

SALISBURY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE MOTION

Submit this form to the Faculty Senate President

SUBJECT: Merit Pay and Training

SENATOR PROPOSING MOTION: Anita Brown

SENATOR SECONDING MOTION:

MOTION (this section alone will be recorded in the minutes):

The Faculty Senate strongly recommends that the Administration discontinue the policy of denying faculty merit pay for non-completion of training until the Faculty Senate has ample opportunity to review, discuss, and make recommendations regarding required training.

JUSTIFICATION:

At Salisbury University, the culture has been for the Administration to request and adhere to the recommendations of the Faculty (via the Faculty Senate) regarding changes to how merit pay is distributed among the Faculty. In Spring 2022, the Administration indicated that it was interested in withholding merit pay for Faculty members who did not complete required online trainings. On 3 May 2022, the Faculty Senate (FS) unanimously opposed a motion to withhold merit pay for non-completion of required trainings.* At that point, the Administration refrained from withholding merit pay from Faculty who did not complete their online trainings.

Two years later, on 20 June 2024, an email from Human Resources (HR) indicated that employees (including Faculty) would not be eligible to receive any merit increases awarded for FY 2025 if they had not completed “all assigned mandatory training.” This practice was a surprise to the Faculty Senators and likely to the Faculty in general.

This practice is a significant change to the evaluation process for faculty. Faculty are evaluated and recommended for Merit by their Department Chair or School Director based upon their performance in the areas of teaching and advising, professional development, and service. This practice permits merit pay to be withheld from Faculty regardless of the evaluation of their performance in the areas of teaching and advising, professional development, and service.

In addition, Faculty who were deemed meritorious in the previous year are eligible for merit pay. However, in 2024, less than a month before merit pay would be awarded, long after Faculty were evaluated, the email from HR seemed to announce a new requirement for Merit.

BOR policy requires that university policies regarding Faculty workload and responsibilities be established in consultation with faculty. Accordingly, the Faculty at SU do not expect the Administration at Salisbury University to unilaterally make a change in how Faculty are evaluated, or awarded merit pay, especially when that change was opposed by the FS. Nor do Faculty expect the Administration to announce such a change, over the summer, in an email from Human Resources. Faculty were both surprised and confused by the announcement. It was unknown what the mandatory trainings included, who decided what the mandatory trainings were, and exactly how the Merit award would be withheld or otherwise distributed among the Faculty.

ANTICIPATED IMPACT:

Negative:

If in July of 2024, Faculty were impacted by the new practice enacted in Summer 2024 regarding the Merit Pay of Faculty, then discontinuation or changes in this practice may be complicated.

Positive:

The Administration will consider Faculty input for a change in practice that impacted faculty workload, pay, and evaluation and that seemed to oppose "the Voice of the Faculty." Faculty input may produce better options regarding mandatory training.

Is this a recommendation to the Provost? Yes X No
Is this a recommendation to someone else? No Yes, to

VOTE: Number of Senators Present: Motion Passes or Fails:

***Some background information:**

From the 3 May 2022 minutes of the FS:

The motion by Senator Martin and seconded by Senator Long-White, "Resolved, that, beginning in August 2022, a single check box to indicate completion or non-completion of all required trainings shall be added to Faculty evaluation forms and to Faculty Librarian evaluation forms. Be it further resolved that, beginning in August 2022, 0.5% shall be subtracted from the merit raise percentage (for example, a merit raise of 2% would be reduced to 1.5%) of any Faculty, including Faculty Librarians, who do not complete all required trainings during the merit period but who are otherwise meritorious", failed to pass with 0 yes votes and 12 no votes.

From the email sent from the Human Resources account on 20 June 2024 with the subject "SU FY2025 Salary Guidelines"

Completing all assigned mandatory training, including "Preventing Harassment and Discrimination," is required for an employee to be eligible for salary merit increases. If an employee did not complete this training before the extended deadline (June 19), they will not be eligible to receive any merit increases provided to State of Maryland employees for fiscal year 2025.