

Senate Played Critical Role in Development of New Faculty Salary Scales

Thanks in part to the advocacy and involvement of the Academic Senate, range adjustments and new salary scales took effect for UC faculty on October 1. The adjustments are part of a four-year plan to close the salary gap between UC and its Comparison 8 institutions, restore the relevance and integrity of the UC salary scale system, and bring the majority of faculty back on-scale.

The first year of the plan provides all general campus faculty with a 2.5% range adjustment. At the same time, each salary scale between Assistant Professor I and Professor Step IV will be adjusted upwards by 8-10%, with a somewhat smaller increase of approximately 6-7% for Professor Step V to Step IX, as a first step to make the scales more reflective of market conditions. Faculty will benefit from the market adjustment if their salary, including the 2.5% range adjustment, is calculated to be smaller than the new scale for their rank and step. The actual increase will vary depending on the faculty member's current salary. The full plan calls for three additional years of range and market adjustments to bring salaries and scales up to more competitive levels.

Academic Senate Vice Chair Mary Croughan says that the Senate enjoyed an almost unprecedented level of involvement in the development and implementation of the plan, and its input was also integral to the effort. She credits President Dynes, Provost Hume, and other Office of the President administrators for being receptive to faculty input. The University Committee on Academic Personnel, under the leadership of Professor Tony Norman, also helped draw attention to the issue in a June 2006 report on the salary scale system, which proposed a set of principles and policy recommendations for fixing the scales. Shortly after the Senate's review of the UCAP report, President Dynes convened a joint faculty-administration Work Group to consider the issue.

Professor Croughan says faculty voices on the Work Group, including then-Senate Chair John Oakley, then-UCAP Chair Croughan, University Committee on Planning and Budget Chair Chris Newfield, and University Committee on Faculty Welfare Chair Susan French, had a significant impact on the final plan, which The Board of Regents approved in September. "The faculty felt strongly that the original charge to bring more faculty back on-scale and make the process more transparent couldn't be accomplished without raising the scales and improving faculty salaries across the board," she says.

The following is an example of how the plan will proceed in the first year. The 2.5% range adjustment will increase the salary of a Professor Step III from the old on-scale rate of \$81,800, to the new scale rate of \$83,800. Likewise, a second Professor Step III making an off-scale salary of \$85,000 moves up to \$87,125. After the market adjustment, both professors will further move up to the new Step III base rate of \$89,900. A third Professor Step III whose \$100,000 off-scale salary necessarily exceeds the new base rate will receive

the 2.5% range adjustment, but no market adjustment. The Office of the President says individual campus policies determine whether the third professor's adjustment will apply to the base salary or the total salary. UCOP has been urging that campuses apply the 2.5% range adjustment to the total salary. In addition, Above Scale faculty will receive a larger than 2.5% range adjustment that will include a market component; again, the exact size of this increase is decided by each campus individually. Faculty should see salary increases appear in their paychecks by January 2008 or earlier, although all increases will be retroactive to October 1, 2007.

The plan affects faculty on the Health Sciences Compensation Plan (HSCP) differently. HSCP faculty will not see the 2.5% range adjustment as an increase in their actual total salary. Rather, the increase in base salary scales will result in a significant increase in retirement income for those faculty.

Vice Provost for Academic Personnel Nicholas Jewell (himself a former UCAP member) is encouraging campus administrators to engage faculty in clear and candid communication about the details of the plan and its implementation. He said UCOP will not mandate specific implementation procedures because the plan has a different impact on each campus according to local factors such as the number of faculty making less than the new scales, as well as previous campus efforts to retain faculty. He estimates that approximately 60% of faculty will get something more than the 2.5% range adjustment this year, and he projects that the range and market adjustments planned for the next three years will reduce the number of off-scale faculty from 75% to about 15%. "The plan restores integrity to the rank and step system, one of UC's traditional strengths," says Vice Provost Jewell. "The goal is to take the opportunity to fix the 'staircase' rather than to only focus attention on individuals on the 'staircase'. The result will be a more fundamentally sound faculty reward system – not to mention higher faculty salaries – which will have a positive effect on the UC family as a whole. It will be important to maintain this momentum, if not increase it, in the next year and beyond".

Vice Chair Croughan agrees that the four-year plan will have a positive effect on the overall health of the University and UC faculty because faculty compensation will be based more closely on rank, step and merit review. She says restoring the integrity of the rank and step system is an important element to maintaining the excellence of the University, and a universitywide salary scale is central to preserving the sense of UC as one University. "The University of California takes pride in our merit-based peer review system, which ensures excellence throughout an academic career. This plan allows rank and step and salary to be based on academic productivity rather than on purely market influences and negotiations." She also believes that the plan will have a positive impact on recruitment, retention, equity, and morale problems at the University, which are particularly apparent in the mid-associate to early full professor ranks, where salaries tend to lag market more than in either the early assistant or late professor ranks.

Professor Croughan said a few faculty and administrators have raised concerns that the new scales may reward some faculty who do not deserve to be rewarded. She believes those concerns are unsupported by evidence, however, and suspects that very few faculty on each campus would be considered "underperforming" by any definition. "The merit review process has systems and policies in place to address the issue of poor performing or

disengaged faculty,” she said. “But these faculty are rare in the UC system, in part because of our review processes. The overwhelming majority of faculty deserve higher salaries.” In any case, the Senate will be taking a systematic look at the issue.

Professor Croughan challenges another concern, related to off-scale faculty who believe they should be able to maintain their differential position, by saying, “I believe, and it is also the strong sense of the Work Group, that the merit review process, not outside offers or a faculty member’s negotiating skills, should determine rank, step, and salary. Some faculty may be discontent about having other faculty come closer to what they make, but I think it’s very important for there to be comparable worth and pay for faculty on the different campuses. We need to bring all UC faculty up to market comparability. And the merit review process can still be used to create appropriate differentials based on merit.”

Full implementation of the full four-year plan is contingent on continued funding from the state or other sources. The Work Group will continue to monitor and review the data and adjust the plan as needed. “The work is not done,” said Professor Croughan. “It is a four-year program, and I expect the Work Group to continue to monitor and adjust the plan as needed to accomplish its aims. Ideally the scales will approximate the market by the time we’re done in four years.” She adds that the Senate does not want the increases to come at the expense of increased student fees. “The Academic Council feels very strongly that we want to see student fees held (or lowered with the resumption of full state funding), and not increased.”

Finally, Professor Croughan encourages local and systemwide Senate planning and budget committees to monitor how the program is being implemented locally. She has also asked the Office of Academic Personnel and UCAP to continue monitoring the effect of the plan on the merit review process, which has to be maintained with its current rigor. She notes that if faculty would like to have more information about the plan, they should contact their chancellor or executive vice chancellor.

The new faculty salary scales can be found in the following link:
<http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/tab0708/tabcont.html>

- Michael LaBriola