

Rubrics for Assessing Merit
Grinnell College
Budget Committee and Personnel Committee
October 15, 2007

In assigning merit scores for the teaching, scholarship, and service of faculty members under triennial review (Budget Committee or BC) and interim, full, and tenure reviews (Personnel Committee), both committees strive to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each faculty member under review. Both committees also try to understand the different and special responsibilities each discipline entails. To ensure consistency across evaluations and across years, BC and Personnel have developed a rubric for assigning each component merit score. This new rubric supplants the one used for the past three years, and incorporates comments and suggestions gathered from the faculty. In many cases, sample types of work are suggested to help future members of each committee and faculty under review to better understand the various categories. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive. In many cases, disciplinary or interdisciplinary work will not fit exactly into our descriptions. In such cases, the faculty member under review and his or her chair should explain special disciplinary expectations and how they might correspond to examples to help us best situate the faculty member's accomplishments.

Teaching and Advising

Because Grinnell's hiring and evaluation processes emphasize teaching, most faculty members at Grinnell are strong teachers. In addition, faculty members may have different kinds of teaching responsibilities. Some work in or between disciplines in which they have the opportunity (or the requirement) to regularly teach new courses. Others work in disciplines in which they can and must continue to teach the same course every year, and therefore spend their effort in fine-tuning those courses. Some blaze new trails in topic or pedagogy. Some serve their discipline or the College by regularly teaching introductory courses not always popular with students. Some faculty members advise unusually high numbers of students while others may spend many hours with a relatively smaller number of students. Because Grinnell values each of these responsibilities, the Budget Committee and Personnel have decided not to prioritize any particular activity. Instead, we request information that describes the responsibilities and the special ways in which faculty members under review are particularly successful at their work. We assume most Grinnell faculty provide superior instruction, therefore we have chosen to use a narrower scale for assessing teaching.

- 3** *Exceptionally inspired and effective teaching and advising.* The top faculty at Grinnell. Because responsibilities differ so much, we must make this assessment on a case-by-case basis, relying on strong arguments from faculty and their chairs or designated reviewers.
- 2** *Inspired and effective teaching and advising.* The typical Grinnell faculty member. To receive a 2, faculty must show not just clear commitment to excellent teaching and advising, but also evidence of success in these core activities.

1 *Less effective teaching and advising.*
Scholarship

The BC and Personnel understand that scholarly expectations differ significantly across different communities. Our examples here indicate approximate levels. As the introduction suggests, it is the responsibility of the faculty member under review and the chair or designated reviewer to help the Budget Committee understand the recognized standards of the relevant discipline or scholarly community.

5 *Exceptional achievement.* In the ideal, scholarly work of high visibility equivalent to what we would expect at the most productive stages of a strong career.

- In most disciplines: an article articles considered seminal or on the cutting edge within the discipline and published in a major journal in the field
- In some disciplines: a well-reviewed book or a book published by a highly reputed press
- In the performing or visual arts: a musical, dance, or theatrical performance of substantial scope involving a national-caliber performing ensemble or venue, or an exhibition at a prestigious gallery or museum of national or international significance
- In some cases, multiple works that fit into category 4

4 *Very strong achievement with likely visibility in a discipline*

- In most disciplines: a book, an edited volume, or an article or articles published in peer-reviewed and highly competitive journals
- In some disciplines: invited article or articles or book chapters
- In the performing or visual arts: performances or exhibitions of substantial scope resulting from professional review in venues of regional significance or smaller scope resulting from professional review in venues of national or international significance
- In some cases, multiple works that fit into category 3

3 *Strong achievement.*

- For many disciplines, this corresponds to a peer-reviewed article or articles in second or third tier journals
- For some disciplines, edited volumes, book chapters, extended reviews
- In the performing or visual arts: several performances or exhibitions of lesser scope resulting from professional review in venues of regional significance
- In some cases, multiple works that fit into category 2

2 *Scholarship with low visibility in a discipline.*

- For most disciplines, this corresponds to an article or articles subject to peer review but appearing in less strong venues
- For some disciplines: public work without peer review presented at regional or national venues
- In the performing or visual arts: a small number of performances or exhibitions resulting from professional review in local or regional venues outside of Grinnell

1 *Less demonstrable or of limited visibility within the discipline*

- In most disciplines: book reviews or works in progress presented on campus or at other local colleges or universities
- In the performing or visual arts: a small number of performances or exhibitions not subject to some form of professional review

0 *Little or no evidence of scholarship.*

Service

In order to assess service, we first classify work according to workload and kinds of responsibility. We then use the numbers and kinds of service activities to determine the final merit score. Faculty members and their chairs aid us in this endeavor by comparing the workload and responsibility to those of common committees at Grinnell. Because the work or responsibility associated with committees varies from year to year, these categories should not be considered fixed or comprehensive. These guidelines privilege routine service but innovative or significant one-time contributions should also be specified. Faculty members should comment on their service to their profession and explain its significance or impact.

Type P service activity: Similar to the service load in a committee that meets rarely (1-3 times per semester) in which most activities are not particularly burdensome. Examples in the Grinnell committee structure include Institutional Review Board (except for the chair) and Teacher Education Committee.

Type Q service activity. Similar to the service load in a committee the meets approximately bi-weekly or irregularly and in which most activities are not particularly burdensome. Examples in the Grinnell committee structure include Admissions and Financial Aid Committee, Honorary Degree Committee, or Concentration Committees.

Type R service activity. Similar to the service load in a committee that meets weekly or bi-weekly and requires regular work outside committee meetings. Examples in the Grinnell committee structure include the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Board, Committee on Academic Standing, Curriculum Committee, Admission Board, scholarship committees, and the Faculty Organization Committee. Chairing a department in a year that is not unusually demanding but may include salary reviews or promotion reviews. Multiple lectures at alumni events might qualify as Type R service.

Type S service activity. Similar to the service load in a committee whose responsibilities include the assessment of other faculty at Grinnell. Examples in the Grinnell committee structure include the Personnel Committee, the Committee for the Support of Faculty Scholarship, and the Instructional Support Committee. Chairing a department in a year of external evaluation, multiple reviews or multiple hires is also a Type S service activity as is chairing a large department with a significant budget and some staff supervision. Type S service might also reflect an unusually innovative contribution to the intellectual life or vitality of the Grinnell

community. For example, establishing a new concentration or interdisciplinary major could qualify as Type S service.

Type T service activity. Similar to the service load in Executive Council: Frequent meetings, significant work outside those meetings, and responsibility for assessment of other faculty. Chair of FOC in years when significant changes are made to the Handbook, Chair of the Institutional Review Board are also Type T service activities.

- 5** *Exceptional responsibility and very demanding activity.* A Type T service activity accompanied by a Type R or a Type S service activity.
- 4** *Significant responsibility or very demanding activity.* A Type T service activity, or two Type R service activities, or two Type S service activities, or a Type R service activity and a Type S service activity.
- 3** *Substantial activity.* A Type R service activity or a Type S service activity. Three or more type Q service activities.
- 2** *Moderate activity.* One or two type Q service activities.
- 1** *Minimal activity.* A type P service activity.
- 0** *Little or no service.*