**Faculty Advancement**

**Merit**:

A merit is defined as a change in step (Assistant Professor, Step 2 to Assistant Professor, Step 3).

In the Step Plus System, all merits are considered on a fixed two-, three- or four- year schedule, as determined by normative time at their current rank and step. At every review, the candidate may be considered for more than one step, i.e. 1.5 steps, 2 steps, etc.

After a deferral, the candidate may submit the next year.

If the merit was denied, the candidate may resubmit the next year.

After a five-year review, the candidate may submit an action the next year.

**Promotion:**

A promotion is defined as a change in rank (Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or Associate Professor to Professor).

*How far back should the promotion record go?*

Promotions from Assistant to Associate Professor go all the way back to the candidate’s date of terminal degree (day they received the doctoral degree). Promotions from Associate to Full Professor cover all materials since promotion to Associate Professor (usually 6 years).

*When can an academic promote?*

Normally, academics promote from Assistant, Step 4 to Associate, Step 1 and from Associate, Step 3 to Full, Step 1.

In the Step Plus system, promotion can be requested early. If the candidate is not eligible for merit or promotion during the current cycle and wishes to submit for promotion, this is considered an accelerated promotion (acceleration in time). If the candidate is eligible for merit, the action remains a normal Step Plus advancement.

*Why was a merit approved instead of the requested promotion?*

The reviewing committee can recommend that a faculty member receive a merit in lieu of a promotion. This is generally due to an insufficiency in the record, for example, not enough teaching evaluations, or publications.

Overlapping Steps:

Assistant Professor, Step 5 and Step 6 as well as Associate Professor, Step 4 and Step 5 overlap the first two steps of the next higher rank (the salary is only $100 higher). The committees/Dean/Vice Provost use these steps to advance faculty without approving promotion.

Ex. If a faculty member is promoting from Assistant Professor, Step 5 and they have been at step 5 for two years, the next normal promotion step is Associate Professor, Step 2 because Assistant Professor, Step 5 and Associate Professor, Step 1 overlap on the salary scale. In order to actually give an increase, the next step up is used. This is not considered a 2.0 step action.

Upper Level Merits:

An upper level merit is a merit review that occurs at Professor, Step 5 to Professor, Step 6 and at Professor, Step 9 to Professor, Above Scale (beyond the set scale steps) and requires review of the candidate's time since promotion to full Professor. These two actions are called "barrier steps" because they demarcate the gateway to the "highly distinguished" upper or above scale steps of the Professor rank. The packet contents resemble that of a promotion (external letters from referees are required), but this is still called a merit because it is a change in step, not rank.

**Step Plus**

*General Principles*

In formulating our criteria for recommending larger-than-normal advancements, we should aim to strike a balance between concreteness and flexibility. Our goal should be to clarify the criteria for accelerations without tying our hands to quantitative assessments that understate or overstate the total contributions of candidates.

*One-Step Advancement*

All academics are eligible for regular advancement at scheduled intervals. A balanced record, appropriate for rank, step, and series, with evidence of good accomplishments in all areas of review is rewarded with normal advancement. All academics can expect to advance at normal rates, unless a major flaw in their performance is evident. Service duties are expected to increase as faculty advance in rank and step.

*One-and-One-Half-Step Advancement*

A larger-than-normal, 1.5-step advancement requires a strong record with outstanding achievement in at least one area of review. However, outstanding achievement in one area may not qualify the candidate for 1.5-step advancement if performance in another area does not meet UC Davis standards. Chairs and Deans should be encouraged to articulate in the departmental and Dean’s letters the grounds for advancement beyond simple numerical tabulations of papers, citations, courses, and committees: for example, by describing the special impact or quality of the work, the awarding of prizes for achievement, or the scale and scope of the undertaking.

*Two-Step Advancement*

A two-step advancement will require a strong record in all areas of review, with outstanding performance in at least two areas. Two-step advancement requests will go to CAP for review and the Vice Provost- Academic Affairs for decision. The two-step advancement should be considered for individuals who would have accelerated every year under the previous system.

Links to the full Guidelines for Advancement:

Academic Senate: <https://academicaffairs.ucdavis.edu/policies/step-plus/guidelines-for-advancement-senate.html>

Academic Federation: <http://academicfederation.ucdavis.edu/step-plus/guidelines-for-advancement.html>