

## Merit Categories and Salary Increases

Eligibility for any salary increase will be based on merit. The annual evaluation will indicate whether the faculty member is eligible for any salary increase. Eligibility for any salary increase requires satisfying the **merit threshold**. The merit threshold is defined as **demonstrating professional competence in all three evaluation areas (teaching, research and professional development, service)** according to criteria and standards articulated by schools and departments. Criteria and standards may vary by school, department, tenure status and rank.

A second designation of quality of performance is **high professional competence**. Faculty members receiving this designation will normally exhibit evidence of consistently high professional competence in all three areas of evaluation. In exceptional cases, very strong performance in one or more areas may compensate for less strong performance in another.

A third designation of quality of performance is **exceptional professional performance**. A faculty member receiving this designation will exhibit high professional competence in all three areas of evaluation and exceptional performance in one of teaching, research and professional development or service. This individual will be performing, in the area of exceptional performance, at a level substantially beyond college-wide expectations for promotion to the next rank, or, for a professor, at a level beyond the expectations for promotion to the rank of professor.

In designating a faculty member as meeting one of the designations of quality of performance above, or as **not meeting the merit threshold**, Chairs should make qualitative assessments of performance and apply the criteria flexibly. In addition, departments and schools may develop more rigorous criteria for these designations.