Office of the Dean
University of Toronto Scarborough
PTR Assessment Process – Best Practice Guidelines for Chairs[1]

These guidelines outline what UTSC believes to be the best practices for the PTR process. They are not meant to be prescriptive. Each unit has its own culture and this must inform and differentiate practice and process in each unit. However, we invite you to take advantage of some of the best practices found in these guidelines when you consider your local practice, process and correspondence to colleagues. Please note that these guidelines are to be used as a supplement to the annual PDAD&C memorandum on PTR/Merit Assessment produced by the Provost. The most recent version of this memorandum (PDAD&C #47, 2012-13) can be found at: http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/public/pdadc/2012_to_2013/47.htm

Note that it is very important to ensure that the evaluation process for PTR awards is clearly understood by all faculty. Chairs should write to colleagues to inform them of the procedures used to arrive at a decision about each individual's PTR award and the nature of the merit-driven career progress scheme. Ideally, this information should be provided at the beginning of the academic year, discussed with colleagues during the year, and reiterated at the time of evaluation. In drafting your letter, please consider the following points:

1. **Material Provided by Faculty**
   a. Annual Activity Report and current *curriculum vitae*
      The Activity Report should be submitted using the UTSC format, which is available at http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~vpdean/chairs_manual.html. The report should indicate clearly the changes in activity from the previous year and should articulate progress made in the year on work-in-progress if it has not appeared in the year. Individuals should comment on the significance of their activities, where needed. The report may be supplemented with other evidence of the significance of the activities such as reviews of monographs, or a well-developed research plan that may have been part of a grant submission. An individual should also include information on the direction of his or her research, where needed. Materials on teaching activity should include course outlines and evaluations, and can include curricular innovation and a teaching dossier. The development of a teaching dossier is to be encouraged for all faculty (further details of the kinds of contributions which might be taken into account in the assessment of an individual's research and scholarship, teaching and service contributions is covered in Section 5).

   b. Paid Activities Report
      The University's *Policy on Conflict of Interest for Academic Staff* (June 1994)[2] requires the inclusion of a Paid Activities Report as part of the Annual Activity Report.[3] The form is available at:
      http://www.faculty.utoronto.ca/Assets/Faculty+Digital+Assets/Faculty+Files/paidact.pdf

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[1] These best practices are modeled on those produced by the Faculty of Arts and Science.

[2] Available at: http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/conacad.htm

[3] It is important to note that in some cases a major paid activity must receive prior approval from the Chair.

2.   Membership of the PTR Committee

The PTR decision and allocation is the responsibility of the Chair. However, we strongly advise Chairs to have a PTR committee that is advisory to the Chair and to rotate faculty members on the committee. For those departments with teaching stream faculty, we suggest an Associate Professor, Teaching Stream be added to the committee for the assessment of the performance of teaching stream staff. You might also consider adding a junior faculty member to the committee. Ideally, a departmental PTR committee should have no more than six committee members.

You are encouraged to consider creating a sub-committee to evaluate the teaching component of faculty.

PTR committee members must **not** have access to salary information of their colleagues nor should they be informed of the actual dollar amount of individual awards. You are encouraged to make this explicit in your communication of the PTR award to reassure colleagues of the confidentiality of salary information. Best practice, regardless of the weight placed on teaching, service or research/professional activity, is for the committee to assess the work **first** by means of a point system and then for the Chair, armed with the relative rankings, to make the dollar allocations.

The Chair alone should do the PTR assessment of members of the PTR committee.

3.   Teaching Stream and Tenure Stream Letters

It is critical that teaching stream staff (Assistant and Associate Professors, Teaching Stream) and tenure stream staff receive different letters because of the different relative weighting of teaching, service and either research (tenure stream) or pedagogical/professional development (teaching stream). For example, teaching and pedagogical activity and service in support of teaching duties must carry the predominant weight in the award of PTR to members of the teaching stream.

4.   The Competitive Nature of the Pools

It is important that academic staff understand from the outset that PTR increases are relative to the performance of colleagues in the same pool – below the breakpoint and above the breakpoint.

It is useful to inform academic staff that the make-up of the pools changes from year to year with the addition of new colleagues and the movement of colleagues upwards from one pool to another. This phenomenon seems to be misunderstood by many academic staff. The movement between pools can have positive and negative effects. If a high performer moves between pools (e.g. from below-the-breakpoint to above-the-breakpoint) those remaining may receive a higher PTR increase that year for a performance similar to that of the previous year. Those in the above-the-breakpoint pool may receive a lower increase for similar performances in the face of increased competition from the new member of the pool.

Below is a sample paragraph that might be used:
PTR increases for individual faculty members are relative to the performance of colleagues in the same pool. The make-up of these pools changes from year to year with the addition of

new colleagues and movement of others out of the pool. A below average increase should not necessarily be interpreted as a negative evaluation. It may only reflect the outstanding performance of other colleagues.

5.   The Communication of the Formula for Assessment

5.1 Tenure Stream Staff
The relative weight of teaching, service and research/creative professional achievement (tenure stream) or pedagogical/professional development activity (teaching stream) must be communicated clearly. For tenure stream staff, most units in the Arts and Science divisions employ a simple statement based on a ten-point scale: 4 points for research/creative professional achievement; 4 points for teaching; and 2 points for service. However, there are variations to this scheme, normally with more or less emphasis on teaching or research. In rare instances the formulas can be adjusted to recognize longstanding academic administrative service (for example, for an undergraduate coordinator) where such duties are onerous enough to negatively impact on teaching or research. In cases where a variance to the usual scheme is appropriate, the altered weightings must be discussed with the faculty member, and confirmed in writing, as soon as they are known and ideally at the beginning of the assessment year. You should communicate any such variances to the Dean when you submit your salary increase information to Human Resources Services.

We recommend that your letter to colleagues include detailed information on how academic staff will be evaluated in these areas. It is also a good idea to discuss this

5.2 Teaching Stream Staff
A different weighting should be used for those units with teaching stream faculty. For example, a 10 point system might be used: 8 points for teaching and related professional activities and 2 points for service. Within the eight points for teaching and related professional activities the relative weighting between the two should be clearly enunciated (perhaps to recognize outstanding professional activity in a particular year). Teaching performance should receive the most weight in any year. It should be noted that, regardless of teaching performance/activity, pedagogical/professional development activity must also be recognized and rewarded each year. Some examples are found below:

i)   participation at and contributions to academic conferences where sessions on pedagogical research and technique are prominent;

ii)   teaching-related activity by the faculty member outside of his/her classroom functions and responsibilities;

iii)   professional work that allows the faculty member to maintain a mastery of his or her subject area, provided that such professional work enhances directly the teaching mission of their academic unit and UTSC; and

iv)   the ongoing pursuit of further academic qualifications.

6.   The Assessment of Research and Creative Professional Achievement

6.1 Weighting
It is advisable to have a multi-dimensional view of the assessment of research and creative professional achievement. Each unit will evaluate research in different ways depending upon its local culture and practice. However these differences should be clearly enunciated in advance so that faculty understand what is being evaluated.

For instance, some departments recognize and credit doctoral supervision under the category of research; others under teaching and in rare instances recognition is split between the two categories. Each option is acceptable provided faculty members are informed of the weighting.

The relative weighting of research output also varies by unit. In some units publication of an article in a top tier journal is the summit of scholarly achievement. In others a refereed book in a top press, resulting from several years of research, is well rewarded. Presentations, lectures, or addresses delivered at international discipline conferences and publication in conference proceedings are most highly valued in others. In some disciplines the number and value of external, competitive grants received and research contracts awarded are important indicators of scholarly activity. A patent, contributions to the development of government policy, or a juried exhibition of artistic work may each indicate significant creative professional achievement.

A five-page paper in one discipline may easily outweigh a twenty-page paper in another. A good small book may be equivalent to two or three major journal articles in some disciplines. Single authorship and joint authorship are evaluated differentially depending on the discipline. Monographs and edited books also receive differential weighting. An invitation to deliver a keynote lecture at one conference may represent the highest honour bestowed upon members of a discipline. A presentation at a regional conference may be far less prestigious. Certainly all of the above are part of the mix in the evaluation of scholarship: what is at essence is the number and prestige attached to each.

The judgement by the PTR committee on the relative value of each of these activities is its most difficult task. The task is further complicated because the prestige of journals, presses, conferences etc. is not static, but with few exceptions, undergoes constant and continual change. Moreover, as the University is an internationally significant research institution, the reach of our faculty is increasingly global and the number of outlets for the dissemination of scholarly research is growing. Thus, a strict enunciation of what is and what is not considered to be top, mid, or bottom tier or what conference, journal, or press is considered more or less prestigious is exceedingly difficult. The evaluation and definition should be fluid and rest with each year's PTR committee.

However, this does not mean that some measure of relative importance cannot be communicated to faculty either in writing or in a public meeting of academic staff. For example, the following five-point scale might be use for the evaluation of research:

5 = outstanding research by international standards

4 = first class research with clear evidence of impact and international recognition

3 = strong research activity with a good combination of quality and productivity

2 = regular research activity with the combination of quality and productivity somewhat less than the department norm

1 = some research activity, but well below the department's norm

0 = no research activity

6.2 Timing of Credit for Scholarly Activity

The way in which credit is allocated annually for scholarly activity also varies across units. As a general rule we recommend that you allocate full credit the year in which the culmination of the scholarly activity actually takes place: a publication is accepted (in press), lecture or presentation delivered, patent granted, grant received and honour or prize awarded. However, we recognize that several disciplines spread credit over a period of one to three years. For example, some units award credit in year one when a book or article is accepted, credit in year two when the book or article is published and in year three when the reviews of the work are in. The weight awarded for any of the three years may also vary by unit, depending on local culture*. **The communication of the timing of the credit for these activities should be precise. It is important to ensure that all faculty are aware of how and when the credit is allocated and that previous credit is clearly identified in annual activity reports.***

The same general rule applies to credit given to work in progress. Once again there is variance according to unit. Best practice includes the submission of work in progress by academic staff so that it and the progress of the work to completion may be evaluated fully and fairly. As in the case above, ***the communication of the timing (including any statutes of limitation) should be precise. Credit should be identified by the Chair in the communication of the PTR award. Academic staff in their annual activity reports should identify previous credit.***

Finally, the application of credit for work should be consistent from year to year. Any change in the way in which credit will be awarded should be discussed in advance with the members of your academic unit.

7.   The Assessment of Teaching

It is advisable to have a multi-dimensional view of the assessment of teaching, since the judgement involves contribution to the overall teaching mission of the unit, as well as individual performance in the classroom.

Course development, curricular innovation (both organization and delivery), graduate and postdoctoral student supervision/mentoring and the integration of research into

undergraduate and graduate courses are all considerations that may be used in the assessment of teaching. In addition, the number of students taught, the type of course taught (i.e., a large, compulsory undergraduate course versus a small, elective fourth year seminar course), pedagogical work with Teaching Assistants, teaching in collaborative programs, and membership on thesis committees are also considered by many departments. Once again, weights and emphasis will vary from unit to unit depending on local culture but academic staff should be informed of the variety of activity upon which the assessment of teaching will be based in their unit.

While it may not be necessary to provide faculty with an exhaustive list of areas that may be considered in the evaluation of teaching, some measure of relative importance in line with your unit's culture can be communicated to faculty, either in writing or in a public meeting of academic staff. The same department noted above also employs a scale in its evaluation of teaching as follows:

4   =   Truly outstanding, with significant contributions to curriculum/teaching development

3   =   very good in all respects with particular strengths in some

2   =   clear satisfactory performance

1   =   acceptable performance

0   =   unacceptable performance

8.   Service

8.1 General
Service can take many forms in the university and all full time and part time academic staff are expected to contribute. It does not include service to outside organizations that are not related to the advancement of scholarship or teaching. It includes service to the administration of the academic unit, related graduate unit, UTSC, the University at large, and the Faculty Association. External service may include contributions to scholarship as an editor, referee or member of an editorial board, conference organization, academic reviewing, membership on external Ph.D. committees, continuing education activities, work with professional, technical or scholarly organizations or membership on consultative committees for government organizations.

8.2 Public Education

Public education activity by faculty, particularly through the popular media, generates a positive media image that reflects the value of the University to society. These activities include public presentations, publications in popular periodicals and newspapers and appearances on television and radio. Such activity should be recognized in the service component of the faculty member's annual assessment.

9. Dean's Special Merit Pool

Five percent of the total PTR pool for UTSC is placed in a special merit pool. Chairs can recommend colleagues who have had an outstanding year for consideration by the Dean for a special merit award. In such cases, the Chair should submit a brief summary of the highlights of the colleague's activities and her/his relative standing among peers in the department. In addition, the Chair can include a recommendation on the size of the award.

10. Research and Study Leaves

Faculty on research and study leave must provide an annual activity report. It should provide details of their activities while on leave, including information on their progress in relation to their research and study leave proposal which was submitted prior to the approval of their leave.

The annual PDAD&C memorandum on the annual PTR/merit assessment and salary increase instructions includes clear direction for the assessment of performance of faculty on research and study leave:

Staff members who are on research and study leave during the academic year should be assessed with reference to the standards applicable to the leave activity and only on those criteria which are appropriate in light of the work planned for their leave. As a research and study leave plan has been approved for each individual an evaluation should take into account the degree to which the objectives of the plan have been realized or where the objectives have changed during the course of research, the degree to which the research has advanced. Some staff may remain engaged in teaching, graduate supervision and/or service activities while on a research and study leave and unit heads should use their discretion in such situations in determining what recognition is warranted in the PTR determination.

Faculty on research and study leave should be awarded a merit amount appropriate to their accomplishments and should not simply be awarded the average for the unit. The PTR amount is not to be adjusted downwards for full-time staff, despite the fact that they may have been receiving less than full salary while on leave. For part-time staff, the amount should be pro-rated to the percentage of FTE that the person normally receives when not on leave.

11. Faculty on Unpaid Leave

As stated in the annual PDAD&C memorandum on the annual PTR/merit assessment and salary increase instructions, staff who are on unpaid leave do not normally receive a PTR increase. The reporting year May 1 to April 30 does not exactly coincide with the academic year July 1 to June 30. However, there should be no PTR increase for staff on unpaid leave from July 1 to June 30. For staff on unpaid leave in July 1 to December 30 period or the January 1 to June 30 period, PTR should be pro-rated to 50%.

12. Faculty on Maternity Leave

Below is an excerpt from the PDAD&C memorandum on the annual PTR/merit assessment and salary increase instructions:

With respect to PTR, the principle of no professional disadvantage should prevail for staff on

maternity/parental/adoption leave. Calculations for PTR should be based on the faculty member's work prior to and after the leave, with allowances for a longer-term review to ensure no anomalies occurred. The faculty member's performance prior to the leave may be a good indication of the PTR for the leave period, although in cases where the faculty member was ill or unable to function at full capacity prior to the leave, it may be necessary to extrapolate over a longer period of time.

13. Part-time Faculty

Part-time academic staff on annual contracts (with appointments of over 25%) receive PTR as well as ATB. Increases for part-time staff should be determined on the basis of their annualized salaries and appropriately pro-rated.

14. Graduate appointments and Cross-Appointed Staff

In cases where faculty hold their graduate appointment outside of your department or where they are cross-appointed to another department/division, consultation with those unit heads is a critical element of the information gathering process for PTR assessments.

Merit increases for academic staff holding budgetary cross-appointments are awarded separately by each unit; however, the total amount of the award must only appear on the histogram where their primary appointment lies.

15. Letters to Academic Staff Informing Them of their PTR Award

All academic staff should receive a letter from the Chair informing them of their PTR award. The letter should include comments with regard to the performance of the academic staff member that year. For example, if the academic staff member's publication record was very good in that particular year, this should be mentioned explicitly. Meritorious service, excellent teaching, pedagogical innovation or a supervisory load that is heavier than the unit norm, etc. also should be mentioned. When an individual receives a Dean's 5% Merit Award, the Chair's salary letter to him/her should indicate that he/she has received a Dean's 5% Merit Award and the amount. In like fashion, a poor performance in teaching, research or service should be noted, along with an offer to discuss with the faculty member ways in which a future performance can be improved.

Several departments now include some general information regarding the accomplishments of departmental colleagues to provide a measure of outstanding performance so that personal performance can be put into perspective and properly gauged.