Montana Tech

Highlands College ~ Faculty Merit Program

FACULTY MERIT PROGRAM GUIDELINES

PURPOSE

The Highlands College of Montana Tech Faculty Merit Program (hereinafter "HCMT FMP") provides awards to full-time faculty who have demonstrated outstanding achievement at Montana Tech in teaching, scholarly/creative activity, and/or service within the previous three (3) years. The faculty merit awards are to be determined by the Faculty Merit Committee (hereafter "the FM Committee") according to the criteria and procedures outlined below.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The FM Committee shall be composed of three (3) members selected from merit award winners from the past two years. It may be necessary to appoint additional members to replace committee members that, for any reason, cannot serve. A faculty member serving on the Merit Award Committee shall not be eligible to apply for Merit Award. Spouses or immediate family members of any applicant may not serve on the committee.

ELIGIBILITY

All full-time Highlands College faculty members, with the exception of members of the FM Committee, are eligible to apply every year. However, a faculty member shall not be eligible to apply for a Merit Award for two years following receipt of a Merit Award. Faculty that have received a formal disciplinary letter within the past three years, which is on file with the Personnel Office, are ineligible for a Merit Award.

TIME LINES AND DECISION PROCESS FOR MERIT AWARD COMMITTEE

1. **November 15**: Committee constituted; committee meets, elects chair.

2. **December 15**: Merit Award Applications are due.

   a. As soon as possible following the submission deadline, the FM Committee will review the applications.

   b. For all major FM Committee decisions and deliberations, a quorum will be required. A quorum shall consist of three (3) committee members. FM Committee discussions will be considered confidential. No written or verbal feedback is to be provided to applicants due to the inability to provide a blind review of the materials.

3. **February 1**: Draft list of recommended merit awards from committee to HCMT Dean and Provost.

   a. Committee meets with HCMT Dean and Provost as necessary to amend the list of awards. The committee members, the HCMT Dean, and the Provost shall endeavor to agree upon any changes to the list of awardees.

b. If agreement cannot be reached, then all changes to the original list shall be decided upon based on a vote, with simple majority rules, of the parties listed above in (a).

4. **March 1**: The Provost communicates final list of recommended awards to the Chancellor

5. **March 15**: Chancellor announces merit awards.

MERIT AWARDS

Up to two (2) merit awards for members of the bargaining unit may be granted. Each merit award shall consist of $2000 in the year in which the award is granted and shall become part of the next year's base pay. The FM Committee is under no obligation to award all Merit Awards that may be available in a given year. Members can only receive one (1) merit increase within any three (3) year period.

MERIT AWARD APPLICATION

The completed application, including the documents listed below on the required list, must be submitted to the FM Committee, c/o Office of the HCMT Dean by the prescribed due date. Without exception, late applications will not be accepted. Only supporting materials that are evidence of achievement during the current three (3) year award period may be submitted. All supporting materials must be dated.

LIST OF REQUIRED ITEMS & OTHER REQUIREMENTS

In order to apply for a Faculty Merit Award (FM Award), a faculty member shall submit the following materials:

1. A cover letter formally requesting consideration for the FM Award.

2. A narrative justification/description of the meritorious teaching, research/creative/ scholarly activity and/or service. This application must explicitly address the criteria that the Merit Award Committee will use to evaluate applications as attached.

3. A two (2) page brief curriculum vitae using the standard Northwest Accreditation format.

4. Other supporting documentation.

5. Required documentation shall consist of 10 or fewer letter-sized pages.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria for receiving a FM Award are based on outstanding performance in at least one of three areas: teaching, research/creative/scholarly activity and service as follows:

Demonstrate a consistent record of teaching excellence in the last three (3) years.

Deliver significant professional service to the College in the last three (3) years.

Display a solid record of scholarly activity that demonstrates a positive impact on his/her discipline/industry in the last three (3) years.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate these criteria.

No faculty member with a letter of reprimand during the three (3) year period under review shall be eligible for a merit award.

REVIEWING AND RANKING PROCEDURES

The FM Committee shall use the following procedures to review and rank applications:

1. The HCMT Dean, or his/her designee, shall coordinate the formation of the FM Committee, as outlined previously.

2. Following the application deadline, the HCMT Dean, or his/her designee, will call a meeting of the FM Committee. The first order of business for the FM Committee is to elect a Chair. At this point, all applications (and supporting materials) received will be available for review and ranking by the FM Committee.

3. All applications will be reviewed and ranked by all members of the FM Committee. This may be accomplished in a committee meeting or by individual committee members over a period of time established by the FM Committee Chair. The FM Committee Chair will ensure an opportunity for a full committee discussion of applications prior to final ranking.

4. The FM Committee will then hold a meeting to review and discuss the ranked applications.

5. A recommendation list plus a written justification for each shall be submitted to the HCMT Dean.

6. The HCMT Dean will forward the recommendation to the Montana Tech Chief Academic Officer (CAO).

7. The Montana Tech CAO will make the final decision based on the application and the committee recommendation. If the CAO disagrees with the committee recommendation, it is the CAO's responsibility to meet with the committee to explain the reason for denial and provide the committee with an opportunity to discuss.

COMMITTEE RECORDS

Each year, the FM Committee shall document how it made decisions regarding awards and publish an "Annual Report" explaining the committee's rationale. This report will be filed with the HCMT Dean's Office.

All of the associated working papers of the FM Committee (ranking sheets, minutes, agendas, etc.) will be kept by the HCMT Dean for two years following each annual FM

Committee cycle. All applications and supporting materials (i.e. published works, award certificates, artwork etc.) submitted with Faculty Merit applications shall be returned to the applicants.

AWARD

The non-base portion of the award shall be paid on or before May 15th.

The base-building portion shall be added to the faculty member's base effective the first day of their next year contract.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions to improve this program should be forwarded in writing to the HCMT Dean and/or the Provost/Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

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EVALUATION CRITERIA USED BY THE FACULTY MERIT COMMITTEE

Teaching

Montana Tech emphasizes quality teaching as one of the primary responsibilities of its faculty. The FM Committee may use, but are not limited to, the following criteria in evaluating teaching.

A. Basic Information Regarding Teaching Load
Teaching load can include many factors, including but not limited to:

1. The total number of course preparations;
2. The number of students in each class;
3. The total number of credit hours;
4. The total number of contact hours (including classroom and laboratory instruction); and
5. The status of each class relative to students: e.g. whether it is required, an elective, or a major/non-major course.

B. Information Regarding Teaching Excellence
Teaching excellence can take many forms, including but not limited to:

1. Programs that enhance student learning;
2. Effective classroom instruction;
3. Working with students in an academic capacity outside of class, including tutoring, help sessions, and advising;
4. Graduate thesis, senior project, or undergraduate research supervision;
5. Innovative course design;
6. Incorporating technologies that enhance learning;
7. Production of educational materials;
8. Development of effective teaching methods;
9. Analyses intended to improve teaching;
10. Educational planning or policies that improve teaching and learning; and
11. Dissemination of teaching innovations to a wider audience.

C. Supporting Documentation Demonstrating Teaching Excellence
Documents supporting teaching excellence can take many forms, including but not limited to:

1. Materials such as syllabi and lesson plans that demonstrate the forms of teaching excellence listed above;
2. Student evaluations;
3. The use of technology in the classroom, for supporting classroom activities, or for distance delivery;
4. Written reports of class observations by colleagues (i.e. "peer observation");

5. Pre- and post-test measures or knowledge surveys that demonstrate student learning; and
6. Recognition through teaching awards from external organizations.

Service

Through service, Montana Tech faculty make major contributions to the institution, profession, and community. Community is meant in the broadest sense, including local, state, and national levels. The FM Committee may use, but are not limited to, the following criteria in evaluating service

A. **Basic Information Regarding Service Activities**
   Service activities can take many factors, including but not limited to:

   1. A list of committees, positions, and other specific ways that the applicant has served the institution, profession, and community.
   2. The approximate number of hours per year that the applicant has served in each of the capacities listed in (1.).
   3. The amount of compensation if any, including but not limited to monetary reward or course release, for each item listed in (1.).

B. **Information Regarding Excellence in Service**
   Excellence in service may take many forms, including but not limited to:

   1. Service to the campus through accomplishments in committee leadership, program development, or other ways that improve the institution;
   2. Service to the community at the local, state, or national level through advisory boards, review panels, or other functions that produce demonstrable benefits;
   3. Service to professional publications, professional societies, or not-for-profits;
   4. Production of materials that improve the function of the institution, profession, or community; and
   5. Writing successful proposals that fund non-scholarly projects or build capacity.

C. **Supporting Documentation Demonstrating Excellence in Service**
   Documents supporting excellence in service can take many forms, including but not limited to:

   1. Service awards or other formal recognition of service;
   2. Leadership positions in a service capacity;
   3. Tangible outcomes or achievements such as completed non-scholarly projects; and
   4. Successful proposals that fund non-scholarly projects, build capacity, or otherwise enhance operations.

Research, Creative or Scholarly Activities

Montana Tech has increasingly emphasized the need for faculty to be engaged in research, publication, and other forms of scholarship or creative activity. At the HCMT, this emphasis has been the object of attention only since the Fall, 2008 semester and is thus only in its earliest stages of development. Merit Awards are an important means for recognizing and rewarding these activities. The FM Committee may use, but are not limited to, the following criteria in evaluating research, creative or scholarly activities.

A. **Basic Information Regarding Research, Creative or Scholarly Activities**
Research, creative or scholarly activities can take have many factors, including but not limited to:

1. Publications;
2. Patents;
3. Creative works;
4. Presentations;
5. Grants applied for and/or received.

B. **Information Excellence in Research, Creative or Scholarly Activities**
Excellence in research, creative or scholarly activities can take many forms, including but not limited to:

1. Publications, including whether the publication was refereed;
2. Presentations, including whether the presentation allowed attendees to earn continuing education credit in their disciplines;
3. Grants applied for and/or received, including whether the grant was local, state or national and whether it was competitive in nature and the applicant's specific role as PI, grant writer, or other documented role;
4. Organizing, directing, or contributing to conferences, workshops, short courses, or seminars;
5. Editing or evaluation of manuscripts or grant proposals; and
6. Integration of scholarly activity with teaching.

C. **Supporting Documentation Demonstrating Excellence in Research, Creative or Scholarly Activities**
Documents supporting excellence in research, creative or scholarly activities can take many forms, including but not limited to:

1. Copies of publications;
2. Copies of creative works;
3. Announcements of presentations;
4. Copies of grant applications and/or award notices;
5. Critical reviews of publications.

_____   _____
Faculty Representative   Date

_____   _____
Dean, Highlands College   Date

_____   _____
Provost/Vice Chancellor Academics   Date

_____   _____
Chancellor   Date