

Feedback on Annual Report of Faculty Activity & Merit Process

TAUP sent an email on October 11, 2010, asking for feedback about the new Annual Report of Faculty Activity. We received responses from a cross-section of schools and colleges. Many faculty suggested changes in categories, and we have passed this information on to the administration. (You can see a detailed summary of the comments that faculty made below).

In contract negotiations, TAUP and the administration agreed on a couple of basic goals: (1) standardize the merit application process and (2) have everyone considered for merit automatically. However, in some ways, obstacles remain. While for all faculty the annual report was *necessary* for merit consideration, in some schools and colleges it was *not sufficient*. We heard that in many cases, supplementary materials were required from faculty. Furthermore, the schools and colleges that asked for additional materials set due dates for submission that varied by as much as two months.

We believe that application for merit should be uniform and fair. If there are differences in the way supplementary materials are handled, the playing field for merit awards will not be level. Although each discipline will have its unique requirements beyond the annual report, certain aspects could be standardized.

Some TAUP recommendations:

- All schools and colleges could announce at the same time what supplemental material is needed.
- All schools and colleges could set the same due date for submission.
- All schools and colleges could use the same general list of supplemental materials that are needed.
- The necessary documentation for activities or accomplishments could be uniform.

TAUP would like to know your thoughts about the issues that we have raised concerning annual reports and merit applications, and the solutions we have put forth. And if you also have other comments to make about the annual reports, we would like to hear those as well. See the full summary of faculty comments below.

Send your comments to taupaft@aol.com.

Below is a summary of the feedback that TAUP faculty sent us.

MODIFICATIONS TO FORM OR CONTENT OF THE ANNUAL REPORTS

Procedures

- Want to be able to enter information year round
- Would like to work on report early, but not lock it down until I know that I have entered everything I want – some things could come to my attention later [since this was possible, better instructions will fix this]
- Should be able to save form as pdf in my own files

Better categories (Needed categories italicized and underlined)

- Should be clearer: where to submit *workshops and/or other professional development-related information*
- *Media interviews* should have own category – not “other” in Talks/Abstracts/Papers presented
- I am a member of several types of *professional associations* – should “service type” be committee participation or service – need better category
- “*Book chapters*” should be under “Books.” How to enter *authors* confusing – when chapter is in edited book; should all editors be listed or just my name as author of chapter?
- *Merit summary should include categories* in which applicant wants to apply
- Need better explanation of *different advising roles*; e.g., dissertation reader versus committee member; what about *informal advising of students*?
- “Talks” category does not include option for *organizing/moderating conference panels*
- I produce *technical reports that are filed with various state agencies*; these can be accessed by other professionals – no good category since these are neither journal publication or monograph; decided to use “scholarly activity,” but did not seem good fit
- What belongs in the “*Merit Overview*” section; need clearer instructions and/or explanation
- Not all my *artistic activities* (e.g., in music) had appropriate categories
- Rather than use form with generalized categories, ask for updated CV with merit year activities bolded.

POSITIVE RESPONSES

- Help with problems easily available and effective; could speak with real person
- Procedure of filling out form easy; wonderful to have web-based, accessible anywhere, standardized reporting
- Does provide sense that merit decisions will be made with greater transparency
- Improvement over onerous and inflexible form required in my department (CLA)
- Like ability to start and stop, with ability to go back later
- Found that the time and trouble it took to assemble necessary material was worthwhile

NEGATIVE RESPONSES

Technical difficulties

- Several courses teach/taught were not listed and it was not easy to enter correct info and delete incorrect.
- Difficulties in uploading resume
- Repeated problems in submitting report
- Individual music lessons – not easy to retrieve class info from previous semesters (CRN number can be difficult to find)

Required too much time

- Time consuming
- Time spent filling out form (too much) interfered with real work
- Annual report seems beside the point – just extra work, because CLA required so much other supporting material for merit application (Several comments along these lines)
- Spent day and a half filling it out – many different types of work and contributions – way too long
- Didn't submit merit in because we had to submit everything again; duplication or reporting is tiresome (Comment not from CLA)

Don't like tying money to report

- Degrading to withhold part of ATB unless annual report submitted
- I don't believe in tying money to submission of form – I did not earn the money
- How was 97% response achieved? Seems high for tiny increase.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR MERIT APPLICATION

- NTT/Teaching & Instruction – Course evaluations
- My school doesn't know enough about the different kinds of work faculty do to know what to ask for
- **CST** – CV
- **CLA** – long list of required supplemental information, much of which duplicated information in the annual report.
- **SCT** – Copy of Annual Report; copy of first three pages of SFFs for each course taught in the merit year; summary (max length 2 pages) of accomplishments in merit year; Minimal documentation of these – i.e., copy of journal table of contents or festival or play program
- **BCMD** – same information and supporting materials as previous years