

## Checklist for Merit Application

Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

Revised January 2006

### Contents of Merit Binder

**NOTE:** All merit materials must fit in a one-inch binder. The only exception is a copy of a book you have written or edited. Do not use any plastic sleeves or enclosures in the binder. Use dividers to separate main headings: (I) Merit Application/Annual Report Form, (II) Research Section, (III) Teaching Section, (IV) Service Section, and subheadings within each section (for example, "Research Narrative," "Publications," "Peer Review").

#### **I. Merit Application/Annual Report Form**

In most cases, the merit review period is the same as the period covered by the annual report. In this case, a fully completed annual report should be placed at the beginning of the binder. This constitutes the Merit Application Form.

**If your merit review period is different from the period covered by the most recent annual report, you should include the following in this section:**

1. A summary page indicating the dates of your merit review period and the reason why it is different from the annual report period. The two most common reasons are (1) new faculty in their second year and (2) sabbatical or other faculty leave during which you did not apply for merit. Because new faculty members are not eligible for merit in their first semester, they may include their first semester in the second year merit review period. Faculty members who do not apply for merit during a leave period may include that leave period in the next merit review period.
2. Annual Report for the most recent calendar year.
3. Additional material to be considered in the merit review. Note that this material cannot already have been used for merit review.

#### **II. Research Section**

1. **Research Narrative.**  
A statement that describes your research philosophy, agenda, and achievements in the merit period. This statement should explain the focus of your research efforts and link your publications and conference presentations to this agenda. It should explain why the research is meritorious. This narrative statement should be no more than 1 single spaced page in 12 point font.
2. **List of Publications including indicators of quality.**  
Full citations of completed research output (conferences, journals, books) for the merit review period. Note that an item may be used toward merit only once. Thus, if you include something accepted for publication but not yet published in one merit application, you may not count it for merit again when it is

actually published. Please remember that it is your responsibility to establish why your work is meritorious. In your list, include some measure or indication of the quality and significance of the work. These indicators may include journal acceptance rates, unsolicited reviews of the work, citation indices, or other relevant measures.

3. **Copies of Major Research Projects.**  
Provide copies of the publications listed above.
4. **Grant related activities.**  
In this section describe your grant related activities in the merit period and indicate how they are meritorious. The emphasis should be on grants/contract applications that have been successful.
5. **Editorial work.**  
Serving as a editor of a journal or editing a book may considered scholarly activity. If you believe your editorial activities should be considered in this category, explain why you think the activities are scholarly (rather than service) activities, and indicate why they are meritorious. Indicators of merit may include your level of responsibility (e.g., soliciting manuscripts, preparing an introduction, developing a special issue, etc.), the time involved, the contribution to the field, or the importance and/or quality of the journal.

### **III. Teaching Section**

1. **Teaching Narrative.**  
A statement that describes your personal teaching philosophy; highlight any significant accomplishments in the merit review period, and explain why your teaching is meritorious. This narrative statement should be no more than 1 page, single spaced in 12 point font.
2. **Peer Review.**  
A summary peer review of your teaching by members of a departmental teaching committee or the College Teaching Committee. Peer reviews will involve a thorough and critical review of one's teaching materials by an independent department and/or college teaching committee. They should reflect more than a classroom visitation checklist. Peer observations of your teaching during a regularly scheduled class are a strongly recommended component of this peer review but an actual classroom observation is only required each year for untenured faculty. Your portfolio should provide a brief summary of the results of this peer review.
3. **Student Evaluations of Teaching.**  
Please provide the means for both item 7 ("Overall, this course is...") and item 8 (Overall, this instructor is...") on the College course evaluation form for each class and comparisons to similar classes in your unit and the College. Also provide an accurate summary of your particular "strengths" and "areas of improvements" as identified in written comments provided by students in your classes. This statement should be no longer than 2 pages in length. In an

appendix please provide all written comments from students. These may be either typed comments, xerox copies of student evaluation forms, or “cut and pasted” lists of comments.

4. **Pedagogy and Other Teaching/Supervisory Activities.**  
Provide a list of the teaching/supervisory-related activities that you consider meritorious and explain why they are meritorious: (1) undergraduate and graduate student advising (list # of students advised, # of committees chaired), (2) curriculum development (e.g., list of new courses developed), (3) if appropriate, evidence of the application and development of innovative methods, (4) participation in teaching/supervisory workshops; (5) publication/dissemination of teaching materials, and (6) other relevant teaching/supervisory activities. This section should be a maximum of 2 pages in length.
5. **Learning Outcomes.**  
Provide some observable or numerical measure of learning gains in your courses. This may be accomplished through various means, including: (1) evidence from Student Evaluation Forms; (2) completion of major projects by students (e.g., passing certification exams, publications of papers, receiving awards) that can be directly linked to their participation in your course; (3) evidence from alumni or exit surveys that your course was considered important in their career placement and/or development; (4) pre-and post-tests over materials covered in the class; and/or, (5) improvement in scores on standardized tests given at the beginning and end of the semester in a course. Other sources of evidence of teaching effectiveness are available and may be used in this section, but they must be connected directly to learning gains and outcomes. This section should be no longer than 1 page in length.
6. **Copies of Syllabi for All Courses Taught During the Merit Review Period.**
7. **Supplemental materials supporting your case for why your teaching is meritorious.**  
Include any other materials in this section that you feel demonstrate the meritorious nature of your teaching with an explanation of how they support your assertion. These may include: examination materials, course handouts, and any other pertinent materials on teaching. This supplemental material should contain only information for the merit review period.

#### **IV. Service Section**

1. **Service Narrative.**  
A narrative statement that summarizes your service activities and explains why they are meritorious. Keep in mind that senior level faculty are expected to have higher levels of service and more significant roles in service activities than junior faculty.
2. **Supplemental Materials supporting your case for why your service is meritorious.**

### **Tips from the College Promotion, Tenure and Merit Committee**

1. It is the applicant's responsibility to make the case for why his/her work is meritorious.
2. Use commonsense to make it easy for the committee to review your information.
3. Submit a neatly organized binder and keep your narratives concise and to the point.
4. For teaching, make sure you include a peer review.
5. For research, indicate the quality in a relevant and credible way.
6. For service, indicate the amount of effort involved.

***Keep in mind we generally have more than 40 merit applications to review in less than two weeks. We only have 15-20 minutes to spend reviewing each folder, so it is in your interest to make the material easy to find. We'd rather spend the time evaluating the content, not searching for the material.***