FACULTY MERIT-CREDIT
A GUIDE FOR FACULTY

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I. PURPOSE

The Faculty Merit-Credit Program provides awards to full-time faculty who have demonstrated outstanding achievement *at UCO* in teaching, scholarly/creative activity, or service *within the previous two academic years*. (See application form for eligibility window for this cycle.) Awards are determined by the Faculty Merit-Credit Committee (hereafter "the Committee") according to the criteria and procedures discussed below. The awards are meant to honor the faculty member's previous work and provide funds for items that support future exceptional work in the area of the award (e.g., equipment, books, travel).

II. BACKGROUND

Former UCO President Nigh approved the Faculty Merit-Credit Program on April 28, 1994 in response to Faculty Senate Proposal 92/3-6.

III. COMMITTEE MISSION

The Committee's mission is to develop and administer all necessary processes and procedures to fully implement the Faculty Merit-Credit Policy required by Faculty Senate Proposal 92/3-6.

IV. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

A. The Senate Proposal stipulated that the Committee be composed of three faculty members elected from each undergraduate college, under the auspices of the Academic Vice President. As required by the Faculty Handbook, the Committee also includes a representative from the Faculty Senate, designated by the Senate President. Members serve staggered terms, initially ranging from one to three years. Members may serve more than one term, but not consecutively. Per the Senate Proposal, the Chair is elected annually by the Committee, at a meeting convened by the Academic Vice President, normally early in the spring semester.

B. The original (1994-95) Committee members were: Sheldon Buxton, John Camey, Fred Grosz, Terry Harrison, Dan Haskin, Randy Jones, Diane Kremm, Sam Magrill, Terry May, Joanne Necco, Bill Radke (elected as Chairperson), Sheldon Russell, Mohammad Shaaf, and Roberta Sloan.

V.   FUNDING

Funding for the program derives from interest income on funds donated to UCO for faculty (and staff) development, matched by university funds. The merit-credit program is scheduled to receive approximately $10,000 for the academic year (actual amount may vary).

VI.   MERIT-CREDITS

Awards will take the form of "merit-credits" to be spent by the recipient for items that support the areas of teaching, service, and research, creative and scholarly activity, e.g., equipment, books, and/or travel. Cash awards are not part of the program.

VII.   ELIGIBILITY

All full-time UCO faculty members, with the exception of members of the Faculty Merit-Credit Committee, are eligible to apply. This includes faculty on temporary appointments who otherwise meet all application criteria. Faculty Merit-Credit awardees from the previous year are not eligible to apply *within the same category* during this application cycle.

VIII.   APPLICATION PROCEDURES & TIME LINES

The completed application (handwritten applications will not be accepted) must be submitted to the Faculty Merit-Credit Committee, c/o the Office of Academic Affairs, *no later than the date specified: Monday, March 25, 2019.* Include your application and other supporting materials listed on the required list. *Only supporting materials that are evidence of achievement at UCO during previous two academic years at UCO may be submitted and should be arranged in reverse chronological order.* Ensure that all supporting materials are dated. Any work performed for monetary compensation is not eligible for a Faculty Merit-Credit award.

IX.   COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A.   As soon as possible following the submission deadline, the Committee will review the applications. Awards will normally be decided by July 1, annually, and announced thereafter as recommended by the Committee to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

B. By no later than July 1, and earlier if possible, the Chair will forward Committee recommendations to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Provost/Vice President will then coordinate with the President for announcement and presentation of the Faculty Merit-Credit awards. If possible, recipients will be announced at the Fall Semester General Faculty Meeting.

C. The Committee Chair, assisted administratively by the Office of Academic Affairs, will provide written notification to all applicants regarding the award or non-award of merit-credit. All letters will be simultaneously released, via campus mail, as soon as possible following the final recommendations of the Committee to the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs.

D. During one meeting, the Committee will review the progress of those administrative procedures associated with the procurement and receipt of all commodities funded by the program.

E. By July 1, the Committee Chair will prepare an annual report of Committee operations for the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, with copies furnished to the University President and the Faculty Senate President.

F. By August 15, the Academic Affairs representative to the Committee will advise the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, the undergraduate Deans, and the Faculty Senate President which representatives will complete their term on the Committee so new members can be elected or appointed as appropriate.

G. For all major Committee decisions and deliberations a quorum will be required, e.g., at least nine members, not counting the Academic Affairs (non-voting) representative. Committee discussions are confidential. No written or verbal feedback is provided to applicants due to the inability to provide a blind review of the materials.

X. SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria for receiving a Merit-Credit award are based on outstanding performance in one of three areas related to the University mission: teaching, scholarly/creative activity, or service as depicted through the application process.

XI. SCORING PROCEDURES

A. The Committee uses the following procedures to score applications:

1. A full-time faculty member is eligible every year including the year(s) following an award. However, recipients of Faculty Merit-Credit last year may not apply for an award this year *in the same category*, though they may apply for awards in the two remaining categories.

2. Merit-credit may be considered in only one area.

3. The Committee reviews and scores each applicant in the category in which application was made.

4. The total funds will be distributed by the committee based on relative rankings of the applicants across all areas. Awards will be no less than $500.

B. List of Required Items
All items should be in a binder or folder with clips, with the applicant's name clearly identified. Written items should be in 12 point font with 1" margins.

- Faculty Merit-Credit Application Form, completed
- Letter to committee (two page maximum)
  - Include the importance of the award to you and your justification for applying
  - Describe the impact that your meritorious work has had on constituencies (e.g., UCO – including students, faculty, departments, colleges, committees – and/or professional organizations, communities)
- Description of how merit-credits will be used, including expected impact on constituencies (e.g., student, UCO, OKC metro, professional networks, national and/or international communities) (one page maximum)
- Philosophy Statement for category of application (two page maximum)
- Narrative for all checked items in the category of application (four page maximum)
- Supporting materials to document checked items (August 1, 2016 through July 31, 2018). Arrange in reverse chronological order

Note: All required items must be included. A sub-vetting committee, which consists of three Faculty Merit-Credit Committee members will be formed to check for all required documents. Incomplete applications will NOT be considered.

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C.   Review of Application and Assignment of Points

1.   TEACHING *Include a short narrative summarizing your achievements for all items checked below (four page maximum). Include supporting materials for each checked item as available, in reverse chronological order. Best practice is to separate materials for each checked item with dividers. Include teaching evaluations if available and syllabi for all courses under consideration for Merit-Credit.*

       Development of new or innovative programs, courses or workshops

       Special recognition for teaching

       Additional, uncompensated teaching loads

       Guest lectures, in area(s) of expertise, to UCO classes

       Initiatives to support transformative learning through teaching and learning,

       Other(s)

2.   RESEARCH/SCHOLARLY/CREATIVE ACTIVITIES *Include a short narrative summarizing your achievements for all items checked below (four page maximum). Include supporting materials for each checked item as available, in reverse chronological order. Best practice is to separate materials for each checked item with dividers.*

       Published manuscripts

       Creative activities

       Presentations (oral or poster).

       Internal/external funding.

       Initiatives to support transformative learning through RCSA activities

       Other(s)

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3. SERVICE *Include a short narrative summarizing your achievements for all items checked below (four page maximum). Include supporting materials for each checked item as available, in reverse chronological order. Best practice is to separate materials for each checked item with dividers.*

Guest seminars, within the discipline and consistent with the University mission, to other institutions or organizations (Remunerated consultation is not an eligible service activity.)

Special recognition for service (related to expertise)

Sponsorship of student organization(s)

Leadership roles in professional organization(s)

Initiatives to support transformative learning through service learning

Other(s)

D. Scoring and Computation.

1. Following the application deadline, the Academic Affairs representative to the Committee will notify the Committee chair to schedule a meeting. All applications (and supporting materials) received will be available for review and scoring by the Committee.

2. All applications will be reviewed and scored by all members of the Committee except for the Academic Affairs representative. Scorers will use a rubric agreed upon by the Committee beforehand and available to applicants along with the application materials. Scoring may be accomplished in a Committee meeting or by individual committee members over a period of time established by the Committee chair. All scoring will be conducted in the Office of Academic Affairs Conference Room. No applications will be removed from the Office of Academic Affairs. The chair will ensure an opportunity for a full committee discussion of applications prior to scoring. Committee discussions are confidential. **No written or verbal feedback is provided to applicants due to the inability to provide a blind review of the materials.**

3. The Committee chair (or a team from the Committee appointed by the chair) will then tally the total, mean and/or median scores for each application. All assigned scores will be used in the tally. From those scores a list will be prepared, ranking in descending numerical order, by mean and/or median score, all applications received.

4. Based on that ranking and the amount of money available to the Committee, award amounts will be established per paragraph XI.A. 4., above. The Committee reserves the right to determine the number of awards and associated dollar amounts that will be granted as part of each application cycle.

XII. REAPPLYING FOR MERIT CREDIT

A. If a faculty member has previously submitted an application for Merit-Credit but has not received an award, an updated re-application may be submitted by the application deadline the next academic year.

B. Merit-Credit will not be awarded twice for essentially the same specific activity.

XIII. ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

A. Once Merit-Credit is awarded, the Office of Academic Affairs will create an account for each recipient. Recipients will receive a letter outlining the time lines and administrative procedures for using Merit-Credit. Questions regarding use of Merit-Credit funds should be addressed to Dr. Charlotte Simmons (ext. 2538).

B. Time lines for encumbering Merit-Credit awards are essentially the same as for normal University procurement/travel processing.

C. All paperwork for Merit-Credit awards must pass through the Office of Academic Affairs for approval and processing. All administrative paperwork and budget records associated with Merit-Credit awards will be maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.

D. The deadline for spending Merit-Credit will be no later than the end of the fiscal year (May 15) *following* the fiscal year in which the award was made. For example, an award granted July 1, 2018 would normally have to be totally expended by May 15, 2019. No Merit-Credit will carry forward beyond that point without prior approval by the Committee or the Office of Academic Affairs and only for compelling reasons.

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XIV.   COMMITTEE RECORDS

All applications and associated working papers of the Committee (score sheets, minutes, agendas, etc.) will be kept for three years following each annual Committee cycle. Supporting materials (i.e., published works, award certificates, artwork etc.) submitted with Faculty Merit-Credit applications are not subject to this requirement. The Office of Academic Affairs will be responsible for storing and archiving all applications and Committee working papers.

XV.   SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions to improve this program should be forwarded in writing to the Office of Academic Affairs.

XVI.   UPDATES

This guide will be updated annually by the Committee and the Office of Academic Affairs. Any changes will be published and made available to all full-time faculty members upon request. Any significant changes will be integrated into the next update.

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