

Department of Psychology
Guidelines for Merit Review
Adopted April 3, 2024

- The Department shall have a standing Merit committee, comprised of one member from each area, and elected to 2-year terms by the faculty at large as specified in the by-laws. Each year, the new Merit Committee shall elect a returning member to serve as its Chair.
- Faculty will complete the Annual Activity Report (AAR) distributed by the college and submit it to the Department Chair in line with deadlines established by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).
- When new Merit committee members are elected, and before the deadline for submission of AARs, the Department Chair shall meet with the elected merit committee and provide the charge to the committee.
- The Department Chair will instruct the committee to evaluate teaching, research, and service in accordance with a faculty member's assignment during the past year. In 2019-20, the Merit committee conducted a test of the reliability of the previous scoring system (5-point numeric scale) versus a categorical approach using three categories. The categorical approach proved to have better indicators of rater reliability. Hence, moving forward, the committee will use the categorical approach adopted by the faculty in Spring 2024.
- Categories are:
 - Exceeds Expectations--Distinguished annual report
 - Exceeds Expectations
 - Meets Expectations
 - Does not Meet Expectations in at least one or more areas
- When the majority of department faculty are highly productive in their assigned duties, most faculty would appropriately be categorized as “exceeding expectations.” “Distinction” would be limited to individuals who had a qualitatively more successful or high-impact year as evidenced by a teaching award or significant research achievement (e.g., publication in Nature, award of a large grant, etc.). This category would include fewer faculty even among a highly productive faculty.
- Committee members should use the four categories to produce four ratings when applicable: a research rating, a teaching rating, a service rating, and an overall rating. The overall score should reflect a composite of the research, teaching, and service activities for each faculty member, taking into account their assignment. Accounting for assignment is critical in order to have equitable evaluations. Note that the categories of research, teaching, and service are broad and encompass a wide range of activities, in some cases varying by assignment. For example:
 - Graduate mentoring is reflected both in teaching and research and may be evidenced by the inclusion of graduate students as co-authors on manuscripts and presentations, as well as mentoring of theses and dissertations.

- Some faculty members have assignments in teaching and service with no FTE for research. Faculty members who do not have research assignments may be actively engaged in mentoring undergraduate students in research, an important contribution to our experiential learning mission. Such faculty may also publish and present their work; these contributions reflect active engagement in their respective fields that contribute to the currency of teaching materials and expertise in their fields. As such, these activities may be reflected in scores for teaching or professional service. However, these activities are not required to demonstrate excellence in teaching or service.
- Committee members evaluate all faculty members on department payroll **except themselves**.
- Each committee member independently generates scores based on a thorough review of each AAR.
- The committee should set an internal deadline for the compilation of initial reviews and set a meeting to discuss preliminary scores for faculty not on the committee. After discussion, members may or may not choose to modify scores based on these discussions.
- Committee members submit independent final scores confidentially to the Merit Committee Chair, who is responsible for creating the final summary scores for faculty who are not members of the Merit Committee.
- Each Merit Committee member submits their final scores for the other merit committee members directly to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will create the final summary score for these faculty members.
- The committee chair will also submit any information on analyses conducted to examine inter-rater correspondence along with a summary statement about the current year's process to inform subsequent committees and the faculty.
- Ratings and assessment materials are **CONFIDENTIAL** and are to be discussed only with other merit committee members or the Department Chair. Comments made during committee meetings are confidential. Any AARs downloaded during the review process should be deleted once the merit review is concluded. All materials are maintained on a secure site (e.g., TEAMS); only the department chair and the committee members have access to these materials. De-identified materials may be archived on this site for future committee use.
- In addition to scores, committee members are encouraged to make comments that could assist the department chair in interpreting scores or may be useful in drafting annual letters. Comments, like the merit scores, should be based solely on the 12-month period of the AAR, and will be used at the discretion of the department chair.
- The department chair will provide each faculty member with their annual merit information subsequent to the completion of the annual letters. Merit information will not be presented in the annual letter.
- Faculty questions about their scores should be addressed to the department chair or the merit committee chair, who may choose to refer questions to the department chair. Scores are generated by the committee, and individual committee members should not be approached with questions or concerns.