

## **Best Practices for Preparing Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay (EMPP) Requests in the Division of Academic Affairs**

**June 2013**

- The EMPP Program is used to reward a select number of high performing P&S staff. It is used at the discretion of managers in order to recognize:
  - A single “one off” and impactful contribution
  - Extraordinary efforts and high performance on major projects, including those of a considerable time duration
  - Accomplishments that led to significant cost reductions or savings to the unit, or generated new revenue
- It is important to note that the accomplishment must have taken place outside the boundaries of the performance expected for the staff member’s job. “Above expectations” performance within the employee’s job description should instead be recognized through the annual performance-based salary adjustment. The following example citation is not acceptable on those grounds:

*Jane (Administrative Specialist III) regularly goes above and beyond to help faculty and staff; she shows an exceptional devotion to her job. Jane did a great job managing the budget during a period of uncertainty. Jane also helped to fill in during a Secretary II vacancy in the office this year.*

The following example citation is acceptable:

*Tom (Program Assistant II) served as the project coordinator for the ISU exhibit of the “Smithsonian Institute Folklife Festival Project.” The project had national exposure (the exhibit was held in Washington, D.C.), and coordination required months of dedicated effort and attention to many details. This project was in addition to Tom’s regular, ongoing position responsibilities.*

- The recognition should be timely and made shortly after the accomplishment or completion of the project. Do not wait until the end of the fiscal year.
- The award amount should reflect the magnitude and scope of the accomplishment. Awards near 5% are typical. Requests for the maximum of 10% of base salary should be rare and reserved for accomplishments that are exceptional in nature.
- The written rationale must be specific, and the accomplishment must be clearly documented in measurable terms. The following example citation is not acceptable on those grounds:

*Joe (Program Coordinator I) is available for calls, and works extra hours, in the evening and on weekends. Joe is critical to the success and smooth operation of the unit. Joe provides guidance and support to help develop grant proposals. Joe has helped to build awareness of team accomplishments.*

The following example citation is acceptable:

*Nancy (Program Assistant I) identified the need for a product inventory system for the department's educational materials sales. She worked with IT staff to develop an online order form for products, and to develop and implement the new data management system for product inventory. In the past year, the department shipped 2,800 products with an inventory value of approximately \$150,000; the new system will allow inventory and sales to grow with no additional new staff cost. The net result is improved response time and additional revenue for the department.*

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### ***Excerpt from the Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay Program Guidelines***

Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay may be given to reward an individual or group of individuals for outstanding performance or a specific accomplishment that is beyond normal expectations. Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay should not be used as a substitute for providing ongoing performance-based salary adjustments.

1. Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay may be awarded at any time during the fiscal year (though major administrative units may impose deadlines).
2. Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay will be in the form of a lump sum payment that is not added to the base salary.
3. A P&S employee may receive an Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay award only once per fiscal year for an amount **up to** 10% of his/her base salary. The recommendation must be reviewed and approved by the respective Senior Vice President.
4. No more than 10% of a major administrative unit's P&S staff will be eligible to receive an Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay award in a given fiscal year.

Examples of situations where Extra-Meritorious Performance Pay may be given include:

- Completion of a major project or initiative
- Significant extraordinary effort beyond the fulfillment of all job duties and normal expectations of the job – effort that is major, key, or vital to the unit and that resulted in a significant positive impact or productivity gain
- Recognition of revenue generation (or for the support of revenue generation), or cost savings
- Extraordinary effort during times of critical need (e.g., meeting a critical deadline that could otherwise have an adverse impact on critical business operations or major project)