

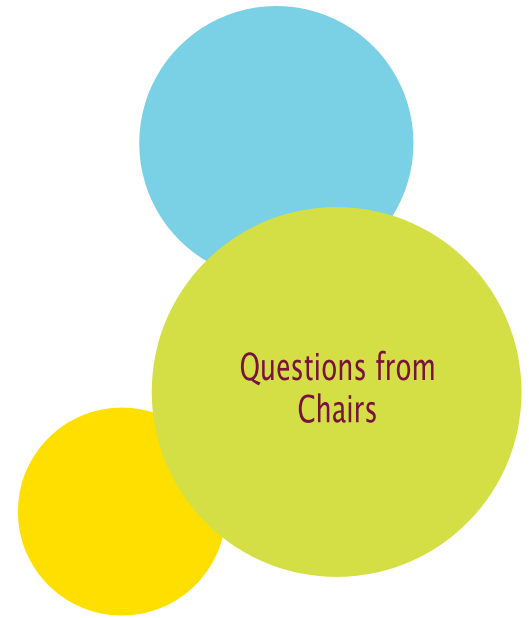
# Frequently Asked Questions about Career Progress & Merit (CP/M)

Collected by MUFA

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[\[Link to CP/M policy\]](#)

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Q1

## Who should review the Records of Activities and assign CP/M scores?

It is the responsibility of the Chair to assign CP/M scores, and to bring those recommendations, with rationale, to the Dean. However, the CP/M policy calls for consultation with other members of the department. It is best practice to involve a small committee in the evaluation process. Often the Chair involves the Associate Chair(s) or Executive Committee; sometimes another faculty member is elected to do this. One chair suggests that the committee should turn over with time, so as many faculty members as possible gain an appreciation for the very difficult task of evaluating their peers, especially given the zero-sum process and limited units available for distribution.

Q2

## How much should I tell my faculty members about the CP/M process, and when?

Be as transparent as possible regarding the process used for evaluation, and periodically invite opportunities to discuss the process at the unit level, with the potential for revision. Units employ many different strategies, which vary considerably in terms of actual process and criteria, and the key is to get general buy-in from the individuals in your own unit.

In the Faculty of Business, faculty members are notified of rating (in person or via email), including their final CPM rating as well as the rating (letter grade) they received in each of the categories of research, teaching, and service. The criteria for ratings within each category are provided to the faculty members so that they understand the basis of the ratings. Other departments include a memo to faculty members that outlines the allocation process (along the lines of the answer to question 1 for faculty members, above). In all cases, the notification of the probable CP/M score comes with an invitation to discuss the score with the chair.

It is important that faculty members know how best to fill out the Record of Activities, so it is a good idea to provide information to new faculty before January. One chair suggests, however, to dissociate the “annual meeting” from the CP/M award notification timeline. They have found that a good time for annual meetings, especially with newer faculty, is early in the new year (i.e., February), soon after the submission of the annual report (so minds are focused in this regard), and well before the CP/M notification which is typically in May.

Q3

### How do I fairly assess.....?

Assessment is difficult. The keys are to be transparent, act in good faith, and involve multiple people in the decisions.

Many of the questions we get involve comparing people with very different teaching loads, or different research expectations (e.g. someone with a research chair). Another issue is comparing people at different career stages. Many chairs suggested using a rubric or grading system, for example like the one used for NSERC research grants, as a way of focussing on the important aspects of each category, and for setting the standards in your field before reading through the Records of Activities.

An experienced chair pointed out that while it is easy to get caught up in a lot of detail during the assessment, it is very important to consider whether a final outcome of 'below par' really is sending the correct message, and if a very high score is indeed justified. Score differences can come about because of many factors, sometimes within the control of the faculty member and sometimes because of the performance of their colleagues.

Assessment of service may be the most difficult, as faculty members can provide different levels of service to the department, to the university, to the local community, or to their discipline-specific community nationally or internationally. Transparency in the metrics used to evaluate all these aspects, and whether 'service to discipline' counts under 'service' or under 'research' is very important. Clear and regular communication to your department is important.

Q4

### What are the best practices for teaching evaluation?

Evaluating teaching for CP/M can be difficult, particularly since the scores from student surveys should not be the primary method for assigning salary increases to faculty members (see Ryerson ruling of 2018: <https://www.canlii.org/en/on/onla/doc/2018/2018canlii58446/2018canlii58446.html>).

Typically departments consider number and levels of courses taught, graduate student supervision, any contributions to curriculum development, creation of educational materials (textbook, etc), teaching award nominations, and any peer evaluations of teaching.

Q5

### How do we account for extended medical leaves, sabbatical, pregnancy & parental leave, etc?

Sabbatical is addressed in the Research Leaves policy (SPS C1 or C2), and Pregnancy & Parental Leave is addressed in SPS C4 – there is an averaging process which includes the last 3 years of CP/M scores, and some discretion of the faculty member in some cases. Extended medical leaves are handled on a case-by-case basis, depending on the duration and severity, but some of the same principles from those SPS policies are used as precedent. Chairs should discuss individual cases with their Dean and/or the Provost's office before making final recommendations to the Dean.

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