

CENTER FOR LIBERAL AND APPLIED SOCIAL SCIENCES BENCHMARKS  
**February 2003**

General Philosophy:

In making its annual evaluation of faculty performance, the PAC is to weigh two factors: effort and accomplishment. The balance between these two varies in each scoring category with accomplishment becoming the more important consideration as the score increases.

Faculty members are expected to provide justification in their self evaluation and annual faculty performance survey to support the awarding of a satisfactory or higher ranking. This is especially the case where a faculty member believes that they deserve a high rating.

A score in the 1 range (1-1,1+) indicates that a faculty member a) has not put in an effort consistent with the department's minimum expectations in that category and/or b) has not performed at a level consistent with the department's minimum expectations.

A score in the 2 range (2-,2,2+) indicates that a faculty member a) has at least met minimum department performance expectations and/or b) has met the minimum departmental expectations with regard to effort. The higher the score in this category the more pronounced are the individual's accomplishments. Effort alone cannot place a faculty member in the upper range of this score.

A score in the 3 range (3-,3,3+) indicates that a faculty member has exceeded departmental expectations regarding performance in a category during the year. Level of effort may be a consideration in placing a faculty member within the 3 range but it is not a sufficient consideration to merit a ranking in this range. In their self evaluation the faculty member must justify why that score is merited.

The scores referred to here are for one year periods. Tenure requirements are not identical to merely summing up or averaging yearly evaluations. For example, consistent 2- scores in research might be achieved largely on the basis of having research in progress. Obtaining a satisfactory rating in research for tenure would require published works.

The benchmarks used here are for faculty having a normal teaching load. Any adjustment in that load or devotion of extra time to an activity (such as is periodically allowed for teaching) will result in the PAC using higher standards in their evaluation.

Faculty on leave will be evaluated on a qualitative scale developed by the PAC to take into account the specifics of their situation. They will not divide their time into the three categories as full time faculty do nor will the same benchmarks be used.

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time faculty do nor will the same benchmarks be used. Faculty should consult with the department head and PAC chair prior to beginning their leave so as to arrive at an agreed upon standard for evaluation. The faculty member, department head, and PAC chair may agree to amend this agreement once the leave is underway if the situation warrants.

Nothing in this document precludes the addition of new items nor is meant to exclude credit for items not listed. Until such time as the department can formally amend the listing of items, it will be left to the PAC's discretion how to handle cases of omission.

Activities such as consulting, preparing educational software or writing instructors' guides may be placed in the category that most appropriately fits the nature of the work completed. Faculty members should consult with the department chair and PAC chair as to placement. If the MPAC decides to move the activity to another category during deliberations, the faculty member involved may adjust his or her percentage of effort to reflect that change.

## TEACHING

minimum requirements for a 2 range score:

all of the following

- satisfactory or better student evaluations with due consideration give to grade distributions and the nature of the course
- course syllabi which clearly state the goals and objectives of the course
- course assignments appropriate to the level and subject matter of the course
- meeting classes
- meeting at least 5 office hours per week
- effective student advising
- routine updating of substantive course material and/or teaching methodologies (There is no expectation that this would occur in every course. There is an expectation that faculty are continually revising and adjusting their courses as new material and teaching technologies become available.)

all of the following as appropriate

- writing letters of recommendation
- participation in honors and other special studies projects when the opportunity to do so exists

1 range score

performance that does not warrant a satisfactory (2+,2,2-) ranking on the basis of the items listed above

3 range score

The following make a faculty member eligible for consideration for a 3 range score but do not

guarantee such a score. In their self evaluation the faculty member must justify why that score is merited. The PAC may conclude that the quality of the performance does not warrant such a score and assign a 2 or 2+ score

- teaching evaluations which are at least above average with due consideration given to grade distribution and the nature of the course.
- development of new courses or programs
- substantial revision in course content and/or teaching methodology
- structuring of courses in such a way that goals and objectives are met in an innovative fashion or one that requires a great deal of out-of-class contact with students or prep time. (The key here should be the benefit to the student and not simply the time involved. Course syllabi and assignments would be possible supporting evidence.)
- heavy teaching load or rotation
- engaging in student advising activities that go beyond those associated with helping one's own advisees
- engaging in student advising/mentoring that is central to special achievements by students
- writing an especially large number of letters of recommendation
- produce a major piece of educational software that is intended primarily for JMU and is not subject to external review [modified and moved from research]

## SERVICE

minimum requirements for a 2 range score (two of the following; the same activity area may be engaged in twice). Under normal circumstances the successful completion of assigned coordinator-type duties is sufficient to earn a 2 range score.

- serve on committees (department/college/university) that meet irregularly or for limited periods of time where the major contribution of the faculty member is to be physically present. (The minimum amount of combined meeting time for these committees is 15 hours)
- serve effectively on one department/college/university committee that is a "working committee."
- carry out departmental paperwork tasks that contribute to the department's ability to respond to university and college directives.
- serve effectively in an administrative capacity for an honor society
- serve effectively on the faculty senate
- review submissions for journals or books for publishers
- write a study guide or produce test question data base
- produce educational software that is intended primarily for JMU use and is not subject to external review

A faculty member may also cite the following:

- effectively represent the department/college/university at workshops or other professionally related activities
- effectively represent the department at JMU functions
- attend graduation and other functions identified in the handbook as requiring faculty attendance

(the presumption exists that simply attending these functions --regardless of how many-- cannot guarantee a 2 range score)

1 range score

performance that does not warrant a satisfactory (2+,2,2-) ranking on the basis of the items listed above

3 range score

The following make a faculty member eligible for consideration for a 3 range score but do not guarantee such a score. In their self evaluation the faculty member must justify why that score is merited. The PAC may conclude that the quality of the performance does not warrant such a score and assign a 2 or 2+ score.

- exceptional service on a "working committee(s)," including chairing the committee, that produces a product that is of importance to the department/college/university
- exceptional service for a honor society
- exceptional service on the faculty senate
- exceptional service at workshops or other professionally related activities that require a significant investment of time
- exceptional service in support of departmental, college, or university programs
- receive a major external consulting contract

## RESEARCH

Each volume in a multi-volume series shall be counted separately with the exact weight awarded to be decided by the PAC.

The PAC will award credit for a book in the academic year the contract is signed and the academic year in which galley proofs are produced is submitted. As a general rule the PAC will treat the

contract signing as equivalent to a refereed journal article and the completed book will be given greater weight than a refereed journal article. The PAC may adjust this weighting if it desires but must provide a justification for doing so.

minimum requirements for a 2 range score

2 of the following are required if 1 is a convention paper or poster presentation; more than 2 if there is no convention paper --or an equivalent--; only 1 is required if it is a refereed/juried convention paper that appears in proceedings. In years in which there is no money available for travel to conferences, the MPAC will take this factor into account in assigning satisfactory scores for Research.

- serve as a discussant on a panel or participate in a roundtable
- deliver a completed convention paper
- prepare and exhibit a poster presentation
- conduct ongoing research that is moving toward an identifiable product (this could involve extensive data collection, or a substantial rewrite of previous work)
- prepare a quality grant proposal that reflects new effort and ideas
- publish a book review essay, research note, or other piece of research of similar length
- publish a nonrefereed or invited article (in something other than a "prestige" source)
- publish a commissioned piece of research or carry out a routine or normal consulting activity that results in a published product
- receive an "in-house" grant
- deliver a invited paper or make an invited oral presentation at an academic or professional meeting other than a conference
- organize and chair a panel
- produce educational software that is intended primarily for external audience and has undergone external review
- professional development centering on the learning/updating of statistical and software skills

While some weight will be given to the presentation of more than one convention paper, presenting multiple convention papers alone can not result in a 3 range score. The purpose of convention papers is twofold. First, allowing/encouraging faculty to stay abreast of developments in their field. Second, provide an avenue for development new ideas that might ultimately result in a published piece. With regard to the first point (and given limited travel funds), one convention paper would seem to be a reasonable expectation. Giving significant added rewards for additional presentations comes very close to "buying" merit money. As to the second purpose, what ought to be rewarded in terms of accomplishment is the movement from a convention paper to an article (for which there would be no discount applied to multiple publications). There is also a danger that excessive attendance at conferences ultimately hurts students by canceling classes or the overuse of films, etc.

1 range score

performance that does not warrant a satisfactory (2+,2,2-) ranking on the basis of the items listed above

### 3 range score

The following make a faculty member eligible for consideration for a 3 range score but do not guarantee such a score. The PAC may conclude that the quality of the performance does not warrant such a score and assign a 2 or 2+ score.

- sign a contract for a book
- have an article of original research accepted through a refereed process
- publish an invited article of original research or commentary in a prestigious national level publication
- receive a major external grant
- produce a major piece of educational software that is intended primarily for an external audience and has undergone external review

Should the material be published electronically, the same standards will apply that are used to judge printed material, e.g.; the selectivity of the source, prestige, of the source, nature of the audience, quality of the product

Realizing that exceptions are always possible, the unifying feature to 1) signing a book contract, 2) receiving an major external grant, and 3) signing a major external consulting contract is that they would all seem to require at least a year of intensive effort on the part of the faculty member and bring national recognition to the university. Work on commissioned articles and lesser consulting (which are equated in the 2 range score) are similar in that less than one year seems to be a reasonable time frame for their completion; the resulting product will not be as lengthy or involved as that in a 3 range product; and they were not selected/awarded on the basis of something approaching a national competition.

In comparing coauthored and single authored efforts, the PAC may, at its discretion, decide to elevate the ranking of an individual who has accomplished a particularly noteworthy individually-authored research product in a year when coauthored pieces were the norm.

Each volume in a multi-volume series shall be counted separately with the exact weight awarded to be decided by the PAC