

**Personnel and Benefits Committee Meeting
March 4, 2013**

Present: Bob Durham, Carla Myers, Gail Katz, Tom Zwirlein, Pam Carter and guest Valerie Brodar

Gail Katz provided a brief report on activities of the system Personnel Committee. The Personnel Committee is questioning the seemingly large health insurance reserve being held by the University. They are interested in knowing whether the reserve should be returned to plan participants or be used to lower rates next year. They are also interested in knowing how the amount required to be held in reserve was calculated. So far there are no answers to these queries.

P&B believes there is most likely an industry standard for calculating the level of reserves. The University should follow best practice in setting reserve levels and should disclose how reserves are set in order to reduce the risk of the self-funded plan.

At a recent UBAC meeting, it was reported the Regents approved a 3% merit pool for faculty and exempt. In addition, each campus can establish another pool for salary grievances, offers made by other institutions and unmet merit adjustments. This amount will be put in the base budget. At the last Faculty Assembly the Chancellor said this money should be used fix the most egregious salary cases on the campus.

The committee began a discussion of the need for a study of faculty and lecturer salaries at UCCS. The perception is that salaries remain low and something should be done to resolve the problem.

Valerie Brodar joined the meeting to share concerns of the LAS faculty. The perception of the LAS faculty is there seems to be larger and larger discrepancies between LAS faculty and faculty in other schools. Specifically, salaries in other UCCS colleges are much higher than in LAS. LAS faculty are disgruntled and discouraged. Valerie and others in the college want to know how we can address these issues.

Tom explained how part of the issue is caused by market differentials. Each discipline has its own market and salary levels are set within these markets. However, the situation at UCCS exacerbates the problem since most departments tend to make offers to hire at below market salaries. When new hires arrive they are immediately below market but may be among the highest paid faculty in a particular department. Both junior and senior members of the department are now disgruntled. The former group is unhappy because they are behind the market and the latter group is unhappy because their salaries are compressed. Since there never seems to be an adequate salary pool to alleviate these problems, things go downhill in a hurry. This may be the curse of accepting a position at a Colorado university. When you fall behind it may be practically impossible to catch up.

P&B is unanimous in believing all meritorious faculty should be compensated fairly at a level that is at a minimum close to at least some percentage of mean (or median) of market salaries earned at other higher education institutions. There was a time when the goal was to get salaries within disciplines and within rank to at least 90 to 93% of the mean (median) of peer institutions. However, since the global recession, several years of no salary increases, reduced funding from the state of Colorado, the transition from state funded higher education to tuition funding and many other issues, the campus stopped performing compensation studies. The campus is experiencing rapid growth and the state budget is growing again. Now is the time to examine salaries for all levels of instructional activity.

Several years ago P&B made a recommendation that salaries for all new instructor hires across campus would be set at a minimum level so no further salary inequities would be created at the time of a hire. This recommendation was made in order to stop creating more problems in the salaries of non-tenure track faculty (NTTF). The recommendation was approved by a vote of Faculty Assembly and accepted by UCCS administration. The minimum salary level was to be adjusted on an annual basis to factor in inflation. Faculty Assembly should determine whether this practice is still being done.

Another identified problem is the low salaries paid to lecturers in some colleges. Salaries for lecturers seldom if ever increase from year to year and in most cases remain below what is paid at other higher education institutions in the region. How in good conscience does UCCS live with these paltry salaries? Can the institution expect a lower level of effort corresponding to the pay from these lecturers? Would the educational experience of students improve if these salaries increased? Would the pool of available lecturers increase if salaries were more competitive?

A long held perception is that NTTF salaries are not market competitive. These salaries should be examined carefully for any salary inequities as well as the low rate of pay for the work performed.

Inequities in the ranks of tenure track faculty (TTF), lower salaries compared to market and difficulty hiring in certain disciplines should be examined.

P&B has articulated problems with UCCS instructional salaries and has listened to disgruntled faculty. The committee recommends a study of salaries at all levels of instruction. Specific achievable goals should be established in order to take corrective action as necessary based the study results. There are examples of studies completed at other universities. For example, see the report by J.W. Terrill recently completed for Southeast Missouri State. Specific goals were established and corrective action is taking place as a result of the study. UCCS should consider hiring an outside consultant with compensation expertise to conduct the study.

Some information needed to conduct a comprehensive salary structure analysis includes:

1. Individual faculty identification (anonymous) to link the faculty member to a comparative salary
2. Job title for each faculty
3. Department identifier
4. Current rank
5. Years in rank or NTTF status
6. Merit for each of the last 5 years
7. Median (mean) comparison salary using CUPA
8. Age, ethnicity, gender
9. Hire dates, tenure dates, promotion dates
10. Information on what UCCS is paying for new hires by discipline and a comparison to new hire statistics at peer schools.
11. Information on lecturer salaries and comparisons to salaries at other higher education institutions.

This information and more can be used to determine the extent of the problem. Then clearly defined goals can be developed to determine an action plan for resolving any problems over a reasonable period of time.

A final suggestion was made at the meeting to study salaries within the University of Colorado system. These salary analytics would be compared to appropriate higher education systems in other states to determine whether salaries are appropriately distributed across the campuses in the CU system.

Next meeting: April 1, 2014, Dwire 205