

SMC Faculty Salary Policy Tutorial Spring 2010

2009-2010 Faculty Welfare Committee

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<http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/faculty-and-staff/faculty-governance/academic-senate/faculty-welfare-committee/index.html>

Presentation Objectives

- Educate the faculty about the current salary policy, its history and recent demise.
- Outline / provide context for the topics where the FWC needs your input:
 1. *Formal faculty response to the Administration's renunciation of Goal #2.*
 2. *Appropriate peer institutions for salary comparisons.*
 3. *Uniform scale vs. differential scales.*
 4. *Automatic step increases vs. annual, merit-based performance evaluations.*
 5. *Connections to Rank and Tenure issues.*

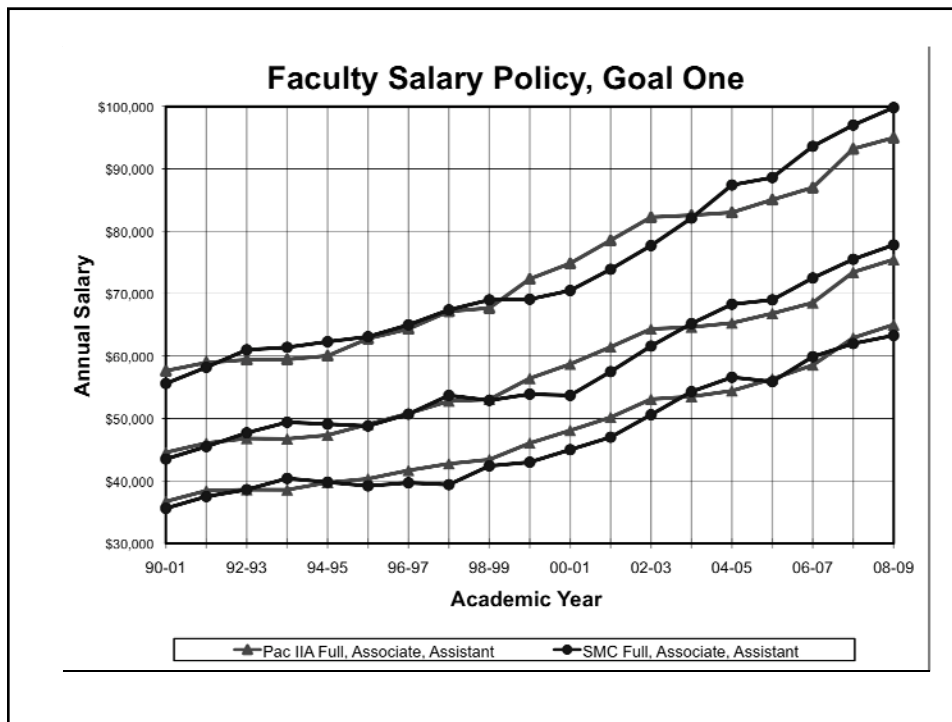
Our Current Salary Policy

- **Goal #1 (a.k.a. “the floor”)**

The average of salaries by rank should minimally be the average salaries by rank of the Pacific IIA institutions, as defined and published yearly in Academe, The Chronicle of Higher Education, and on web sites.

Pacific IIA Master's Institutions

Azusa Pacific University	Mills College	Walla Walla University
Biola University	National University	Western Washington University
California Institute of Integral Studies	Notre Dame de Namur University	University of Alaska, Anchorage
Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo	Pepperdine University	University of Alaska, Southeast
Cal Poly - Pomona	Saint Mary's College of California	
CSU at Bakersfield	San Diego State University	
CSU at Chico	San Francisco State University	
CSU at Fresno	San Jose State University	
CSU at Fullerton	Santa Clara University	
CSU at Long Beach	Sonoma State University	
CSU at Los Angeles	University of Redlands	
CSU at Northridge	University of the Pacific	
CSU at Sacramento	Woodbury University	
CSU at San Bernardino	George Fox University	
CSU at San Marcos	Southern Oregon University	
CSU - Dominguez Hills	University of Portland	
CSU - East Bay	Western Oregon University	
CSU - Monterey Bay	Willamette University	
CSU - Stanislaus	Bastyr University	
Chapman University	Central Washington University	
Dominican Univ. of California	Pacific Lutheran University	
Holy Names University	Seattle Pacific University	
Humboldt State University	Seattle University	
Keck Graduate Institute	University of Washington at Bothell	
Loyola Marymount University	University of Washington at Tacoma	



Our Current Salary Policy

- Goal #2 (a.k.a. “the target”)

To maintain competitive salaries, the budget process should also consider a smaller cohort of comparable institutions: the other schools in the WCC and Manhattan College. Many of these institutions have professional schools, which pay significantly higher salaries, particularly in the ranks of associate and full professor. In light of this, the College should aim for the median of the assistant professor scale at Saint Mary’s to be at the median of assistant rank average salaries at these cohort institutions, as available yearly in the sources noted above.

Our Current Salary Policy

- Goal #3 (a.k.a. “the range”)

The College should aim for a salary structure that is equitable across ranks, with particular attention given to competitiveness at the assistant professor level. The salary structure should have a range of salaries, from assistant to full professor, consistent with the Pacific States IIA.

Salary Policy History

- In 1966, the Board of Trustees Approved the “CSU plus 3%” salary policy, which mandated that the SMC salary scale in any given year would correspond to the CSU-Hayward (now CSU-East Bay) scale from the previous year plus 3%. By 1994-1995, the policy had vanished(!) from the *Faculty Handbook*, and salary policy decisions were being made on a completely *ad hoc* basis. **However, the original 1966 Board of Trustees policy had never been formally repudiated or repealed.**
- In response, the 2000-2001 Faculty Welfare Committee composed the “*Catechism on Faculty Salaries*,” a cogent analysis that documented a significant decline in purchasing power across all faculty ranks during the 1990’s. The *Catechism* also showed how faculty salaries had lagged behind recent tuition increases (both rates and gross revenue).

- In the fall of 2000, the FWC met individually with all academic departments to share their findings. These meetings had the desired impact; in December of that year the President (Brother Craig Franz, FSC) formed a Task Force on Faculty Salaries.
- The Task Force completed its work by the end of the 2000-2001 academic year. Its recommendations – essentially Goals #1, #2, and #3 of our current salary policy – were strongly endorsed by Brother Craig in June of 2001.
- The Trustees formally approved the new policy in May of 2002, but with slight modifications to the text because they were concerned that the original policy was not sufficiently flexible in terms of implementation.

- In the years that followed, substantial progress was made on Goal #1. But Goal #2 – which had been approved by the President and the Trustees as official College policy in May of 2002 (and reaffirmed in 2005), was repeatedly challenged / criticized / ignored by the Administration and the Trustees and did not receive adequate financial support. Finally, in the spring of 2008, the Faculty Salary Policy Task Force formally requested that *“the College should formally communicate a rationale as to why adequate funds have not been budgeted to meet the goals of the faculty salary policy.”*
- In September 2008, Brother Ronald responded to the Task Force by formally renouncing Goal #2:

“It is therefore my conclusion that the time has come to either remove Goal #2 from the faculty salary policy or replace it with a goal that better reflects the academic, enrollment, financial and mission-related realities of Saint Mary’s College.”

- In the spring of 2009 the Faculty Salary Policy suffered another setback when it was revealed that a small number of faculty were receiving salaries that were far above the official scale values. Although only nine faculty members were ultimately identified as receiving off-scale pay, the deviations were in some cases substantial enough to call into question the validity of using average SMC salaries for comparison purposes.

- Why was this discovery problematic?

The Administration had never informed the Faculty Senate or the Faculty Welfare Committee about the existence of the off-scale salaries.

Our entire salary policy had been built upon the assumption of a standard salary scale.

FWC Perspectives

- The recent history of the College indicates that the faculty have been attentive to salary issues, and have consistently provided responsible leadership in this important area.
- The Administration has not demonstrated a comparable level of leadership, and there have been repeated breakdowns on a number of important issues. Tremendous amounts of time and energy have been wasted on resolving all the salary policy fumbles that have occurred during the past 15-20 years.
- The concept of a long-term salary policy has not been viewed by our administrators and Trustees as an important institutional objective.

FWC Perspectives

- Attainment of Goal #2 would have required a dedicated effort from the College, but any assertions that it was inherently unaffordable or fiscally irresponsible are ungrounded; it was simply a matter of setting priorities.
- The FWC is extremely concerned that the Administration may not be a reliable partner in the future – either in terms of a revised version of our current policy, or in terms of a completely new salary policy.
- Regardless of the specific policies ultimately endorsed by the faculty, it is essential that their implementation be transparent (even if that means sacrificing some confidentiality). The entire dynamic in this area must change – the Administration must earn the trust of the faculty by agreeing to a system that is open, and then making it a long-term priority of the institution.

What FWC needs from the faculty

- The FWC has been asked by the administration to help formulate a new salary policy.
- In order to proceed with this task, an essential first step is to update the faculty on recent developments (hence this presentation) and assess faculty opinions on some of the key issues:
 1. *The formal faculty response to the Administration's renunciation of the current policy.*
 2. *Appropriate peer institutions for the purposes of salary comparisons.*
 3. *Uniform scale vs. differential scales.*
 4. *Automatic step increases vs. annual, merit-based evaluations.*
 5. *Connections to Rank and Tenure issues.*
- The FWC is officially – and deliberately – agnostic on these issues.

1. Faculty Response to the Administration's Renunciation of Goal #2

- Possible Responses...
 - * Advocate for the current policy (Goals 1-3, uniform salary scale, etc.); engage the Administration to see that it is restored and enforced.
 - * Work to preserve some parts of the existing salary policy and discard or reformulate other parts.
 - * Abandon the current policy and formulate a completely new policy from the ground up.

2. Appropriate Peer Institutions

- Factors to consider...
 - Location / cost of living
 - Institutional size / profile / mission
 - Student demographics
 - Applicant pool overlap
 - Financial resources / endowment
 - Traditional rivalries (WCC athletics)

3. Uniform vs. Differential Salary Scales

- Possible advantages of keeping a uniform salary scale
 - * Consistent with liberal arts traditions – all disciplines are equally valued.
 - * Helps to maintain a sense of community; differential scales might be more likely to foster resentments and divisiveness amongst the faculty.
 - * Simple, straightforward; more resistant to inappropriate manipulation or favoritism by administrators.
- Possible advantages of moving to differential salary scales
 - * Essential for our hard-to-hire departments / disciplines.
 - * Economic fairness – if different “flavors” of faculty are paid using different scales at other schools, then the same should be true at SMC.
 - * Will help the College shape / strengthen academic programs and pursue strategic priorities.

4. Automatic Step Increases vs. Merit-Based Annual Performance Evaluations

- Possible advantages of keeping automatic step increases
 - * Switching to annual reviews would require too much time and effort; our current evaluators (Chairs, Deans, R&T Committee, Provost) are already overwhelmed.
 - * Switching to annual reviews would have a negative impact on campus culture and would shift the focus from thoughtful pedagogy to “gaming” the review process.
 - * Merit-based pay increases would be susceptible to inappropriate manipulation or favoritism by administrators.
- Possible advantages of moving to merit-based annual performance evaluations
 - * Rewards faculty who work harder and bring more to the College.
 - * Would help to eliminate the problem of senior faculty who disengage after reaching the rank of full professor.
 - * Would give the College a powerful tool that could yield better management of schools / departments.

5. Connections to Rank and Tenure Issues

Under our current system, faculty salaries are directly linked to academic rank. This approach has some inherent advantages – for example, pay is directly linked to length and quality of service (either at SMC or elsewhere).

Problems have arisen, however, when new faculty hires have been placed at an elevated level on the Rank and Tenure roster. Faculty who have received these elevated placements have sometimes faced evaluations for promotion or tenure after only a year or two at SMC.

Should salaries continue to be directly linked to Rank and Tenure status?

Should these two issues – salary and rank – be partially or fully decoupled from one another?

Final Thoughts

Active faculty engagement on compensation issues is essential to our collective economic well-being, and to the long-term prosperity of Saint Mary's College.

The recent history of the College clearly indicates that the faculty can have a very strong voice – if they choose to use it – in shaping the overall direction of the College.

The current economic crisis – and the arrival of a new Provost who is a strong advocate of transparency and accountability – has created an opening for meaningful reform in our governance and budgetary processes.

What happens next is up to us...