

College of Arts and Sciences
2007 Faculty Merit
Unit Merit Process
May 22, 2006

The spring 2006 faculty merit exercise included a separate unit merit allocation intended to bridge the considerable gap between A&S department salaries and their AAU peers. The Provost Office contributed \$531,294 and A&S self-funded \$265,647 for a total allocation of \$796,941. Anticipating a four year phased approach, these dollars represent approximately 32% of the total funds required to correct inequities across the college estimated at \$2,463,000 (relative to 2005 AAU data). A proportional share of Provost dollars were transferred to the Graduate Dean to allow for adjustment of some of the 14 graduate school faculty tenured in A&S with salaries below the AAU.

In accordance with the principles of salary compensation, these dollars were differentially awarded in favor of the most meritorious units with deviations from their AAU peer salaries. In consultation with the department chairs, A&S implemented a process to identify and rank highly meritorious departments.

The college solicited unit merit justifications from departments requesting a specific format to allow for comparability between units. Thirty one documents were submitted. These justifications summarized data on national rankings (NRC, USNWR, etc.), publication productivity related to peers, graduate placement, faculty awards, and undergraduate teaching accomplishments. Each merit justification was reviewed, evaluated, and ranked by a committee comprised of 10 reviewers. The reviewers consisted of the dean and the current associate deans (4 reviewers); associate dean emeriti from each division (3 reviewers); and senior faculty from outside the college (3 reviewers).

Along with a copy of every merit justification, each reviewer received supplementary information including salary data relative to the AAU (2005 data) and performance data including degrees awarded, student credit hours, department course workload rating, and department undergraduate GPA. Each reviewer confidentially ranked each unit as a 3 (highest), 2, or 1 (lowest) with an equal distribution of ratings. The reviewers' ratings were combined to determine an average score used to rank each document relative to the other merit justifications.

Once ranked, the units were divided into three tiers. The top tier had the 5 most meritorious units. The second tier consisted of 17 second most meritorious units and the third tier had 9 units. It should be pointed out that the reviewers did not consider those third tier departments as below quality, only that their justification for merit relative to AAU was less compelling than for other units.

ATTACHMENT 2

Once a unit was placed within a tier, it was ranked within that tier relative to the percent difference between the department's average salary and the AAU average salary. In the top tier, units ranged from 97.3% to 93.45% below their AAU average salary. The second tier ranged from 102.54% to 82.76%. The third tier average department salary ranged from 98.99% to 83.54% of their AAU average.

An algorithm to address the most egregious AAU discrepancies while rewarding the most meritorious units was developed and used to target the top tier to bring those departments to 102% of their AAU average salary, the second tier at 99%, and the third tier at 94%. The target salary was then divided by 4 years.

Each unit was informed of their unit merit award and instructed to award those dollars in accordance with university policy on "merit" to tenure and tenure track faculty only. Departments were specifically instructed not do a simple across the board as an equal distribution allocation does not fall within the principles of merit allocation, and none did. All departments allocated these funds based on a committee assessment of individual merit, with most units targeting highly meritorious individuals at the associate and full ranks with compressed salaries.

Over the summer the College will analyze these allocations and report the outcome to the campus, and recommend any needed improvements to this allocation system for next year's exercise.