Tarleton State University  
FY14 Staff and Faculty Merit Recommendation Process  
(Subject to approval by The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents)

Continuing the University’s deliberate efforts to implement and follow a more progressive compensation program which identifies and rewards outstanding performance, Tarleton has budgeted a 3% merit pool for fiscal year 2014. Of course, the budgeted merit pool is subject to approval by the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents (BOR), which we hope will occur during the Board’s August, 2013 meeting.

The ability to budget the merit pool was made possible by strong Semester Credit Hour growth over the past several years and favorable increases in budgetary support from the State. Overall, the University allocated approximately $1.4 million in staff salary merit, new staff positions, and other related support.

According to Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) policy, merit increases are to be based upon job performance. In compliance with TAMUS policy, Tarleton’s merit pool for fiscal year 2014 for both faculty and staff will have a distribution range of 0% to 5% on eligible salary and be based upon performance evaluations.

*How will the award process work?*

Individual increases will be recommended by supervisors within the divisions with final decisions to be determined by the Provost or respective VP.

Merit increases will be effective September 1, 2013.

The 3% pool will be distributed by staff and faculty managers as follows:

- **Department Head:** 80% of the merit pool
- **Dean/Department Admin:** 15% of the merit pool
- **Provost/VP:** 5% of the merit pool

As indicated, each department head will receive 80% of their departmental merit pool, which equates to approximately 2.4% of the overall pool. Department heads are responsible for recommending a merit increase by linking merit increase percentages with employees’ performance as documented in a current year performance evaluation. The dean/department administrator may recommend an additional .45% and the provost/VP may award an additional .15%.

In order to provide larger increases to outstanding performers, department heads will need to provide lower increases for less strong performers. For example, a 3% increase will need to be offset by a 2% increase or less to stay within budget.
The Provost/VP retains final authority to make any adjustments deemed necessary and the Provost/VP will determine the protocol if there are more than 3 management layers between the President and frontline staff or faculty. At the conclusion of the merit recommendation process, the Provost/VP will perform a final review of all merit recommendations for their respective division and make any needed adjustments before submission to Employee Services for data entry.

**Why is this process necessary?**

As mentioned above, the BOR has specifically prohibited across the board salary adjustments.

Since approximately two-thirds of Tarleton employees received an “exceeds expectations” rating based on the performance evaluations performed last Spring (see graph below), the process outlined above will be in conformity with the BOR directive and help achieve the University’s goal of rewarding outstanding performance.

![Percentage of Tarleton employees in each performance category based upon evaluations occurring in FY13.](image-url)

Taking into account performance evaluations and amount of the merit pool, after all merit has been awarded, it is probable the most typical merit increase will be 2.5% and the overall distribution (which averages to a 3.0% pool) will be similar to the following illustration:
**Other considerations**

1. Individuals hired between March 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013, are not eligible for merit until they have successfully completed six months of employment with Tarleton. Mid-year merit is allowable in accordance with Tarleton Rule 31.01.08.T1.

2. Individuals promoted to a new position between June 1, 2013 and September 1, 2013 are not eligible for merit; therefore, when setting a promotional salary keep in mind the incumbent will not be eligible for merit until FY2015.

3. Recommended merit increases should not be communicated to individual employees until the Texas A&M University System Board of Regents has approved the budget and then only through the salary letters to avoid any ambiguity.

4. Merit increases are only allowed in .1% increments.

5. Staff members who are part of a formal or informal performance discipline process or currently on a performance improvement plan should receive a 0% increase. Please work closely with your Dean and/or Employee Services as you make these determinations and as you communicate merit decisions to your employees.

6. Merit for VPs will be capped at a maximum of 2.5%.

**Merit recommendation timeline**

- **July 25**: Distribution of merit instructions and departmental merit worksheets to departments.

- **Aug 2**: Merit worksheets due to division head for final review. All intermediate reviews and approvals must be completed prior to submission to the division head.

- **Aug 9**: TAMUS Board of Regents consideration of Tarleton’s budget, including proposed merit pool; merit worksheets forwarded to Employee Services for budget preparation.

- **Aug 26-30**: Salary letter distribution to employees