

FACULTY SALARY STUDY

2018-2019 GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

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Prepared For

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Table of Contents

	Page
List of Tables	i
List of Figures	ii
Executive Summary.....	1
I. Introduction.....	2
II. Background.....	2
III. Review of Process	3
a. Challenges	3
b. Market Assessment.....	3
c. Data Collection and Methodology	4
d. Interpretation of Results	5
IV. Development of Salary Structure and Compensation Model.....	6
V. Faculty Compensation Philosophy.....	6
VI. Recommendations.....	6
a. Who Decides Who is Deserving of Salary Adjustments	6
b. First Goal	7
c. Long-term Goal	7
d. Annual Assessment	7
e. Internal Data Integrity.....	7
f. Consistency of Transition.....	7
Appendices	8
i. Table 1: Faculty Information at a Glance – FY2019	
ii. Table 2: CIP Analysis Notes	
iii. Table 3: CIPs at Georgia College	
iv. Table 4: Comparison of Georgia College to Responding Institutions by University and each College	
v. Table 5: Comparison of Georgia College Median Salaries to CUPA-HR Responding Institutions by Rank	
vi. Table 6: Proposed Salary Bands College and Rank	
vii. Figure 1: Comparison of Georgia College Salaries to CUPA-HR Responding Institutions	
viii. List of Comparison Institutions	
ix. Sibson Consulting Philosophy Document.....	

Executive Summary:

This report represents the culmination of a year of collaborative effort of the Faculty Salary Review Task Force. It shows comparisons of Georgia College faculty salaries by CIP codes and rank for all teaching faculty at the university in comparison to 283 masters-level institutions across the U.S.

The report focusses on comparisons of Georgia College salaries to the 5th percentile, first quartile (25th percentile), median, third quartile (75th percentile) and 95th percentile of the salaries reported for the comparison group of universities.

The Task Force recommends action be taken for the salaries of faculty in CIP codes that fall below the first quartile of salaries seen in their respective CIP codes and ranks at comparison institutions, when faculty performance warrants such action. In the long- term, every effort should be made to bring median salaries for each rank and CIP code up to the median salaries reported for each rank and CIP code for the comparison institutions. Finally, an annual report of progress toward these goals should be made available to the Georgia College community.

I. Introduction

In undertaking a faculty salary study, it is important to be mindful of the goals of such a study. From the perspective of the administration of the university, the ability to attract and retain faculty members who reflect the overarching goals of the university is paramount. As we strive for preeminence, we should expect preeminence from our faculty members. Therefore, one must recognize that market forces play a role in dictating the appropriate monetary compensation for faculty with the skills, characteristics, and temperaments desired by the university. From the perspective of faculty members, there is reasonable expectation that they will be rewarded for progressing in their chosen fields. Faculty members also have a reasonable expectation that any process that either in whole or in part determines their compensation will be transparent and open to reasoned criticism. Finally, from the perspective of the Board of Regents and the State, there should be a clear indication that any requests for additional funding to achieve any corrections requested by a salary study be fiscally responsible and compelling.

II. Background

The last comprehensive salary study to be conducted at Georgia College engaged the services of the Pappas Consulting Group and McKnight Associates, Inc. Then President Dorothy Leland described the necessity of the study as follows.

This study was planned as a means of addressing market conditions; the thinking behind this process was to set in place an overall salary structure that in a later process could then allow the kind of fine-tuning that individual merit and inequity cases call for. For that reason, the study does not reflect extraordinarily meritorious or negative performance, time in rank, and so forth. The faculty advisory committee and others who have been involved in discussions of the study all agree that questions of merit should be addressed as a separate process within units. Any plans resulting from this study will move positions, not individuals, along a salary scale. – Former President Dorothy Leland – Letter to Faculty (2007)

The conclusions of the consultants were critical of Georgia College's compensation practices and called for immediate actions to address insufficient funding.

“As this study objectively shows, there are faculty compensation issues that require attention. This is especially critical at a time when recruiting faculty at outstanding niche institutions, such as Georgia College & State University, has become extremely competitive. We would posit that recruiting faculty for an institution like GCSU, where the data clearly show that faculty salaries are significantly below market, is even more acute as a considerable number of private peer and aspirant institutions have both the operating budget and the endowment to support the “new” liberal arts faculty marketplace. Pappas Consulting Group -- Final Report (2007)

III. Review of Process

a. Challenges

The Task Force's challenge of undertaking the faculty salary study started with understanding ourselves. Our first discovery was that we, as an institution, did not keep adequate track of and correctly categorize our own faculty members. There were discrepancies in salaries for individuals, some faculty members were listed as being assigned to the wrong department and, in some cases, the wrong college, and limited term or part-time faculty were categorized as full-time to name just a few of the problems. Our first (and most complicated) task was to make sure we had an accurate and error-free inventory of all faculty members. We asked our academic unit deans – in collaboration with associate/ assistant deans and department chairs – to review the list of faculty members in their respective academic unit for accuracy in salary, rank, and CIP (Classification of Instructional Programs) code and provide annotations where errors were detected. We strongly suggest (see Recommendations below) that the university undertakes an annual audit of the inventory of faculty members.

The Task Force's second challenge was to determine to what institutions our faculty salaries should be compared. The Task Force quickly encountered a logistical problem (discussed in Data Collection and Methodology below): to mine a sufficient amount of data from the CUPA-HR faculty salary survey responses to obtain an adequate number of faculty in each category (rank and CIP combination) for the CUPA-HR reports to provide summary statistics. We had to cast a wider net than the initial group of aspirational and comparator institutions determined by the institution and Board of Regents, respectively. The wider net embraced all institutions with Carnegie Classification of Master's responding to the CUPA-HR salary survey. This larger comparison group included institutions that are less like Georgia College than we might have preferred. Ultimately, in order to have enough data to produce salary bands, we deemed it appropriate (and received approval from the administration) to use the larger comparison group.

The final challenge was determining how best to present the data. There are a variety of statistics that could be used to compare faculty salaries among the institutions. For each category (CIP and rank), the Task Force ultimately chose to use a variation on the five number summary (minimum, first quartile, median, third quartile, maximum) operationalized as the 5th percentile, first quartile, median, third quartile and 95th percentile of salaries reported by the other Master's institutions. These data are provided (in the Appendices i, ii, and iii to this report) in tabular form and graphical form as a table and box and whisker plot, respectively.

b. Market Assessment

The academic market is difficult to model. At the start of a faculty member's academic career, new faculty members may solicit multiple offers to either start their teaching careers or engage in post-doctoral research. At this point, the market for their talents is at its most competitive. For any institution to attract colleagues at the assistant professor rank, it must offer a compensation package (salary, fringe benefits, working conditions, and expectations of success in the chosen field) sufficient to attract the attention of those seeking employment. Those institutions that offer the better packages will usually attract the better talent, all other things being equal. Therefore, the market wages that are observed at the assistant professor level are likely to be a reasonable representation of the value of the talents a candidate brings to an institution. As faculty members

progress in their careers, are tenured, and promoted, the market for their skills decreases considerably. Tenure represents job security in academe and is highly valued by faculty. Once a faculty member earns tenure, that person becomes less mobile and more connected to the institution.

Colleges and universities are hesitant to hire tenured associate and full professors outside of administrative ranks (department chair, dean, provost, etc.). One exception is the truly extraordinary researcher who can promote the mission of the institution from their research interests. As a result of the decreased mobility of senior faculty, it is much more difficult to assess the general market for such positions. Different institutional philosophies determine what was observed when examining their salaries as part of the comparison group. The Task Force could not know what those philosophies were, but in aggregate, they were thought of as “the consensus view” of the value of different positions at associate and full professor levels. Consequently, there was value in knowing and attempting to align the salaries of all ranks of faculty with those offered at other comparable institutions.

Any institutions that finds its salaries lagging significantly behind other salaries runs the risk of having the faculty “lose heart”. This can be particularly problematic if an institution espouses a special mission that requires all faculty to support (as opposed to an institution that generalizes in marching students toward graduation without any particular interest in their development as individuals).

In comparing faculty salaries among Georgia College and other institutions, the Task Force assumed that the salaries across comparison schools at the assistant professor level were “market” observations as closely as the term can be applied to the academic labor market. For senior (associate and full professor) levels, comparison data were viewed as the benchmark for the normal salaries expected at that rank.

c. Data Collection and Methodology

In this study, the Task Force ultimately chose to use the data submitted by CUPA-HR from 282 colleges and universities from across the U.S. wherever possible.¹ These institutions include Georgia College comparator and aspirant institutions as well as the Master’s institutions.

- i. CUPA-HR: The Task Force chose to use data collected by a professional data aggregator, as time constraints and the ability to convince other schools to volunteer data for such a project was initially pursued and proved to be impractical. Schools that submit data to CUPA-HR generally have the same motivations and the Task Force believed that their data were as reliable as they could possibly be. Using CUPA-HR data provided the Task Force with ready access to uniform data that could be customized for our uses, which outweighed the cost of access to the data.

¹ In the rare instance where the data were insufficient to provide a full comparison of market salaries for a CIP code, we expanded our sample to include data from 3,415 institutions that ranged across multiple Carnegie classifications. Tables in Appendix iii indicate where such an expansion was necessary.

- ii. Comparison schools: Initially, it was determined that it would be best to limit the comparison group to a small list of institutions that were considered comparable or aspirational. Unfortunately, with a small pool of schools from which to draw data, it was quickly determined that many of the CIP codes that matched our faculty disciplines did not have a sufficient number of faculty or participating institutions to have summary statistics supplied in CUPA-HR reports. As a result, the Task Force discovered that if the comparison group was enlarged to include the full sample of Master's institutions (in addition to the colleges and universities initially stipulated), the summary statistics were supplied in the CUPA-HR reports for nearly every CIP-rank combination. In the few instances where insufficient data existed in this sample, the Task Force expanded the search to include all Carnegie classification schools responding to the CUPA-HR survey.
- iii. Use of CIP codes: *The Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) provides a taxonomic scheme that supports the accurate tracking and reporting of fields of study and program completions activity. CIP was originally developed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in 1980, with revisions occurring in 1985, 1990, and 2000. (source: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>).* The Task Force chose to use CIP codes rather than department designations in order to more appropriately parse the faculty and compare the salaries Georgia College offers to those offered at comparison schools. The Task Force chose to use 4-digit CIP codes (as opposed to 2-digit or 6-digit CIP codes) because the level of disaggregation closely matched our course offerings and we were most likely to find matching salaries reported by the institutions from which data were available.
- iv. Five Number Summaries: In the tables presented in the appendices of this report, we chose to present the 5th percentile, first quartile, median, third quartile, and 95th percentiles as provided by CUPA-HR reports² to see where the Georgia College median salaries for the same CIP-rank fell. The endpoints (5th and 95th percentiles) provide approximations to the minimum and maximum values within these data and exclude the most extreme outliers. The first and third quartiles bound an interval of the middle fifty percent of salaries within any rank and CIP code. The median salary was chosen instead of the mean to mitigate the influence of extreme outliers in the data on these central tendencies.
- v. Adjustments: The only adjustments made to our data were to convert any 12-month salaries to 10-month salaries (by dividing by 1.2). As the data all came from the same year, there was no reason to adjust for changes in cost of living over time. There was no attempt to adjust for any cost of living differences as the schools in the sample come from a wide variety of geographical areas. Every area has its advantages and disadvantages. The committee did not see any point in debating the relative merits of any regional differences and the various ways they might be capitalized in

² The CUPA-HR reports did not provide minimum (0th percentile) or maximum (100th percentile).

academic wages largely because we could not observe the region of origin for any data in the study other than our own.

d. Interpretation of Results

By presenting the data as both a table and a box and whisker plot (see Appendix), we believe we have made interpretation of the data extremely accessible. This should make the comprehension of the results by a wide audience relatively easy. For every Georgia College group of faculty members of the same rank and in the same CIP code category, we have provided their median salary and plotted that median to scale on the box and whisker plot. This geometric perspective provides a visual cue of where our median salaries fall relative to the salaries of the comparison group. This visual presentation will render an annual assessment of progress straightforward.

IV. Development of Salary Structure and Compensation Model

There were many facets to a compensation package that go beyond the salaries we offer for different disciplines and different ranks. Some institutions have experimented with models that focus simply on rank or job title. Ignoring the inherent differences in the opportunity costs faced by practitioners of different disciplines generally has resulted in an inability to hire faculty for disciplines where market salaries were higher but being able to hire outstanding faculty for disciplines with lower market salaries.

Our approach treats each discipline (or CIP code) as its own market. The Task Force implicitly assumed that the relevant comparison group for any faculty member were their colleagues across their own discipline at their own rank rather than their colleagues in different disciplines at Georgia College. Therefore, the Task Force suggests that the salary structure at Georgia College should represent the salary structure seen across the comparison schools. It should be noted that such an approach implies that an annual reassessment of the salary structure of comparison schools is strongly recommended. If different disciplines become more popular or go out of favor, salaries are likely to reflect such shifts. A disciplined vision true to Georgia College's mission will prevent "chasing the popular majors" and help avoid competing for faculty with temporarily inflated salaries.

V. Faculty Compensation Philosophy

The Sibson Consulting document (see appendix iv) as prescribed by the Georgia College Senior Leadership team provides a philosophy for motivating the Faculty Compensation Study.

VI. Recommendations

In considering how a study such as this should be used, the committee ultimately adopted the following principles.

a. Who Decides Who is Deserving of Salary Adjustments

One of the most important considerations was the issue of who would ultimately decide how any salary adjustments that result from this study should be distributed. While we have a

recommendation as to which CIP codes should be addressed first, it is ultimately the job of department chairs and deans to decide which individual faculty members have demonstrated sufficient meritorious achievement to warrant adjustments to their salary. Of course, any faculty member who has been consistently rated as meeting or exceeding expectations should expect to be rewarded as such.

b. First Goal

While ultimately adjusting salaries is contingent upon adequate funding, the first priority of any adjustments should be to bring median salaries in each CIP code for each rank up to their operational minimum which is the first quartile level (or the lower end of the box in the box and whiskers plots).

c. Long-term Goal

Ultimately, if we are to be a preeminent institution, our salaries ought to reflect our ability to attract faculty members who are also preeminent in their chosen fields. This would require, among other things, that we offer salaries that are competitive. In this light, we recommend that over time every attempt be made to get the Georgia College median salary to meet or exceed the median salaries of comparison schools.

d. Annual Assessment

For the purpose of full transparency and to maintain data integrity, it is the advice of this committee that an annual report be provided to the campus that summarizes the progress that has been made (or the reasons progress has not been made) toward the goals suggested here. We suggest that the tables and graphs that accompany this report be replicated each fiscal year going forward. It is the opinion of the committee that now that the templates for these graphs and tables have been created, the effort necessary to replicate them each year is modest. Doing so would allow for ongoing assessment of the state of salaries across academic disciplines which, ultimately, should benefit everyone. This annual assessment will be used to create a five-year rolling average, for use in hiring of new faculty and assessing progress towards our goal of reaching the 50th percentile.

e. Internal Data Integrity

As part of the ongoing assessment practice, we recommend an annual assessment of the quality of our data. The committee discovered multiple discrepancies in the reporting of our own data for both internal and external use. The process of updating the tables and graphs presented in this study should provide an opportunity to ensure data integrity.

f. Consistency of Transition

One challenge encountered in putting together this report was determining which faculty members were currently on a 10-month appointment and which were on a 12-month appointment. The ability to treat all faculty in a consistent manner as they transition into or out

of administrative roles is important to the long-term integrity of any salary study. Therefore, we

recommend that going forward all transitions either from faculty to administration or from administration to faculty be treated uniformly. Our option is to use the salary conversion policy taken from the Georgia College Policy, Procedures, and Practices Manual (PPPM) (<http://gcsu.smartcatalogiq.com/Policy-Manual/Policy-Manual/Academic-Affairs/EmploymentPolicies-Procedures-Benefits/Faculty-Appointments-Qualifications-for/Contract-Conversions-Academic-Year-and-Fiscal-Year>) of using a 1.2 multiplier to go from a 10-month appointment to a 12-month appointment and dividing by 1.2 to make an adjustment in the other direction. The corresponding USG salary conversion policy and procedures are included in the USG Academic & Student Affairs Handbook which references BoR Policy 8.3.1.2.2 (https://www.usg.edu/academic_affairs_handbook/section4/C682/#p4.3.5_salary_conversion_guidelines_for_fiscal_and_academic_year_faculty_app)

