Faculty Compensation Task Force  
Meeting #4  
November 17, 2016 Brink Faculty Lounge, 8:30 am to 10:00 am

Attendance: Eric Aston, Don Crowley, Brian Dennis, Brian Foisy, Kristin Henrich, Patrick Hrdlicka (co-chair), Anne Marshall, Wes Matthews (co-chair), Scott Metlen, Michael Murphy, John Rumel, Jeanne Stevenson (ex officio), Chantal Vella

Absent: Dale Pietrzak, Mary Stout, Katt Wolf

Notes by: Joana Espinoza (ex officio)

Call to order

Business

i. Minutes from 10.17.16 meeting were approved.

ii. Co-chair Matthews led the discussion with a presentation on salary information from the CUPA-HR database. As in the Oklahoma State University survey, salaries are broken down according to discipline, rank, and Carnegie classification (CUPA-HR recognizes 99 institutions as belonging to the Carnegie R2 classification, i.e., the classification that UI belongs to). The database is updated on an annual basis. Only professorial positions were shown in the presentation but data on other types of faculty (e.g., instructors) is also available. A handout with salary information of representative disciplines (CIP codes) was provided. Some disciplines (e.g., chemistry) seem to have a greater number of survey respondents than the Oklahoma State University (OSU) survey, while participation in other disciplines appears to be lower. Column A lists information for UI employees (number of incumbents and average salary). Column B lists the average, standard deviation, mean, minimum and maximum salaries, as well as the number of incumbents and participating institutions that fall within the search criteria. The subsequent column quantifies UI’s performance relative to reference institutions. The last column lists salaries associated with a particular percentile within the reference group. The group liked that salary levels at different percentiles are provided in the CUPA data and felt that greater participation ought to mean a more reliable data set.

Co-chair Hrdlicka asked why there are differences in the average salaries in the two databases. Response: this might simply be a reflection of differences in participating institutions between the two surveys. Moreover, CUPA provides data for the academic year - data are collected in the fall and the database is made available in the spring. The OSU survey, on the other hand, is a year behind. Co-chair Matthews suggested that we can use both databases, but we would need to define primary and secondary databases. VP Foisy suggested we use both data sources - if there is a hole in the data in one survey we should be able to look at the other. Co-chair Hrdlicka expressed reservations about the fact that faculty do not have access to the CUPA-HR data. Anne Marshall agreed, citing that only a few participants on the committee have access to the data. Co-chair Hrdlicka wants to be able to compare both databases.

The discussion then veered to a more philosophical discussion. Both the OSU and CUPA-HR surveys provide CIP codes by discipline, whereas several committee members expressed a
desire to establish the CIP codes by the individual faculty members discipline as there may be multiple disciplines within a department. Brian Dennis suggested CIP code assignment could be addressed as part of the annual position description development. Chantal Vella also pointed out that we have faculty with multiple appointments. Co-chair Matthews noted that on the staff side they discussed two approaches, either blend the market rates or use the higher rate of the multiple disciplines. VP Foisy also said Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment might have to assign CIP codes in a certain way in order to report data but we are not bound by that and that we would not assign CIP codes randomly. Several committee members felt that the department chairs need to be intimately involved in assigning CIP codes.

The discussion then returned to the matter of survey selection. Several committee members did not feel that they have enough information to determine which survey to use. Anne Marshall wanted each CTF member to evaluate salary data from both surveys for representative departments in the college that they represent. Co-chair Hrdlicka found this process to be too arduous and instead proposed that CTF members are used as representative test subjects to evaluate salary data from the two databases. VP Foisy proposed a third option, i.e., avoid the preliminary examination altogether and, instead, use both surveys but establish a set a ground-rules that should guide database selection (e.g., salary data for a particular CIP code would be based on the database with the most responses).

Brian Dennis asked if we have the names of the institutions who participated. We should choose the one that reflects the institutions that we are losing our faculty to. Response: This would complicate the process as the participants could change from year to year.

John Rumel asked if a meta-study of the surveys has been performed that would justify interchangeable use of the databases? According to the collective knowledge of the f-CTF group, this was not the case.

Scott Metlen expressed concern that research levels of UI departments are different and might require an individual market definition (e.g., R2 vs R1). Along a similar vein, co-chair Hrdlicka noted that preliminary feedback indicates that UI faculty express a desire for salary compensation to be merit-based and concern about keeping high-performing faculty. Don Crowley, providing anecdotal evidence, urged us not to look at department-by-department classification, especially since it isn’t clear what we are measuring when discussing a department’s performance. Scott Metlen suggested that we could also use accrediting bodies for salary comparisons. VP Foisy stressed that the end-goal is to offer competitive salaries. If we, after utilizing our salary model, still don’t offer a competitive salary, we will need to address that. Co-chair Hrdlicka wanted to know who gets to decide who receives “adjusted market salaries” increases versus who doesn’t, and encouraged the institution to move away from “back room” deals. Chantal Vella asked what do we do with the people who are already at or above market? If someone is at market, will this new compensation system suppress them while increasing others? Scott Metlen said we would have to figure out on a case by case basis why people are above market, etc...salary inversion versus merit. Co-chair Hrdlicka, again pointed out that the preliminary comments from UI Faculty called for strong merit consideration over homogenization of salaries. VP Foisy - You get the base market rate for a professor but then you take a look at each individual professor by number of years of experience, number of years at the UI, etc. Chantal Vella - we do need to be explicit and transparent about that process. We do want to raise
the floor but we have to make sure that we don’t leave the people who are currently at market out in the cold because then we will just lose high performing faculty.

The discussion again moved back to what database to use. Anne Marshall, co-chair Hrdlicka, and VP Foisy reiterated their previous positions (see above). Kristin Henrich pointed out that her discipline is not even represented in CUPA-HR and supported the idea of using the database that is the most statistically sound. Jeanne Stevenson said the conceptual groundwork and rules are critical to put in place. Chantal Vella felt though that in order to come up with the ground rules we need more data. With no consensus emerging, co-chair Hrdlicka suggested to continue this discussion after the Thanksgiving break.

iii. At the next meeting – scheduled for 12/6, Bob Smith from the Research Office, will lead a discussion regarding Carnegie classification.