

GFO Unit Adjustment Survey Qualitative Responses

- Question #2 asked participants to provide additional comments regarding Question #1: *“Please select the Target salary formula that you believe should be used for unit adjustments.”* Responses to Question #2 are below. Personally identifying information has been redacted:

There are two separate issues about compensation adjustments: one is simply the University is not living up to its contractual commitment. Second is that the University is underpaying current hires relative to the market and to existing faculty. A third issue is whether the adjustment should come out of the RCM allocations.

I don't think the recent sharp jump in the inflation will be reflected properly in the CPI.

Why on earth is Method 1 additive and not compounded? This doesn't make any sense.

Method 4 is upsetting – it is exactly how gender and race inequities get amplified over time. Method 1 is morally problematic –How can we be morally ok with the idea that the salary received by a junior faculty today should be what a senior faculty should have received 20 years ago, when we know that 20 years ago, that same amount of money was worth so much more. It is unclear what it is meant by a campus-unit level approach. We should not have a campus wide pool to pay for these compressions. It is unfair to ask a school to pay for another school not having paid their faculty well throughout the years. If salaries are paid by each school, why should compressions not be rectified by the relevant school? This is punishing the schools who did the right thing (that is paid their faculty for their seniority). The issue of compression is due to not having rewarded some people when necessary in a pre-RCM time. Using RCM allocations to pay for those does not seem fair. It is also important to recognize that salaries of new faculty have been going down in many schools – compared to market and what other universities are offering. I wish there was a more balanced approach to salary inequities than just through compression. Compressions may exist but we don't know if this is the main driver of inequities – what if it isn't? how much money will be left to resolve the other types of inequities? It is absolutely paramount that CCPB or maybe a sub-group be given the data and check the numbers. That sub-group should have experts, outside of IR, and should double check all the numbers and estimates produced.

To capture the real compression, purchasing power should be considered. I support Method 2 because it considers the purchasing power (inflation) and the promised 2% annual increase and 10% promotion increase.

I deeply appreciate the work the GFO EC has done on this proposal. I fully concur, however, with the concerns they express in their introduction to the survey. I also find it deeply troubling that we as a faculty are being asking to "vote" on this massive potential use of university budgets without a robust, inclusive process or the opportunity to address other major issues--particularly equity between tenure-track and teaching-track faculty and retention of junior faculty, especially faculty of color, on both tracks.

There are separate issues about compensation adjustments. The first is that the University has a contractual commitment to give the 2% adjustment. Second is that the University is underpaying current hires relative to the market and relative to existing faculty. A third issue is whether the adjustment should come out of the RCM allocations.

I don't like any of the methods, but #3 actually seems to address compression. The raises in #1 should be compounded, not additive. Also, compression is an issue that is observed from comparing salaries. Taking into account CPI does not get at compression, but gets at whether our salaries are keeping up with inflation, which is a different issue. I wish this effort had more clearly defined goals and a clear definition of compression.

I think the issue is that University is underpaying current hires relative to the market and to existing faculty.

Nobody received a 2% increase last year, and that needs to be taken into account in the computation of the target salaries.

The compression computations do not distinguish between (i) the compounded differences arising from failure to provide the contractual 2% annual increases each year to existing faculty and (ii) secular decreases in recent faculty compensation when indexed by standard inflation measures. The first of these two factors stems from the failure to live up to the UW's publicly stated policy of providing a minimum annual raise of 2% (let alone above inflation). The second factor reflects the systematic lowering of inflation-adjusted wages being offered to new hires. Conflating the impact of breach of promise by the University to senior faculty with the far larger inequity imposed on junior faculty to compute compression creates an inter-generational transfer to senior faculty that is unethical. Further, since both these inequities predate the adoption of RCM, including them in the RCM budget is a third inequity. Particularly so if these adjustments are expected to be recurrent, and to be fully funded out of RCM allocations. Finally, to the extent that Method 2 comes closest to addressing the failure to provide the target 2% increase (which it do not fully do anyway), this adjustment should be carried out at the School level and not at the Campus Unit level since salary levels differ widely across schools within the Unit. Freezes on the promised 2% annual increases have over the years differentially impacted faculty in different schools and the costs of remediating the inequity in one school should not be imposed on other schools thereby creating a new layer of inequities. For these reasons Method 2, implemented at the level of individual schools and funded outside the RCM system seems to be the least problematic of the options.

Method 3 is also acceptable. Method 1 and 4 should be outright rejected.

I'm not quite sure the faculty understands all the choices, and even the GFO representatives seem unclear on Method 4. I've done my due diligence to figure out the differences, but I'm not sure there has been enough time to really analyze the implications of all options.

Asking faculty to choose among these options without full transparency of what each option entails is insulting. Why is there not an option to consider both merit raises AND the increases in cost of living? Faculty salary growth needs to take into account BOTH individual job performance and how expensive it is to live in this region. That would be a true "target" salary to use as a benchmark.

None of the above would be my choice if it were available. Why not just use each faculty member's own starting salary as the base? Quit trying to hard to equalize everyone.

Still confusing.

Is the University taking into consideration the fact that housing costs in the Puget Sound area outpace the CPI?

I appreciate the GFO emphasizing that these methods do not consider demographics, market comparisons, and prior service.

Use median salary not just a single junior member

It is ironic that a study on salary equity ends up sidelining the most vulnerable faculty, regardless of the method chosen. Within the School of Business, you will see faculty who have a base salary of almost 200,000 per year aggressively fighting for this "compression" money with total disregard to those less fortunate. Stop this at campus level. Do a serious analysis of different types of pay inequity within schools and across the campus. Re-envision pay equity in academia and start with the gender pay gap.

The first proposed method seems to me the most beneficial not only because it benefits the second largest number of faculty but also includes years of service. Many faculty how have compressed salaries are more senior faculty who have served for many years, and have likely spent significant effort building the institution.

It is unacceptable that we were not provided gender or racial data in voting on this important issue.

I have concerns about Method 2 and the concept of "deflating" junior fac salaries.. It presumes that salary is the primary wealth indicator and does not take into account lack of access to major net worth improvements (e.g., being able to buy a house) or student debt loads that many junior faculty begin their careers with compared to senior faculty.

It is clearly a shot in the dark, with too little info to make an educated decision

If cost of living in the Seattle region were used instead of CPI in methods 2 and 4, method 4 would have been my choice

It is totally unacceptable that demographic data were withheld from these calculations. In public data that are available, the UW reported in the AAUP-FPS 2021 survey that the average full professor that was a woman made nearly \$18,000/year less than the average UW Bothell full professor that was a man. Now, *maybe* that can be explained by stratification across divisions, but without accounting for demographic data we can't tell. The AAUP-FCS survey does not break down salary by other demographics, but national studies suggest similar inequities could easily exist there. What is the purpose of having an HR division if they are actively withholding the data GFO needs to evaluate these proposals? Hiding data that could reveal discriminatory practices is utterly contrary to the mission of the UW and could have a negative effect on retention. Moreover, if discrimination does exist, knowingly withholding demographic information that would reveal it is a major liability risk. The shift in focus to compression (that if I understand right is calculated only at the higher ranks) is the wrong goal. If we absolutely get steamrolled into making this our main goal, I think the analysis was persuasive that Method 2 is better than the others, which fail to account properly for inflation.

No method is fair. Portion of Pool should be allocated first to address inequity directly. Rest of pool to address negative trendlines for faculty salaries by rank.

It is incredibly disheartening that demographic data have not been provided to assess for race/ethnicity, gender, and other potential disparities in pay. I agree with the GFO's misgivings about being asked to make a selection of "preferred method" of adjustment when we are being asked to do so with incomplete information regarding those potentially most impacted by inequities.

None of these are perfect (obviously), but this one feels the most fair to me.

Cannot vote without demographic data

I find it frustrating that when we are asked for feedback on potential avenues for adjusting for salary inequity, we are not provided with the data to be able to tell what effect this choice will have on salary inequity for the very faculty that are the intended recipients of this meager attempt. It does, indeed, feel tokenistic at best, and completely dysfunctional at worst.

These methods are all terribly reductionist in their approach. The CPI ones are the least tenable as they make an effective argument that there is NO compression at Bothell. Seattle's Olympia reps have been much more persuasive by arguing about comparisons to UW schools. We are in a position of being akin to fighting for a bone to a pack!!! Issues such as end of faculty life, closest to retirement are not taken into account. 2 and 3 are the worst of the lot as they are astonishingly naive and assume a faulty idea of Market definition. Peers of ours at UWS are making \$150,000 to \$200,000 more than many of our comparable senior faculty who are paying for the Loyalty penalty and have argued for higher salaries for new hires compared to what they were at.

None of the above

I don't know how to make a reasonable choice without knowing a lot more about the methods. In general, I'd tend to favor methods that anchor salaries to most junior professor, under the assumption that the more recent hires had less bias in their salary setting. However, does that method take into account the salary differentials between tenure-track and teaching-track?

I've thought a lot about salary adjustment. The whole approach being taken here is misguided and ill-conceived. We are being asked to evaluate a lot of whacky math without first articulating the end goals. Bad science —> Bad Policy Fundamentally, there are 3 things being mixed together here and it is creating a total lack of clarity. 1) Existing faculty salaries must keep up with the increase in the starting salary of new hires. It is called "compression" when faculty fall behind new hires and their peers — often the result of all sorts of inequities. 2) Ideally, we'd reward faculty for time in service so existing faculty make progressively more than newly hired faculty. 3) It would be nice if our raises were more in line with the actual CPI, and we all made more money. Simply, let's assume the increased cost of living each year is captured in the starting salary of new assistant professors, which rise over time. Without a cost-of-living salary adjustment, new hires would earn more than existing faculty. Cost of living adjustment *by design* maintains existing salaries equal to the most recent hire (plus 10% for promotion). Assuming everyone has the same starting salary, all salaries would be equal within a given rank. This is method #3, this is a way to detect compression, and this is what a cost of living adjustment means. Method #1 is flat out wrong. This would create a 2% graduated increase in

salary with time of service. Some people might want to do that, but that's not what cost of living adjustment means and it is not what the annual 2% raise tries to do. Method #2 is nominally the same as #3, and would give the same numeric result if $CPI=0.02$. So this is just quibbling about whether starting salaries increases should be tied to CPI somehow. I think it is overly complicated and flawed. Method #4 is again nominally #3 and becomes equal if $CPI=0.02$ and starting salaries increases followed CPI. However, it is claiming everyone should make more than they do because $CPI>0.02$ and our raises have been inadequate all these years. This is less about internal salary equity and more about keeping up with our neighbors in tech industry. Method would give almost everyone a raise, tilted toward people with the longest service. If you want to detect "compression" -- faculty who have been "left behind" due to either a low starting salary or some other inequity -- #3 is a simple way to find the outliers. There are better, more statistically robust ways, but this would do it. I've attached a plot of actual data showing salaries vs years in current rank for a subset of STEM faculty (Math, PSD, Bio). You can see that salary is uncorrelated with time. Raises more or less keep existing faculty salaries equal to the increasing salary of new hires. Some outliers fall below the line, and it would be nice if the fit had more of a positive slope. In the material from GFO they say: We suggested the following principles: Care for faculty who most need the help (e.g., those who don't make a living wage). Faculty members furthest away from equity should get the most. Address as many people as possible. #1 is not addressed by any of these methods. #2 is addressed only by "Method 3", which is an attempt to isolate people who "fall below the line" #3 is sort of addressed by "Method 4" but not in the most equitable way. Fix 1 & 2 using "Method 3". Use whatever is left over to give everyone a raise.

I think asking us to make these choices is absurd. And also the way it came about too.

- **Question #4 asked participants to provide additional comments regarding Question #3: *"Please provide your preference for the size of "pool" for compression adjustments"*.**

Responses to Question #4 are below. Personally identifying information has been redacted:

The most important inequity was created in multiple years when 2% merit increases were not awarded. This seems to me a more pervasive problem than salary compression, and one that should be addressed.

Where is this money coming from? This isn't in any of the documents provided. What's the tradeoff, i.e. if more money is devoted to compression, then less will go to ___? Without this information this question is meaningless.

Given how unclear the information from OIR has been and how potentially split the faculty may be about the method, I would err on the side of less right now so as not to spend money inequitably.

This is a decision that needs to be made by the deans and the chancellor--faculty do not have the data needed to see the impacts to the schools

whether the adjustment should entirely come out of the RCM allocations is questionable, because there has been salary freeze that contributes to the compression, if any.

None of the compression computations are fully satisfactory. Till their basis and actual computation is sorted out, we should tread carefully and not compound the problem by making overly generous

adjustments that basically are coming at the cost of junior faculty. Larger set-asides, especially if coming out of RCM allocations are going to severely hurt our ability to hire competent new faculty.
Salary inequities need to be addressed. Full stop. As much money as possible should be allocated to addressing this issue until ALL faculty are being paid a fair and equitable wage.
More money is better, right?
Likewise confusing.
Nothing constructive at this time.
I do not understand the question here. I also do not understand how the new funding models is affected by RCM--where is the \$ for this coming from? How will school budgets be impacted? All else being equal, I would want to maximize support for faculty, trying to address compression for most faculty.
I have no idea what this question mans, so I picked the biggest number
The pool for compression adjustments should be \$0. Look for actual inequity.
This is compromise between the largest and lowest amounts.
This question is very difficult to answer given the current technical writing of the report, which is why I went with the middle option. Is it possible to include an executive summary for documents like this in the future? I don't know what any of this means in layperson's terms.
No idea what to even do with this one
This question was extremely unclear - the preferred size of a pool adjustment probably depends on the opportunity cost for other uses of the money. Will it actually be used for addressing inequities if the pool is smaller. I read the second draft report. There are *trivial* miscalculations in the examples used. The nature of compounding 2% raises means YOU CANNOT JUST MULTIPLE THE NUMBER OF YEARS BY 2% AS SHOWN IN THE EXAMPLES! I understand why this analysis was unable to be replicated - this looks very wrong, for the same reason that compounding interest makes bank savings grow exponentially rather than linearly!
It's important to allocate as large a pool. It's not likely that UW will provide much more in near future. 2% does not fix the problems.
Using the lowest number here will allow us more potential for future studies that can include demographics.
won't need more for method 2
Cannot vote without demographic data
Not sure why the GFO Leader is even considering less than the 2% - what the Provost recommends.

The choices above are not clear- would this mean more funding for salary?
Your math is fundamentally wrong.
That idea that you are asking us to use our own money to pay for these raises seems stupid. Of course I want people to get more money, but I also don't want to have to teach larger classes to do so.

- **Question #6 asked participants to provide additional comments regarding Question #5: “Please provide your preference on the scenarios for distributing the adjustment pool.”**

Responses to Question #4 are below. Personally identifying information has been redacted:

Again, because of the issues in the process as outlined by the GFO, I would err on the side of the broadest distribution (since "most compressed" seems to be highly subjective and method-dependent).
Even out the compression. Help the most compressed the most to bring them to the level of those compressed less. If there is money left, give small adjustments to everyone so that they are equally compressed.
If either Method 1 or Method 4 is chosen then Scenario 1 would be fairest since those two methods are actually the least equitable forms of adjustment given the root causes that generated the true inequities. If either Method 2 or Method 3 is chosen, then Scenario 2 would be the fairest.
Going forward, there needs to be a serious reconsideration of how starting salaries are determined. How have we ended up with some faculty more than 10% below their target salary? How do we keep this from happening in the future???
I know GFO and CCPB were not allowed to see demographic data, but this is incredibly problematic. This survey is difficult to complete given the absence of this information; if the goal is salary equity, how can we do an equity analysis without knowing who is not being paid fairly and by how much? If UWB is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and more importantly social and educational justice, then in the future this process needs to center these conversations on these values.
There is no subtlety here. What if a person is consistently underperforming - why should they be leveled put to the salary of a high performer?
Hope I did this correctly.
Does this mean that those with a salary compression of less than 5% are not considered compressed at all?
Funds should go to the most compressed non-white faculty. Need additional information to make an informed vote.
Does it matter? Either way, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

Again, this is compromise between 1 and 2
Highest priority should be given to individuals that are below average for their rank AND at lowest absolute pay levels.
Need to balance between most compressed and broader population of faculty. Because unit adjustment pools are rare, it should go at least 30-60% of faculty. A pool impacting only 15% of faculty would itself not be fair to those working through so many 0% years.
This gives a good mix of the two other possibilities.
will be able to adress all of compression so choice above is moot
Cannot vote without demographic data
Choosing this scenario based on lack of data about compression and demographics of faculty who are compressed
no idea