

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 11, 2021

TO: Binghamton University Faculty

FROM: Donald G. Nieman, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost 

RE: Presidential Discretionary Award Increase which affects UUP-Represented Faculty

The Agreement between UUP and the State University of New York includes a Discretionary Salary Increase Program that allows Binghamton University to recognize faculty for outstanding performance.

- The total pool will consist of 1% of total SUNY-wide basic annual salaries as of 06/30/2020 and will be split with one-half percent for discretionary and one-half percent to address compression.
- Only one discretionary award decision needs to be made using the regular historical process.
- Per SUNY guidelines, the compression (1/2%) pool will be distributed proportionately according to the amounts of identified compression through a separate process.
- In order to be eligible for these payments, the employee must be active or on paid leave on the eligibility date of 06/30/2020 (or April 30, 2020 for part-time employees whose employment expires prior to July 1, 2020) **and** pay period 17 (November 25th).
- If an employee is on a leave without pay at the time of payment, the employee would be eligible to receive the raise upon returning to the payroll.
- If an employee is terminated at the time of payment they are not eligible for the increase.
- Both payments are added to base and increases will be paid in the check of March 17, 2021, retroactive to either July 1st or September 1st, depending on professional obligation.

The discretionary payments are anticipated to be paid in March, leaving us to operate on a very compressed timeline. I am asking Deans to communicate their recommendations to me by Friday, February 5, 2021.

The criteria for the 2020 Discretionary Salary Program are outlined below. These criteria are intended to align closely the differing responsibilities carried by faculty and the ways in which faculty performance is recognized. In any given time period, individual faculty may be assigned very different responsibilities with respect to fulfilling the university's mission. To be considered for a discretionary increase, a faculty member must (1) have filed the 2019-20 annual report, (2) have performed well in fulfilling all assigned responsibilities and (3) have made either outstanding contributions within a single aspect of the university's mission (teaching, research, and service) or have made laudable contributions in more than one area.

In order to meet the timing for the March pay date for discretionary increases, it will be necessary for deans to send their recommendations to me by noon on Friday, February 5, 2021. The deans will set their own dates for receipt of faculty recommendations. I appreciate that we are operating on a compressed timeline and am grateful for your efforts to complete this important process expeditiously and on short notice.

The availability of these funds gives me another way to learn about the outstanding contributions of Binghamton University's faculty. I look forward to hearing more about faculty accomplishments and achievements in the weeks to come.

Process

Using the process that they have employed in awarding past discretionary increases, the Deans will collect and review all recommendations in their respective areas and will forward their decisions to me. I will then send my recommendations to Human Resources. HR will provide a final campus-wide roster to President Stenger for his review and approval. Presented below are the criteria to be used to evaluate contributions of faculty to the University and the procedures to be followed. The various units of the University are quite diverse in culture and ways of operating. These differences contribute significantly to the excellence that characterizes all sectors of this institution. This process enables us as academic leaders to learn more about the significant contributions the faculty here at Binghamton University make to the success of this institution. We look forward to hearing about our colleagues' personal and professional accomplishments and achievements in the weeks to come.

Objectives & Criteria

The purpose of the discretionary program is to recognize significant contributions made by faculty members across the full range of the University's mission: teaching, research, and service. Therefore, the program should grow out of the concept of a community of scholars. Academic units should use some process of collegial review to determine whom to recommend for a discretionary increase. Deans should play an important role in the process as well, evaluating recommendations from departments and advisory committees and modifying them, if that is judged to be appropriate. Deans may also retain a portion of the allocation to recommend increases to faculty who have made especially important contributions to the school. Deans will forward all proposed awards from their school to the Provost.

In making their recommendations, Deans and academic units should seek to recognize truly outstanding performance by faculty in teaching, research, and service. Contributions within those areas should be broadly conceived to recognize outstanding performance in the many ways that faculty contribute to each area or a combination of areas.

Procedures

Academic Unit Allocation Guidelines

It is entirely appropriate within these guidelines to make different kinds of recommendations. One faculty member might be recommended to receive an increase to recognize his or her outstanding scholarly contributions. Another might be recommended for an increase to recognize outstanding contributions to either teaching or service. A third faculty member may be recommended for laudable contributions among our instructional, research, and service missions. In no case should a faculty member be recommended for discretionary increase if that individual did not fulfill all of his or her assigned responsibilities at an acceptable level. This includes the timely submission of the annual faculty report and Performance Programs and Evaluations for professional and clerical staff if the faculty member is a supervisor.

Please note that the rationale should be brief; it may be as simple as "outstanding book published," "high quality articles published," "developed new course," "graduated three doctoral students," "extensive University wide service," etc.

Alternative Process

Consistent with past practice, we will make a second pathway available to members of our university community governed by the discretionary salary program. Thus, a faculty member who is concerned about the primary process for evaluation, and who wished to have his or her performance recognized by a discretionary increase, can write directly to his or her department chair and/or dean. That letter should identify the basis for the request for review and should provide any supporting materials the individual wishes to attach. The department chair and/or Dean will review these materials and provide his or her own recommendation about an increase. Both the original request from the faculty member and the department chair and/or Dean's recommendation shall then be forwarded through channels to the Provost Friday, February 5, 2021. The Provost will review the candidate's initial statement and the department chair/Dean's opinion(s) in making his recommendations to the President for final approval.

C: Harvey G. Stenger, President
Joseph P. Schultz, Associate Vice President for Human Resource