

## Guidelines for Assessing Strong Performance

Approved by Faculty Affairs (March 2016)

### Introduction

According to *Faculty Handbook* (15.1) step advancements within rank are awarded in part on the basis of “strong performance”:

While *eligibility* for a step advancement is based on years at rank and educational preparation, *earning* a step advancement is based on merit, as defined for each rank (see Section 6.3.1, 6.3.2, and 6.3.3).

Recommendation for step advancement by the academic dean to the Provost is based on *strong performance* relative to the standards at the appropriate rank, determined by annual and periodic review documents, including PDPs, self-assessments, and annual evaluations (*italics added*).

Strong performance is determined first by the attainment of minimal standards in each of **four** areas (numbered below). Second, strong performance must be demonstrated beyond the minima in one or more of these areas, as determined by the academic dean. In rare cases, Deans may recommend to the Provost that an exception be made to satisfying all of these minimal standards.

### Minimum standards prerequisite to Strong Performance

- 1) For **teaching**, the prerequisite is documentation of (A) a record of successful teaching and consistent strong student evaluation scores; and (B) focused efforts on improvement or innovation in the achievement of student learning outcomes. The Professional Development Plan (PDP) will include one or more goals related to such growth, and strong performance will entail significant progress toward their accomplishment, as determined in the self-assessment and annual review processes.
- 2) For **advising**, the minimum requirement is (as appropriate to each faculty member) a PDP that includes goal(s) for the improvement of advising and documentation that advisees are being served adequately.
- 3) For **scholarship**, the minimum requirement is a PDP that sets out measurable goals for scholarly or creative products (consistent with departmental standards), with the achievement of an appropriate number of these goals as determined in the self-assessment and annual review processes.
- 4) For **service**, the minimum standard is service to a local church community and one significant university-wide (including but not limited to committee membership) or one substantial departmental service role, in each case, appropriate to academic rank and appointment. In unusual cases and with departmental approval significant service to the community may substitute for service directly to the university. Service also requires attendance at (or being officially excused from) New Student Convocation, Day of Common Learning, Faculty In-Service, Ivy Cutting and Commencement as well as school or department meetings.

### Requirements for Strong Performance

Beyond the prerequisite minima above, strong performance is defined as including additional, particularly noteworthy contribution(s). As examples, these could include especially innovative approaches to student learning, documentation of particularly effective teaching, evidence of strong mentoring, development of new courses or programs, attendance at workshops that bring improved teaching practices back to campus, scholarly products in excess of the minima, collaborative research across departments, research that involves student researchers, or special service roles at the program or university level. Strong performance illuminates the unique contributions made by faculty members.