as qualified in Article 17, Section 2 may not contribute in either of teaching, research, or service categories as other fulltime faculty members in active duty in the Department. In this case, the Department Chair will assign “*satisfactory*” rating for the duration of paid leave of absence.

### **C. Relationship between merit raise criteria and RTP criteria**

The faculty of the Department of Polymer Engineering acknowledges that deliberations on RTP and merit raise have no relationship. Thus, obtaining “*satisfactory*”, “*meritorious*”, “*outstanding*”, or “*extraordinary*” ratings in the merit raise calculations does not automatically guarantee retention, tenure, or promotion in the Department of Polymer Engineering. The deliberations on retention, tenure, and promotion use a different set of approved criteria and are to be held separately from the deliberations on merit raise. In addition, granting of retention, tenure, and promotion does not automatically warrant “*satisfactory*” or superior ratings in merit raise calculations. Faculty voted unanimously to accept the guidelines in this section.