

Department of Accounting and Taxation

Merit Criteria

and

Procedures

for

Tenure-Track Faculty

This version approved: Fall 2013

Accounting Area Merit Criteria and Procedures As of Fall 2013

Background

The accounting department views the most important roles of accounting and tax faculty to be research and teaching.

Research that is worthy of merit should be impactful (described further below) and, as such, will include all manner of applied, empirical, and theoretical studies.

Teaching is critical to the department and the school because we view preparing students for successful careers and leadership positions in accounting and tax (and related areas) to be a major part of our mission. In addition, since several career paths require, or are enhanced by, certification exams, we believe we add value for our students in providing them with a solid foundation for successful completion of such exams. To be effective teachers, faculty should use current, effective pedagogical techniques, and strive, where needed, to develop new and innovative techniques. Effective teaching also requires that our faculty, more so than in any other business discipline, continually update their knowledge since the body of professional accounting and tax literature is continually evolving.

In addition to conducting impactful research and engaging in effective teaching, faculty can enhance the efforts of the department, school, or university by performing services (examples of which are listed below). Generally these activities will contribute either directly or indirectly to student or faculty development, or will provide significant administrative assistance to the schools of business or to Fordham University.

In order to recognize faculty for meritorious contributions in these three areas (research, teaching, and service), we believe that faculty should be eligible to receive merit raises according to the guidelines presented further below.

Also, our view is that faculty may be eligible for merit for each of the three areas independently. Thus a faculty member with little (no) activity in one area may still be eligible for merit if the faculty member can demonstrate significant accomplishments in another area. However, we do not view the three areas as carrying equal weight in evaluating merit; rather we view the relative importance as follows: 1. Research, 2. Teaching, and lastly 3. Service.

Also, at present, it is our understanding that merit is available from the university only for tenured and tenure-track faculty members.

Finally, we emphasize that merit decisions are independent from promotion and tenure decisions. Merit decisions are made simply to allocate funds to faculty for meritorious research, teaching, and service. The criteria for both sets of decisions may share some commonalities, but the criteria are not to be considered the same. Moreover, the processes for each decision differ in significant ways, including how the criteria are used and interpreted.

The accounting area's criteria for merit are below.

Research

To be counted for purposes of merit, research is defined as acceptance during the respective calendar year of a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. (The manuscript may count for merit only once. So if an article is accepted in one year and published in a subsequent year, the year of acceptance will be used to determine merit.) To be considered for merit, the research must be impactful. Impactful research is accepted research that will be published in an acceptable research outlet and that is deemed likely to provide significant effects on future research or practice. An acceptable research outlet is one that is widely respected by either the academic community or the practitioner community.

Acceptable research outlets will evolve over time and are a matter of subjective assessments. However, there are some academic studies that can be used as a guide.¹ Nonetheless, even with a consensus on acceptable research outlets, not all research will be judged to be equally meritorious by those who make merit decisions. Also, to the extent that collaboration in research efforts across academic disciplines is consistent with the goals of the department, research outlets from other fields could also be acceptable.

Teaching

To be considered for merit for teaching, faculty must demonstrate unique and outstanding (“above average”) efforts or accomplishments with respect to pedagogy. Evidence of such teaching can include the following:

- Development of new courses
- Concrete examples of new teaching methods, as well as evidence that these are well received by the students
- Strong teaching evaluations, particularly across a range of courses during the academic year
- Development of new cases
- Coordinating courses
- Evidence of active participation in special teaching seminars, such as those held by the Center for Teaching Excellence
- Willingness to share effective ideas and teaching methods with other faculty
- Willingness to attend, if asked, other faculty members’ classes as an observer for the purposes of promoting teaching effectiveness
- University wide awards for teaching effectiveness

¹ We note two recent manuscripts as guides, namely:

1. Glover, Steven M.; Prawitt, Douglas F.; and Wood, David A., Publication Records of Faculty Promoted at the Top 75 Accounting Research Programs, *Issues in Accounting Education*, Vol. 21, No. 3, August 2006, pp. 195-218.
2. Coyne, Joshua G.; Summers, Scott L.; Williams, Brady; Wood, David A., Accounting Program Research Rankings by Topical Area and Methodology, *Issues in Accounting Education*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 2010, pp. 631-654.

The individual faculty member has the primary responsibility of demonstrating meritorious teaching to the merit committee (described below) mainly because much of the evidence of effective teaching, particularly innovative techniques, would not be known beyond the teacher himself or herself.

Service

Although service to the department, the schools of business, and to the university can be valuable and therefore worthy of acknowledgment through merit, we consider the service component to be third in importance, behind research and teaching.

Below are examples of meritorious service:

- Chairing special committees or actively participating in special committees
- Performing the role of faculty sponsor for student groups, such as those involved in regional or national accounting or tax competitions
- Interacting in major ways with accounting firms or other organizations to help students obtain internships or permanent positions
- Designing and implementing new programs or degrees
- Acting as a faculty sponsor for honor societies and arranging networking opportunities for students

Procedure

Merit Committee

The departmental merit committee will consist of at least three, but not more than 5 members of the faculty. These members will be chosen each year by the faculty at large. All full time tenured and tenure-track faculty are eligible to serve on the merit committee. Members of the merit committee are eligible for merit. However, members of the merit committee will recuse themselves when their merit application is discussed by other members of the committee.

The merit committee members have discretion over, and will reach a consensus on, how to make the recommendations to the Dean of Faculty, using their best, impartial judgments. By necessity, however, merit decisions are subjective in nature due to the lack of objective measures of research impact, effectiveness of teaching, and meaningfulness of service activities.

Merit Application

All Accounting Area faculty who wish to apply for merit must fill out the relevant section of the Faculty Activity Report (FAR) at my.fordham.edu and complete and submit, either in hard copy or by email, the following merit form to the Area Chair by March 15th. Along with the completed merit form, each faculty must provide any corroborating materials (such as the citation of the published article or evidence of acceptance, course outline for new courses developed, etc.). The Area Chair will distribute all completed merit forms (and attachments) to members of the merit committee.

The merit committee will first determine the merit recipients from non-merit recipients. Next, the merit committee will rank the merit recipients into three groups: outstanding, impressive, and noteworthy, where the benchmarks for each are the above guidelines, as well as the current pool of merit recipients.

The list of merit recipients and their proposed rankings (outstanding, impressive, and noteworthy) will be sent to the Dean of Faculty by April 15th.

The process by which the merit committee assesses each application is up to the committee. The committee may decide, for instance, to use a "point system" (such as 3 for outstanding, 2 for impressive, and 1 for noteworthy) and then apply this system to each of the three areas (research, teaching, and service), followed by an aggregation of the scores *across* the three areas. The merit committee may also, at their discretion, agree on relative weights for the three areas (such as 50% for research, 40% for teaching, and 10% for service). However, rather than points, the committee may decide to use only subjective comments.

The below form is a sample only, and provides space for points or subjective comments.

Faculty Name: John Doe Year: 20XX		Merit Committee Member # (assuming 5 members)					Average or Summary
		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	
Evidence of Meritorious Research (please attach any relevant materials, such as acceptance letter and abstract)		Points or Comments	Points or Comments	Points or Comments	Points or Comments	Points or Comments	
1	TAR	3 points (outstanding)	3	3	3	3	3
2							
3							
4							
5							
Summary							
Evidence of Meritorious Teaching (please attach any relevant materials)							
1	New course materials	1 point (noteworthy)	2 points (impressive)	1	0	1	1
2							
3							
4							
5							
Summary							
Evidence of Meritorious Service (please attach any relevant materials)							
1	Served on Curriculum Committee	1 point (noteworthy)	1	2 points (impressive)	2	1	1.4
2							
3							
4							
5							
Summary or Weighted Average (assuming a 50/40/10 weighting for research/teaching/service)		2.00	2.40	2.10	1.70	2.00	2.04