September 25, 2015

To: Deans, Directors, Department Heads and Chairs, and Faculty Members

From: Katherine Newman, Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Subject: Exceptional Merit Nominations for Bargaining-Unit Members

The program for recognizing and rewarding exceptionally meritorious achievement by tenure-system faculty is entering its fifth year—the final year of the program that was bargained with the Massachusetts Society of Professors (MSP). The program’s terms permit individual increases to permanent base salaries. Last year saw 55 awards to unit faculty with a total of $405,000 in increases to those faculty members’ base salaries. Given our more difficult budgetary circumstances this year, a total of $250,000 has been set aside for this program this year. Salary increases resulting from the awards will take effect spring semester, 2016.

Eligibility & Criteria

Awards will be granted to tenure-system faculty members based on exceptional, meritorious performance leading to achievement of national or international renown in research, teaching, or service. Special consideration will be given to instances in which an individual’s salary is lower than salaries at peer universities. Tenure system faculty members in all disciplines will be considered though the terms of the agreement specify that no individual may receive more than one exceptional merit award in any three-year period. Accordingly, since this is the fifth year, first- and second-year recipients are again eligible.

The agreement between the University and MSP requires that “the measures of national or international renown will be those appropriate to the respective disciplines. Evidence of national or international renown may include but will not be limited to awards such as those tracked by the Association of American Universities or comparable national or international distinction.”

While we do take special note of these awards, we depend upon our colleagues who are close to the fields to provide discipline- and college/school-specific contextual information so that reviewers of nominations are better able to assess the achievement of “national or international renown.” Accordingly, nominations that go beyond a description of the nominee’s achievements to include information about what these accomplishments mean in that person’s particular field are very helpful. School/college personnel committee recommendations are most helpful when they offer assessments rather than simply providing endorsements.

Colleagues should remember that these salary increases are supposed to be based on achievements accrued while an individual has been a member of our faculty. Many have achieved high recognition before joining UMass and of course, these colleagues can be considered, but the primary basis for these awards remains the exceptional merit they have demonstrated during their service on our faculty. Likewise, past accomplishments that have been previously recognized by comparable salary increases to those being considered in this exceptional merit process (e.g., retention, anomaly) will not ordinarily be...
considered for an exceptional merit increase. Please remember that under the terms of our agreement, UMass faculty can gain national and international renown in research, teaching, or service before building an overall record sufficient to justify promotion to associate or full professor or the award of tenure.

Process

1. Any faculty member, chair, dean, or department personnel committee may nominate an eligible faculty member. Faculty members may also nominate themselves. All nominations must use the form (“AY2015-2016 Nomination for Exceptional Merit, Bargaining-Unit Faculty”), which is available on the “Personnel Information” page of the Provost’s Office website (http://www.umass.edu/provost/faculty-staff-resources/personnel-information). Nominations should summarize the evidence that confirms national or international renown. Nominations must be made on the digital nomination form and must be accompanied by a current, abbreviated CV (no more than two pages).

2. No later than Monday, October 5, send the completed nomination via email to the personnel officer of the nominee’s college or school. Here is the roster of current personnel officers:

   CICS     Donna Falcetti    DFalcetti@cs.umass.edu
   CNS      Donna McKemnie    DonnaM@cns.umass.edu
   EDUC     Cynthia Hamel     CHamel@educ.umass.edu
   ENGR     Kim Renier        Renier@ecs.umass.edu
   HFA      Lauren Matusko    LMatusko@hfa.umass.edu
   ISOM     Diane Keedy-Pisko  DKeedy@isenberg.umass.edu
   NURS     William Kilbride  WKilbride@nursing.umass.edu
   PHHS     Diane Supczak Mulvaney  Mulvaney@schoolph.umass.edu
   SBS      Mary Ann Libardi  Mlibardi@sbs.umass.edu

3. No later than Friday, October 9, each school or college personnel officer should distribute a simple list of the names of faculty members nominated from his/her school or college to the department heads/chairs and the deans in her/his respective school/college.

4. No later than Tuesday, October 13, those deans and department heads/chairs may supplement the list of nominees by sending nominations by e-mail (using the same nomination form) to the school or college personnel officer.

5. No later than Monday, October 19, the college/school personnel officers should send all nominations to their respective college/school personnel committees.

6. The school or college personnel committee should fill in its recommendations regarding an award and suggested amount, and the chair of the committee should sign the form digitally.

7. No later than Friday, October 30, the college/school personnel committee should send the completed forms to the personnel officer by e-mail (unless directed to submit by other electronic means).

8. The school or college personnel officer will have received from Vice Provost John Bryan an electronic spreadsheet to be used for summarizing all nominations. The officer should complete the spreadsheet summary listing:
   • the names and departments of all faculty members nominated,
   • whether the college/school personnel committee recommended an award, and
   • the amount recommended (if any). The terms of the agreement specify that the minimum award is $5000.

9. The officer is able to gain national and international renown in research, teaching, or service before building an overall record sufficient to justify promotion to associate or full professor or the award of tenure.
9. No later than **Wednesday, November 4**, the college/school personnel officer should upload the nomination and spreadsheet files to the Academic Personnel U-Drive.

If you have any questions about this process, contact John Bryan (JohnBryan@provost.umass.edu).

Thank you, in advance, for the hard work and thoughtful deliberation that these nominations require of all the participants in the process. It is taken very seriously in the Provost’s office!