

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>

DMSRC faculty review

36 messages

HOLZ Carsten A <socholz@ust.hk>

Tue, May 24, 2016

To: sosc-fac-list@lists.ust.hk

Dear colleagues,

today, the DMSRC of the Social Science Division conducted its evaluation as instructed in the motion passed unanimously with two abstentions by the faculty members of the Social Science Division at the divisional meeting on 28 February 2016:

> The faculty recommends that the review committee not spend an enormous amount of effort trying to make fine distinctions, but that if performance is broadly considered credible, all faculty receive the recommendation for full GPA [government pay adjustment]. <

Best,
Carsten

Kellee S TSAI ktsai@ust.hk [= Division head] Tue, May 24, 2016 at 6:09 AM
To: Carsten Holz carstenholz@gmail.com [and other members of the division review committee]

Dear DMSRC [Division Merit and Salary Review Committee],

The Dean [James Lee] and I would like to meet with you today at 1:30 pm in Rm 3365. Thanks.

Best,
Kellee

+ Carsten Holz passes the above message on, without comment, to the SOSC faculty.

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>
To: Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>
Cc: [other members of the division review committee]

Tue, May 24, 2016 at 8:06 AM

Dear colleagues in the DMSRC,
Following Kellee / dean email, met with them solo, talked for an hour until dean asked me to leave them alone.
Have a complete voice recording, that they requested me not to share.
Bottomline, we have done the eval as requested. Dean harkened to differentiation -- we provided the degree we find appropriate.
Talk abt new info sharing by dean, new division vote. Don't know if will happen.
Best,
Carsten

The division head informs me (Carsten Holz) beforehand that she intends to send the below email to SOSC faculty, and I respond that I think the email is fair.

[SOSC secretary to the division head]

Tue, May 24, 2016 at 10:37 AM

To: [SOSC faculty]

Cc: Kellee S TSAI <ktsai@ust.hk>, James LEE <jqljzl@ust.hk>

From: Kellee S TSAI

Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2016 5:30 PM

Subject: DMSRC faculty review

Dear Colleagues,

I would have preferred to call a divisional meeting for us to discuss this in person, but that is not practical given the time of year. Therefore, I would like to take an electronic faculty vote regarding a motion that we approved (with two abstentions) at our divisional meeting on 29 February 2016:

"The faculty recommends that the review committee not spend an enormous amount of effort trying to make fine distinctions, but that if performance is broadly considered credible, all faculty receive the recommendation for full GPA."

Our Divisional Merit Salary Review Committee (DMSRC) met this morning for approximately half an hour. Although I have not seen the results of their ratings, the brevity of the meeting suggests that the committee operated in the spirit of the above motion rather than according to the university's charge to DMSRCs (attached – the relevant section is excerpted below):

8.3 Functions:

(a) Review the performance of all tenured and tenure-track faculty members of the Department for the annual merit salary adjustment.

(b) Provide written review feedback to the Head on the performance of each faculty for that year and make suggestions to the Head where improvements in performance are needed if and as requested by the Head.

I would like to point out that the DMSRC is not charged with making GPA recommendations. Indeed, the reviews have other functions beyond being a basis for GPA increases. One of the most important roles of the annual reviews conducted by the committee is to provide feedback to assistant and associate professors about their progress relative to the expectations of the department.

Since the time of our February meeting, the EVPPPO [Executive Vice-President and Provost Office] has provided additional guidance and information about the MSR process, which I would like to share with you.

1) The provost requests that the DMSRCs provide greater differentiation in their faculty evaluations because he would like to allocate funds above and beyond the full GPA based on merit. This does not mean that all faculty would therefore receive the full GPA, but rather, that he seeks to reward exceptional faculty performance in teaching/research/service with much greater increases than those received by average or below-average performing faculty.

2) To document such differentiation among faculty, the EVPPO asked the deans to ensure that the DMSRCs also draft short summary profiles of each faculty member. These profiles are requested on top of the usual assessments of teaching/research/service along the lines of excellent/VG/G/satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

This is the only description I have for the new request, which was sent from the EVPPO to all the deans (and then downloaded to the heads — which I then shared with Carsten on 5 May):

Short Summary of Faculty Profile

Regarding the provision of a short summary of faculty profile for each faculty member being reviewed (as discussed at the last Deans lunch meeting on 13 April 2016), the rationale of this process is to facilitate a discussion and consensus building in the DMSRCs on the general level of performance of each faculty member and to differentiate faculty members who have special achievements or contributions in areas of University priority objectives. A short summary profile presented in bullet notes on the following areas will suffice:

- *Teaching*: student-credit taught in the past year, the basis of the assessment, e.g., SFQ or others, the level of performance assessed and other note-worthy accomplishments, e.g., new course development, MOOC, etc.
- *Research*: any breakthrough noted
- *Service*: any special contributions, e.g., management of new facilities, etc.

SHSS indicated that the faculty summaries can be submitted as a separate document rather than recorded on the usual form.

In light of this additional information since our February meeting, I am asking you to vote on the following:

- 1) Keep the 29 February motion as is. Note that this option effectively puts the DMSRC and myself as division head in a position of insubordination.
- 2) Keep the 29 February motion as is, but ask our DMSRC to follow the provost's recommendation that DMSRCs provide evaluations that differentiate faculty performance more clearly (including the requested short summaries).
- 3) Rescind the 29 February motion.

Please send [division head's secretary] your vote by this Friday, 27 May at noon. She will compile them anonymously and share the result of the vote with the DMSRC and the rest of the division. Thank you for your attention.

Best regards,
Kellee

Kellee S. Tsai
Head and Chair Professor
Division of Social Science
Hong Kong University of Science & Technology
Clear Water Bay, Kowloon

Secretary [contact info]

Growing our Vibrant Community Together: Think before you print

 **AP25_0.pdf**
333K

On 30 May 2016, the division head's secretary sends a reminder to SOSC faculty to vote.

One colleague in an email to all SOSC faculty proposes a variation on the division head's three options that triggers no further communication. Another colleague engages.

Another colleague emails the SOSC division head's secretary, cc'ed to SOSC faculty "I strongly support the decision made at the 29 February Divisional Meeting (i.e. I vote for Kellee's option 1), and I am wholeheartedly grateful to the DMSRC Chair and Committee for trying to avoid wasting precious faculty time on distributing pennies as reward and punishment."

A colleague writes to me privately, having read the 'guidelines' in full for the first time, and finds that many of these "excellent" points of the guidelines ought to be discussed at a (division) meeting. The colleague then shares their thoughts on several points of the guidelines. I respond privately to the colleague. The colleague rephrases their earlier email to me, which I can (and do) then share with the division review committee and the division head.

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>
To: [SOSC faculty]

Tue, May 24, 2016 at 3:32 PM

Dear colleagues,

I recorded the meeting between the dean, Kellee, and me and was requested at the end of the meeting not to share the recording.

My personal bottom line is that every member of the DMSRC can fill in the forms according to their own conscience, and that comprises the degree of differentiation they wish to make in their evaluation of faculty members.

The DMSRC review draft guidelines that triggered the discussion that led to the motion passed on 29 February 2016 are attached. As far as I can tell, none of the concerns raised in the guidelines have in the meantime been addressed.

I don't know how this is for you: if you get a series of real salary cuts, or you realize that you are being systematically impoverished vis-à-vis your official peer group, then how do you respond? Even if the cuts are relatively small, say 5% over three years, isn't your enthusiasm for working at HKUST going to drop by 50%, your willingness to volunteer for anything drops by 100%, and doing anything that might in any way benefit the guys who treat you that way (including publishing) is going to be the very last thing on your mind? -- In which case "management's" masterplan for the utter destruction of HKUST is an unqualified success!

Best,
Carsten

 **MeritReviewGuidelines-5and9Nov15.pdf**
60K

Kellee S TSAI ktsai@ust.hk [division head]
To: SOSC faculty

Wed, Jun 1, 2016 at 9:00 AM

Dear Colleagues,

Since last week, 19 colleagues have responded to the poll below, including 1 abstention. Out of the 18 votes, 4 opted for Option 1 (keep the original motion as is), 9 voted for Option 2 (keep the motion, but follow the provost's requests), and 5 voted for Option 3 (repeal the motion in light of new information). In short, 14 out of our 18 voting colleagues would like the committee to follow the provost's recommendation that DMSRCs provide evaluations that differentiate faculty performance more clearly, including the requested short summaries. I expect our DMSRC to respect that consensus and reconvene to review the annual faculty reports, and provide short summary faculty profiles documenting any "special achievements or contributions in the areas of University priority objectives" (further detailed below in teaching, research, and service).

I also wanted to let you know that some colleagues have written to me directly (or indirectly through the DMSRC) to share their opinions about the MSR process. Some would like greater transparency in the process. I was hoping we could do that by outlining the broad parameters—but not a mechanical formula--of what we hope to see in terms of research, teaching, and service for substantiated vs. unsubstantiated faculty. This year's DMSRC was tasked with that in the fall, so we have a working document (discussed at earlier divisional meetings). I think it is worth revisiting that effort next year even if it is challenging to reach consensus on issues such as whether co-authored works should be regarded the same as single-authored ones. Many variables go into evaluating the value of a particular publication (including the impact factor of the journal, type of press, nature of the research contribution, whether empirical and/or theoretical, funding sources, etc.). I don't expect that we will agree on the details, particularly since this is a multi-disciplinary division. But the purpose of having a committee is to have such discussions so we can learn about the norms and standards of various fields/sub-fields from one another. We can discuss it as a division as well.

As you know, another element of transparency that was raised concerned the distribution of scores and salaries. There is not as much support for the latter, but providing annual aggregated information about the distribution of merit scores seems reasonable. Let's discuss that at our next divisional meeting as well.

Thanks to those of you who took the time to vote (note that except for those who voted by cc-ing all, I do not know who voted for which option), and provide suggestions on how we can improve the process.

Warmly,
Kellee

Kellee S. Tsai
Head and Chair Professor
Division of Social Science
Hong Kong University of Science & Technology
Clear Water Bay, Kowloon

Secretary: Ms. Josephine Wong
sojowong@ust.hk, +852 2358 7782

Growing our Vibrant Community Together: Think before you print

[Division head's secretary]

Fri, Jun 3, 2016 at 9:02 AM

To: Carsten Andreas HOLZ <socholz@ust.hk>, Carsten Holz gmail
<carstenholz@gmail.com>

Cc: Kellee S TSAI ktsai@ust.hk [= Division head]

Dear Prof Holz,

May I check with you if you would like to reconvene the DMSRC meeting to go through the faculty files?

Shall I check with the DMSRC members' schedule for the meeting?

Please advise.

Best,

Josephine



Carsten Holz
<carstenholz@gmail.com>

DMSRC 2015 review

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>

Sat, Jun 4, 2016 at 5:41 AM

To: Kellee S TSAI ktsai@ust.hk [= Division head]

Cc: [SOSC faculty]

Dear Kellee (and colleagues),

regarding the motion of 29 February 2016

> The faculty recommends that the review committee not spend an enormous amount of effort trying to make fine distinctions, but that if performance is broadly considered credible, all faculty receive the recommendation for full GPA. <

and the statement / email of 1 June 2016

2) Keep the 29 February motion as is, but ask our DMSRC to follow the provost's recommendation that DMSRCs provide evaluations that differentiate faculty performance more clearly (including the requested short summaries).

-- The Social Science Division's merit and salary review committee (DMSRC) on 24 May conducted the review for 2015. The review for 2015 was based on the information the DMSRC had at the time (the division's motion of 29 February, the various documents related to the review) and the views of its members, following a discussion at the time of review. The review was done in full accordance with the official requirements—and in my understanding, nobody can tell individual members of the DMSRC which box to tick for a particular faculty member that they review, and no requirements for the degree of differentiation exist (“X% excellent, Y% very good, etc.). The requested short summary statement was included – the division's motion of 29 February. The review was (and is) complete.

As head of the Division of Social Science, you have appointed me Chair of the DMSRC in 2015/16. As head of the Division of Social Science at Hong Kong “University” of Science & Technology, I would think you can remove anyone from any committee if they don't act the way you want them to act (or remove them for any other reason, which you don't have to name), and you can have decisions re-taken as many times as it takes until you like the outcome.

Best,
Carsten

A colleague emails me with a proposal for the review committee to separate giving feedback to junior faculty from the annual performance evaluation of all faculty.



Carsten Holz
<carstenholz@gmail.com>

DMSRC 2015 review

Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>

Sat, Jun 4, 2016 at 5:48 AM

To: [Division head's secretary]

Dear [Division head's secretary],

I do not reconvene the DMSRC -- please see email sent to all colleagues a few minutes ago, below [above].

Best,

Carsten

Before sending the email below to SOSC faculty, the division head informs me (Carsten Holz) that and how she intends to replace me on the division review committee (and I thank her, after which she expresses her availability to chat).



Carsten Holz
<carstenholz@gmail.com>

DMSRC 2015 review

Kellee S TSAI ktsai@ust.hk [= Division head]

Tue, Jun 7, 2016 at 6:56 AM

To: Carsten Holz <carstenholz@gmail.com>

Cc: [Division faculty]

Dear Colleagues,

The membership of our Divisional Merit Salary Review Committee for 2015/16 has been adjusted. I have replaced Carsten Holz as the chair and a member of the DMSRC. [Colleague X], an existing member, has generously agreed to chair the committee. [Colleague Y], a divisional ExCo member with prior experience on the DMSRC, will join the committee. The other existing members will remain the same: [3 colleagues]. I have asked the chair of the re-constituted committee to convene the DMSRC within the next week and a half, so that I can receive their recommendations in time to perform my role in the MSR process.

Below I am reiterating the functions expected of the DMSCR, along with updated requests from the EVPP0 about providing short summary profiles of each faculty member “to differentiate faculty members who have special achievements or contributions in the areas of University priority objectives.”

I hope your summer is off to a smooth start now that grades have been submitted (for the most part).

Warmly,
Kellee

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