



Faculty Bonus Award

Policy Type: Administrative
Responsible Office: Office of the Provost
Initial Policy Approved: 11/13/2003
Current Revision Approved: 08/01/2016

Policy Statement and Purpose

The Faculty Bonus Award Policy is established to provide a means for recognition and financial reward for Virginia Commonwealth University faculty members. Bonuses may be awarded to those faculty whose performance exceeds the normal expectations and requirements for their positions or for superior accomplishments or achievements. All full-time faculty, including teaching and research (T & R) faculty, clinical faculty, and administrative and professional (A & P) faculty are eligible for the bonus award.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. VCU supports and environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

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Who Should Know This Policy

All University faculty, department personnel officers, department heads, directors, deans, vice provosts, vice presidents and other senior executives are responsible for knowing this policy and familiarizing themselves with its contents and provisions.

Definitions

A & P - Administrative and Professional Faculty

Clinical Faculty - School of Medicine faculty assigned to the MD and Non-MD Clinical Salary Groups

Executive Level - President and Vice Presidential Areas

T & R - Teaching and Research Faculty

Contacts

The Office of the Provost officially interprets this policy. The Office of the Provost is responsible for obtaining approval for any revisions as required by the policy *Creating and Maintaining Policies and Procedures* through the appropriate governance structures. Please direct policy questions to the Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs.

Policy Specifics and Procedures

Bonuses are one-time, lump sum awards for exceptional performance beyond the prescribed expectations of a faculty member's duties. They may be awarded for overall exceptional performance or superior accomplishments. Bonuses are a means to acknowledge excellence, not reward longevity. Merely achieving one's annual objectives or "doing a good job," while certainly commendable, are not examples of the exceptional performance or the superior achievement that should be rewarded with a bonus.

Bonus awards may be any dollar amount of the individual's annual base salary. The dollar amount, within these limits, will be at the discretion of the department head, Dean, and Vice President. Each Vice President must approve all bonus awards within their executive level. All bonus awards must be approved by the University President and/or the VCU Board of Visitors, as applicable.

A. Eligibility Requirements

A faculty member may be recommended for a bonus award if the following criteria are met:

1. Achieved a satisfactory performance evaluation for the most recent academic year.
2. Employed within the department awarding the bonus for at least one year.
3. Exceptional performance beyond documented expectations of faculty member's position, such as:
 - Provides substantial contribution to the fulfillment of goals and objectives of the University, Office of the Dean, or Department.
 - Provides creative, innovative ideas or solutions using strategies, which increase efficiency and the effective use of resources or which strengthen the image of the University.
 - Demonstrates outstanding results in the areas of teaching, research, and/or service.

B. Parameters

Eligible Faculty

All full-time faculty, including teaching and research (T & R) faculty, clinical faculty, and administrative and professional (A & P) faculty are eligible for the bonus award.

Frequency of Bonus Award

Faculty may be eligible for a bonus award only once each fiscal year (July through June). Faculty members may receive bonus awards in consecutive years. There are no limits on the number of years a faculty member may receive a bonus award. The receipt of a bonus award in one year does not guarantee or imply any subsequent bonus awards.

Timing of Bonus Award

The award of a financial incentive shall normally coincide with the University's salary administration process for faculty salary increases. If no salary increases are scheduled, the bonus may still be awarded with approval of the President and/or VCU Board of Visitors, as applicable.

Bonus Award

The bonus award is defined as compensation and not a fringe benefit so that it does not violate the federal non-discrimination rules regarding employee benefits. The award will be made in a single installment and will not increase a faculty member's University base salary. The bonus award will be taxable as supplemental income.

Funding

Funding for bonus awards will come from within the individual unit/department. No central funding will be provided for bonus awards. Sources of funding for bonus awards must be approved by the appropriate Vice President. Funds for bonus awards should be provided from personal services budget funds and not from operating items such as equipment, supplies, and travel.

Bonus Award Plan

Each school or unit must have an approved bonus award plan in order to recommend bonus payments for faculty. The plans must be approved by the applicable Dean or unit head and Vice President. Deans or unit heads are responsible for communicating the bonus plans to all faculty in their school or unit.

Authority

The President may approve individual exceptions to the policy to meet the changing needs of Virginia Commonwealth University.

C. Procedures

1. In general, faculty bonuses are to be recommended during the Faculty Merit and Bonus Award Process (the “On-Cycle” bonus award process). When the university implements a Faculty Merit and Bonus Award process (contingent upon funding), instructions for awarding bonuses will be provided by the Office of the Provost. If a bonus is recommended outside of the Faculty Merit and Bonus Award process, the bonus can be electronically initiated as an “Off-Cycle” request in the Off-Cycle Bonus Award module in eJobs. Instructions for using this module can be found in [the EGUIDE TO FACULTY OFF-CYCLE ACTIONS IN EJOBS](#). This request is usually initiated by the respective Department Chair/Director (or designee, as applicable) and submitted to the respective Dean/Unit Head for review who would, upon approval, submit the request to the respective VP. Upon VP approval, the request is then submitted to the President for final approval. Note: If the faculty member is at the level of the Dean or higher, the off-cycle bonus request also requires approval by the Board of Visitors before it can be processed.
2. If the off-cycle bonus request is approved by the President, the Dean/Unit Head should prepare and provide a notification letter to the faculty member. (A notification template is available from the Office of the Provost or the Office of the Vice President for Health Sciences, as applicable). The notification may include providing the faculty member with the option of receiving a payout of the bonus or deferring pay on the date the bonus is to be processed. Questions about the tax-deferred options can be directed to the VCU Human Resource Generalist for your department, which you can locate at benefits@vcu.edu. Upon final approval of the bonus, the respective school will prepare a personnel action form and submit to HRDOCS for processing.

Forms

There are no forms associated with this policy.

Related Documents

1. VCU Policy: *Faculty Salary Administration Guidelines*
<http://www.assurance.vcu.edu/Policy%20Library/Faculty%20Salary%20Administration%20Guidelines.pdf>
2. [EGUIDE TO FACULTY OFF-CYCLE ACTIONS IN EJOBS](#)

Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

Initial Approval: 11/13/2003 Faculty Bonus Awards Policy

Revision: 2/9/2006 Faculty Bonus Awards Policy

Revision: 5/24/2010 Faculty Bonus Awards Policy

Revision: 12/05/2013 Faculty Bonus Awards Policy

FAQ

There are no FAQ associated with this policy and procedures document.