**Professional Track Faculty Merit Policy Checklist**

Per the [University of Maryland Policy on Faculty Merit Pay Distribution](https://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-vii-personnel/vii-400a), all UMD units are required to integrate PTK faculty into their merit pay procedures. Any unit serving as the primary appointment home for PTK faculty must establish a merit pay system covering those faculty. Units may do this in one of two ways. They can:

1. Integrate PTK faculty into existing merit pay procedures, ensuring procedures adequately apply to both tenured/tenure-track and PTK faculty, or
2. Develop a separate merit pay plan for PTK faculty.

To the degree possible, unit merit pay processes for PTK faculty should operate in the same manner as the process for tenured/tenure-track faculty in the unit. Following approval by the faculty, each unit’s merit pay distribution plan shall be reviewed for sufficiency and consistency with University merit pay policy first by the Dean and then by the Senate’s Faculty Affairs Committee.

**At the end of each item, please list the relevant section of the policy that satisfies the requirement.**

**If the requirement is not fully met, please indicate which elements are missing.**

**Required Elements**

1. Each unit shall have a merit pay distribution plan for PTK faculty. The plan must be approved by a majority of the faculty in the unit who are affected by the plan in a secret ballot.

**Section(s) addressing merit pay plan approval:**

1. PTK faculty should have voting representation on committees tasked with development or revision of merit pay policies and plans including PTK faculty.

**Section(s) addressing membership of plan review committees:**

1. Merit is distinct from COLA and promotion increases, and merit decisions shall be made based on the evaluation criteria and the reviewee’s performance. Merit pay shall not be assigned based on across the board raises or a unit-wide quota.

**If not met, which section(s) need to be revised:**

1. The merit plan states that unit-level merit reviews for PTK instructional faculty shall be conducted by a Merit Pay Committee that includes voting representation from the affected faculty. The Merit Pay Committee must be directly elected by a majority of the affected faculty and must include meaningful representation of faculty from the affected faculty ranks. Insofar as possible, the Merit Pay Committee’s composition will also reflect the gender and racial distribution and the various scholarly interests of the unit.

**Section(s) addressing membership of Merit Pay Committee:**

1. The merit pay plan shall include appropriate procedures for unit-level merit reviews for PTK research faculty, either using a Merit Pay Committee as noted in item 4 above or using a different process appropriate for the unit that includes approval of the department chair.

**Section(s) addressing procedures for PTK research faculty:**

1. The merit plan specifies eligibility for PTK faculty, noting whether the unit imposes a requirement for eligibility based on FTE. Any currently employed PTK faculty with appointments of 50% or greater shall be eligible for merit pay. Unit plans may extend eligibility to PTK faculty with appointments of less than 50% at the unit’s discretion.

**Section(s) addressing FTE threshold:**

1. The merit plan accounts for differences in a) PTK faculty titles and b) full-time or part-time status.

**Section(s) addressing differences based on title and status:**

1. The merit plan states that evaluations should reflect performance over at least the immediate past three years. PTK faculty assessment for merit will be based on performance and there will be no penalty for periods during which PTK faculty were not employed by the University. For years when merit pay is not available, the achievements of faculty will be taken into consideration during the next year in which merit pay is available. Reviews must be conducted annually, regardless of whether merit funds are available in a given year.

**Section(s) addressing review window, annual reviews:**

1. The merit plan specifies the process for handling merit reviews when reviewee has appointments in more than one unit. The process should reflect the following principles:
   1. Any PTK faculty member whose total FTE across all appointments is 50% or greater is eligible for merit in each of the units in which they have an appointment.
   2. Such faculty should be given an annual review in each unit in which they have an appointment.
   3. Any merit award can be based on the relevant unit's contribution to the faculty member's overall salary (or %FTE in the unit).

**Section(s) addressing faculty with multiple appointments:**

1. The merit pay plan provides clear criteria and conditions for merit, and clearly articulates the evaluation procedure for assessing contributions to research/creative activity, teaching/advising, or service.

**Section(s) addressing criteria for merit reviews:**

1. The merit plan includes a full description of the application and review process for merit, including but not limited to:
2. The materials to be submitted by the faculty member;
3. To whom the faculty member submits the materials;
4. Application deadlines and maximum time to review (which should be less than one year); and
5. Where appropriate, separate merit guidelines for different tracks (research, clinical, instructional).

**Please indicate relevant section(s) after each element above.**

1. The merit plan should articulate whether the Merit Pay Committee is advisory to the chair or whether it works with the chair to distribute merit dollars.

**Section(s) addressing role of committee:**

1. The merit plan states how the Merit Pay Committee’s recommendations will be communicated to the department chair.

**Section(s) indicating method of communicating recommendations:**

1. The merit plan will specify the responsibilities of the department chair. These responsibilities include:
   1. Report to the Merit Pay Committee his or her final salary recommendations decision.
   2. Certify (along with the Merit Pay Committee) that they have followed the unit’s Merit Pay Distribution Plan or will indicate areas where they have deviated, providing a rationale.
   3. Review the makeup of the Merit Pay Committee over the previous five years to assure that a reasonable representation of faculty diversity has been achieved and if it has not, take appropriate action to rectify the situation.
   4. Evaluate the salary structure of the department annually and consult with the appropriate administrators (Dean or the Provost) to address salary compression or salary inequities that have developed in the unit.
   5. Give the unit information on available sources of funds for merit increases during the process each year.

**Please indicate relevant section(s) after each element above.**

1. The merit plan specifies that merit pay decisions must be communicated in writing to PTK faculty by the chair. The letter to the faculty member will include a summary of the Merit Pay Committee’s evaluation and how the evaluation was used to assign the merit increase. The letter will inform the faculty member that s/he may request a meeting with the chair to receive an explanation of the merit pay decision.

**Section(s) indicating written notification with required elements:**

**Section(s) providing for meeting with chair:**

1. The merit plan states the process for appealing merit pay decisions.

**Section(s) addressing appeals:**

1. The plan specifies that new PTK hires will receive a copy of the unit’s merit pay policy.

**Section(s) indicating new hires will receive policy:**