

## **Merit Policy**

### **Biomedical Engineering Department**

**Purpose:** Merit raises and bonuses for faculty (Tenure/Tenure Track, Teaching, and Research) in the Department of Biomedical Engineering are based on the principle that faculty should be evaluated in proportion to their assigned duties in teaching, research, service, and/or administration.

1. Since merit raises become part of the base salary, may not be available every year, and can be substantial, the evaluation for a merit raise should include the entire period since the last merit raise. Faculty will not be penalized for contractually approved leave.
2. Similarly, evaluation for a merit bonus should cover the full period since the last bonus was awarded. Faculty on contractually approved leave during this period will not be penalized.

**Definitions:** Meritorious activity denotes a level of performance that surpasses what is deemed satisfactory; accordingly, a satisfactory evaluation does not in itself justify the awarding of merit, nor does the absence of merit imply that a faculty member's performance was unsatisfactory

**Eligibility Criteria:** Merit raises and bonuses are based on the annual faculty evaluations, using the weighted percentage of assigned duties as outlined in faculty workload assignments.

1. **Evaluation Period**
  - a) If more than one academic year has passed since the last merit raise or bonus, the evaluation will consider the equally weighted average of all annual faculty evaluations since the previous raise or bonus, up to a maximum of three years. To avoid double-counting, if merit raises or bonuses are awarded in consecutive years, only the previous year's evaluation will be considered for the second award.
  - b) For the purposes of this merit policy, a missing evaluation should not be considered as only "satisfactory" by default. In the event that a faculty member has no annual evaluations during the eligible period (e.g., due to a full-year medical leave), the Chair should make their best professional and may request the faculty member to submit a brief summary or additional documentation to aid in determining merit, but older evaluations beyond the eligible period should not be substituted.
2. **Partial Service During Evaluation Period:** For eligible faculty members who were not employed at the start of the evaluation period described above (e.g., newly hired faculty), the merit raise or bonus may be prorated accordingly.

**Procedure/Method of Distribution:** The decision to award a merit increase or bonus is made by the Chair of the Department using the following method: Relative performance score of each faculty in the eligibility criteria will be utilized as a guideline for splitting the merit/bonus pool. This means that higher-performing faculty, based on annual evaluations on a scale of 1–5 with a weighted average calculated each year, will receive a merit increase: 1 – Unsatisfactory, 2 – Satisfactory, 3 – Good, 4 – Very Good, and 5 – Outstanding. Only faculty with an overall rating of "Good" (3) or better, and no evaluation of "Unsatisfactory" in any assigned area, are eligible to receive a merit raise or bonus. The

Chair will set a threshold that may take into consideration factors such as the time since the last merit raise (or bonus, as appropriate), the size of the merit pool, whether there is an accompanying across-the-board raise, and clustering of weighted averages; however, the threshold must be 3.0 or higher. The Chair will set a second threshold that will split the “highest performers” (Group A) and the remaining faculty who have otherwise met the Chair’s first threshold (Group B). Subject to the restriction that Group A not have a single individual, and that all raises in Group A are higher than in Group B, the Chair will award raises in Group A consistent with the ordering of Group A’s weighted average performance score and will award equal amounts to all individuals in Group B. The threshold, cut, and slope will be set taking into consideration the existence of particular bounds (maximum and minimum) for the specific cycle.

If implementing rules above, conflicts with the superseding requirements of the university, including the CBA, the Chair shall make best efforts to distribute funds consistent with those requirements, minimizing deviation from the method of distribution.

Recommended for Approval by the Department: 09/22/2025

Approved by the Dean: 10/17/2025

Approved by Provost Faculty Leadership & Success: 01/12/2026