Department of Sociology
Policies Regarding Merit, Tenure, and Promotion
(Adopted Fall, 2001, revised Fall 2006)

Merit

Only faculty members submitting annual reports and requesting to be considered for merit will be evaluated for merit. Required and recommended items to be included in the annual report as evidence of teaching, research, and service activity are listed in appendix A.

Recommendations for merit pay increases will be made by the department chairperson. The chairperson rates the teaching, research, and service activities of each applicant on a five point scale: 0 = non-meritorious, 1 = satisfactory, 2 = good, 3 = excellent, and 4 = outstanding. Mid-point ratings of 0.5, 1.5, 2.5, and 3.5 are allowed.

The department feels that applicants with serious deficiencies in even one of the areas of teaching, research, or service are not deserving of merit pay raises. Therefore, an applicant must receive a rating of 2.00 or greater in teaching, 1.00 or greater in research, and 1.00 or greater in service to be eligible for any merit pay. Persons failing to receive these scores in any of the three areas are removed from merit consideration. The higher minimum score in teaching reflects the department’s emphasis on teaching.

While teaching, research, and service are all important, they are not viewed equally by the department. Teaching activity is judged to be the most important while service is the least important. Reflecting this, the teaching rating received by an applicant is multiplied by 55; the research rating is multiplied by 35; and the service rating is multiplied by 10. An applicant’s total number of points is then obtained by adding together these three products (teaching rating times 55, research rating times 35, and service rating times 10).

Each applicant’s percentage of the total points awarded to all merit applicants will also be that person’s percentage of whatever merit money is made available to the department.

To assist the department chairperson in the merit review process and to provide more extensive feedback to individual faculty members on their annual activities, a merit panel will be formed consisting of three department faculty members. These faculty members will be appointed by the department chairperson, normally for a term of two years.

The annual reports of the faculty members seeking merit will be read by the panel members. Each panel member will independently write an evaluation of each annual report excluding their own. This evaluation will note the strengths and
weaknesses of each faculty member's annual activities. Each evaluation will be signed by its author and then given to the department chairperson for his or her consideration. Decisions regarding merit pay reside with the chair. The panel evaluations will also be given to the faculty member whose annual activities were being evaluated at the time that the faculty member receives his or her administrative evaluation from the chairperson. Unlike the administrative evaluation from the chairperson, the evaluations from the faculty panel members are not forwarded to the dean or other administrators.

If a faculty member has a grievance regarding the merit procedure, that faculty member may first take up the matter with the merit panel. After hearing from both the faculty member and the chairperson, the panel may make a recommendation on the matter to the chairperson. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved at this stage, the faculty member may appeal to the department chairperson. If the matter cannot be resolved at the departmental level, the faculty member should then follow the grievance procedures outlined in SFA's Policy and Procedures Manual.

**Tenure**

The department will observe university policies regarding the evaluation of candidates for tenure. Required and recommended items to be included in the application for tenure as evidence of teaching, research, and service activity are listed in appendix A.

**Promotion**

The department will observe university policies regarding the evaluation of candidates for academic promotion. Required and recommended items to be included in the application for promotion as evidence of teaching, research, and service activity are listed in appendix A.

**Peer Review**

For those faculty seeking feedback about their teaching, research, and service activities from department colleagues other than the department chairperson, a peer review process will be available. This voluntary peer review process will take place after the annual evaluation of faculty by the chairperson has been conducted. (The specific procedures for this peer review will be established by the department during the 1999-2000 academic year and will be implemented following department approval of those procedures.)
Appendix A
Required and Recommended Evidence of Teaching, Research, and Service Activity

Required Evidence of Teaching Activity

Applicants for merit are required to submit the following for either the fall or the spring semester of the year being evaluated: (1) a list of courses taught, (2) enrollment totals for each course, (3) a syllabus for each course taught, (4) a summary of student evaluations for each course taught, and (5) a complete set of student evaluation comments from one course taught. Student evaluation results are only one component of the total set of indicators on teaching outcomes. The department chairperson shall use multiple indicators of teaching effectiveness in the evaluation process.

Applicants for tenure are required to submit the following: (1) a statement of teaching philosophy, (2) a list of all courses taught during the previous five years at SFA, (3) enrollment totals for each course taught at SFA during the previous five years, (4) a syllabus for each different course taught at SFA during the previous five years, (5) a summary of student evaluations for each course taught at SFA during the previous five years, and (6) one complete set of student evaluation comments from each different course taught at SFA during the previous five years.

Applicants for academic promotion are required to submit the following: (1) a list of all courses taught during the previous five years at SFA, (2) enrollment totals for each course taught at SFA during the previous five years, (3) a syllabus for each different course taught at SFA during the previous five years, (4) a summary of student evaluations for each course taught at SFA during the previous five years, and (5) one complete set of student evaluation comments from each different course taught at SFA during the previous five years.
Recommended Documentation of Teaching Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of teaching activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, promotion, or tenure. Additional documentation may be stipulated for tenure or promotion by university guidelines. (See the department chairperson for copies of university guidelines for tenure and promotion.) In compiling both the required and recommended evidence of teaching activities, the intent is to provide a set of information that allows the department chairperson to conduct an holistic assessment of teaching accomplishments. The actual importance of any piece of evidence must be judged in the context of the faculty applicant's overall teaching efforts. The exclusion of a specific recommended item by an applicant is not meant to imply a weakness in that area. The recommended items are:

1. description of teaching in relation to the ALEarning Goals for Sociology Majors@ (copy available from the department chairperson), or an overview of instructional goals in each course;
2. innovative teaching efforts, such as the use of technology, strategies for encouraging writing, and substantial updating of course content;
3. recognitions or awards for teaching;
4. development of a new course;
5. participation in university-wide teaching initiatives, such as the Connections Program and SFA101;
6. student advising activities (e.g., number of students advised and types of advising activities);
7. documented improvement of teaching over time (recommended for tenure applications);
8. peer teaching reviews (recommended for tenure applications);
9. supervision of internships, service-learning activities, or other experiential teaching activities that involve major time commitments beyond usual class preparation;
10. supervision of SOC475 and SOC575 courses;
11. membership on thesis and dissertation committees;
12. attendance at workshops designed to enhance teaching skills;
13. feedback from others that reflects learning outcomes, including former students, alumni, and department majors pursuing advanced degrees; and
14. other information deemed appropriate for consideration (by the faculty member).
Recommended Evidence of Research Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of research activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, tenure, or promotion.

1. Books
   a. scholarly, single-authored, recognized publisher
   b. scholarly, single-authored, locally published
   c. non-edited book, dual or multiple-authored
   d. edited book (single-authored/multiple-authored)
   e. training manual / test bank / teaching manual
   f. book in progress

2. refereed journal articles
   a. Reviewer should consider originality and/or extension of previous work. The author has a responsibility to make this known. Empirical / non-empirical research have equal value.
   b. Articles accepted for publication (e.g., forthcoming or in press) may be included for consideration. Such material, however, may only be counted once in the evaluation process.

3. book chapters
4. invited articles
5. editor of journal (provide copy of journal)
6. funded grant applications (size of grant should be considered)
7. papers read at national meetings
8. non-funded grants (size and difficulty of obtaining funding should be considered)
9. papers read at other professional meetings (includes proceedings)
10. panelist at a professional meeting
11. scholarly articles not in journals but refereed
12. articles in non-refereed journals
13. book reviews
14. reviewer activities
15. other (selection of article in data base; reprint of article; positive review of applicant’s work)
Recommended Evidence of Service Activity

The following items are recommended as evidence of service activity. They are recommended for applicants for merit, tenure, or promotion.

1. committee service on the university, college, or department level -- include position held, the number of times met and approximate number of hours spent working on each committee
2. service as graduate school representative on thesis and dissertation committees
3. office in professional organization (what position? how much time and energy spent on position)
4. committee member in professional organization (specify which organization and how much time and energy was required)
5. specific university assignments by president, vice-president, or dean -- note time required and nature of task
6. papers, presentations, or speeches on topics relevant to your profession delivered for education, civic, service, or church groups
7. consulting/committee service to community
8. other pertinent university service
9. organizing session at a professional meeting (if this activity involves considerable evaluation of papers, it should be placed under research activities, lowest priority)