

# Final Report from the Faculty Salary Study

## Presidential Task Force

Submitted: February 6, 2019

### Introduction

The Presidential Salary Study Task Force was asked to investigate issues surrounding the salaries of the faculty at the University of North Georgia. With the support of Linda Rowland from the Office of Institutional Research, the Task Force gained access to salary data for the UNG Corps of Instruction and ultimately five different comparison groups from CUPA data. These groups include a 56 university CUPA group of Carnegie classification Masters Large and growing institutions, the entire USG, a special sub-group of 8 institutions from USG, the BOR approved university peer group and the BOR approved aspirational peer group. In addition to the salary data analysis, the Task Force surveyed the UNG faculty twice to sample its attitudes about the current salary situation and the prevailing opinions on how discovered issues should be attacked. The results of the study will be discussed below.

### Data Analysis

An overview of the data analysis is given below. Each UNG faculty member's professorate has been assigned a specific code by the USG. UNG faculty salaries were compared to the data from the CUPA comparison groups by matching the job codes of UNG faculty members on an individual basis to the CUPA data sets. CUPA only provides data if more than five institutions provide data for a given professorate and as long as no single institution has too great of an influence on the data. This means that the smaller comparison groups are often plagued by a lack of data for certain academic programs. To make the data easier to understand, the Task Force chose to compare UNG salaries to the median values of the salaries for each CUPA data set.

Based on the 56 institution CUPA comparison data that provides information for essentially every professorate and rank at UNG, UNG faculty are on average paid 94% of the median of the comparison group. Data was compared to all five comparison groups when possible and Tables 1-3 below show that for four of the five data sets, UNG salaries rank below the median of the CUPA comparison groups whether sorted by campus, college or faculty rank. The USG comparison group is the only data set in which UNG ranks essentially at median. This group includes all universities and colleges in the USG system and the data is therefore, probably dominated by the state universities and colleges, which are considerably smaller than UNG and would be expected to pay their faculty less than UNG and its peers. All of these comparisons are consistent with the contention that UNG faculty are paid less than faculty at other peer institutions.

Campus	CUPA	All USG	Special Group	Peer Group	Aspirational Group
Blue Ridge	97.22%	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	89.74%
Dahlonega	94.41%	102.4%	99.66%	94.93%	86.68%
Gainesville	91.51%	100.04%	97.02%	92.97%	84.91%
Oconee	89.74 %	98.50%	94.82 %	90.65%	83.34%
Cumming	91.21%	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	No Data	No Data

Table 1: Comparison of UNG salaries versus the various CUPA comparison groups sorted by campus.

College	CUPA	All USG	Special Group	Peer Group	Aspirational Group
College of Arts and Letters	91.95%	100.30%	98.40%	93.68%	85.44%
College of Education	90.89%	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	91.37%	84.03%
College of Health Sciences	97.85%	99.80%	96.72%	102.87%	89.02%
College of Science and Math	94%	103.35%	99.72%	95.41%	87.55%
Cottrell College of Business	93.09%	94.23% <small>(small numbers)</small>	90.84% <small>(small numbers)</small>	87.09%	80.80%

Table 2: Comparison of UNG salaries versus the various CUPA comparison groups sorted by UNG College.

Rank	CUPA	All USG	Special Group	Peer Group	Aspirational Group
Instructors	93.12%	Insufficient Data	Insufficient Data	No Data	No Data
Assistant Professors	92.68%	98.76%	95.21%	93.71%	85.97%
Associate Professors	93.13%	101.53%	99.15%	95.25%	85.85%
Professors	92.76%	103.91%	98.50%	92.62%	85.16%

Table 3: Comparison of UNG salaries versus the various CUPA comparison groups sorted by faculty rank.

As previously stated, the UNG faculty are paid at approximately 94% of median when compared to the large CUPA comparison data set. This figure can be somewhat misleading in that it is an average over all faculty salaries and there is a somewhat wide distribution of faculty salaries. Figure 1 shows the number of UNG faculty plotted against their individual percentages of the median. The data is binned in 1% steps to present the data in this figure clearly. There are many faculty that are paid below the 90% of median level and the most likely percentage is 88% of median. For this reason, it will cost approximately \$3,750,000 to bring all UNG faculty to median.

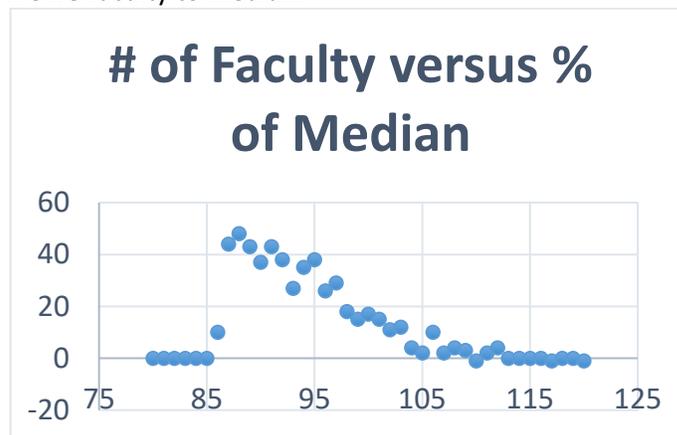


Figure 1: UNG Faculty Salary percentage of the median the large CUPA Comparison group binned in 1% bins.

## **Attitudinal Surveys**

The Task Force also conducted two university-wide surveys that each had an excellent response rate (Survey 1 ~ 33% of all faculty and survey 2 > 50% response rate). The first survey asked a series of free response questions designed to determine the faculty attitude about the UNG salary situation. After a few demographic questions, the following questions were asked:

1. Compared with peer institutions, how do you believe your salary ranks?
2. How would you recommend the university address the salary compression issue to ensure more senior colleagues receive appropriate compensation while we attract quality candidates to fill open positions?
3. What is your perception of compensation differences among faculty depending on the college in which they teach?
4. How would you rate the pay for part-time faculty?
5. How should this compare with compensation for faculty teaching overload courses?
6. Do you believe there is an issue with compensation regarding gender?
7. With the emphasis on expanding UNG's graduate programs, how should compensation be addressed for faculty who teach and develop new graduate programs/courses?
8. What additional issues related to salary do you believe that the committee should examine?

All of the data is available for review, but this report will focus on only a few of the more relevant responses. Table 4 below shows that an overwhelming majority of faculty believes that they are paid at a rate that is lower than faculty at UNG's peer institutions. There was also a large majority of faculty that believed that there was a pay disparity between colleges at UNG. This was true for faculty in every college.

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Lower</b>	<b>Same</b>	<b>Higher</b>	<b>NA/ Did not answer</b>
<b>Adjuncts</b>	11			
<b>Lecturers</b>	30	4		
<b>Assistant Professors</b>	58	6		1
<b>Associate Professors</b>	54	7		
<b>Professors</b>	39	6		2

Table 4: Response to Question 1 of survey 1. Compared with peer institutions, how do you believe your salary ranks?

The general themes from the responses from the first survey included:

1. A strong view that UNG is underpaid;
2. A prevailing view that UNG is top heavy with administrators;
3. Resentment about no growth in resources / travel / support;
4. Campus resentment about pay across campuses;
5. Concerns about differences in teaching load (Business / Sciences with labs);
6. A lack of understanding of merit raises and that UNG does not get COLA;
7. Comparisons made to other institutions (prominently Kennesaw and Georgia State University) about salaries.

The second survey was sent to the UNG faculty using Qualtrics. More than 500 responses were received, representing every campus of UNG and fully half of UNG's corps of instruction as defined by the USG. All colleges and institutes or other organizational groups containing faculty were represented

in the responses. All faculty ranks from part-time instructors (57 respondents) through the rank of full professor (91 respondents) were well represented. The following is a brief discussion of the most important points from the survey. The full raw data is also available for review.

The first question on the survey asked faculty to rate five salary-related items in order of importance from 1 being the most important to 5 being the least important. The items listed in order of importance were:

- Faculty pay should be brought up to at least the CUPA median across all faculty;
- Faculty salary compression/inversion must be addressed;
- The lowest paid colleges/departments should be given equity increases preferentially;
- New faculty should be hired to help deal with student body growth issues;
- A new tenure-track 5/5 faculty line should be created.

57% of the respondents listed the CUPA median question as the top concern and an additional 27% placed it in second. The 5/5 faculty line was listed last by 64% of the respondents and 4<sup>th</sup> by an additional 20%.

Based on the responses from this survey, the faculty is broadly supportive of salary increases for existing faculty, but do not strongly support any other suggested initiatives. The results also show no interest in a faculty rank-based solution, but a strong interest in dealing with salary across the board and for specific faculty individually.

The survey also included a final open-ended question to allow faculty to express any additional concerns or ideas. Although brevity precludes including every comment, some general themes are listed below. All responses are included in the raw data file. Frequent concerns and comments include:

1. Broad concern over the existence of a tuition differential between the A. S. and B. S. degree students, who are simultaneously taking the same classes. This is seen as contributing to UNG's budget and resource issues.
2. Concern over admission standards and UNG's emphasis on growth was frequently discussed. There is a perception that UNG has lowered its academic admission standards. There were also several comments suggesting that student population growth should be slowed or halted until resources "catch up."
3. There is a frequently stated concern about the increase in the number of administrators, while faculty are stretched too thinly and are not being compensated fairly.
4. There were several comments addressing poor part-time and lecturer compensation.
5. Several respondents expressed irritation that faculty in some areas could earn more money in the private sector.
6. A significant number of respondents believe that there are significant pay differentials between campuses.
7. There are significant concerns about new incoming faculty making more than those who have been teaching at UNG for a while. The concepts of salary compression and inversion are discussed but are not called that by name.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the data analysis and the two salary surveys, the UNG Presidential Salary Study Task Force make the following recommendations:

1. The Task Force recommends that the individual Colleges and programs, whose salaries are furthest from the median, be the initial or primary emphasis for equity expenditures, but that the entire university be addressed over time.
2. The Task Force also recommends that salary compression and inversion be one of the first criteria used in making decisions about salary adjustments. The comments in the latest survey showed that this was a major concern among the faculty, while also showing that much of the faculty did not know what the terms salary compression and inversion meant.
3. Although there is broad concern about the rate at which instructor and part time faculty are paid, the Task Force recommends that it should only be addressed after the tenure track faculty problem has been ameliorated. At that time, full-time instructors' salary should be dealt with first followed by part-time faculty pay.
4. Although there were frequent comments in the surveys comparing UNG salaries to private sector salaries, the Task Force believes that these should be ignored. The Task Force feels that if individual faculty members would like to take a higher salary in the private sector, they should feel free to leave the University of North Georgia to seek those opportunities.
5. The Task Force noted that there was a somewhat pervasive sentiment implying that certain programs or majors or sets of faculty were more important and therefore more worthy of raises than others. The Task Force believes that all such comparisons are false and should be disregarded. All faculty across the University are critical components in achieving UNG's core mission, providing a premier, liberal arts education to the students it serves. Any equity adjustments should be provided university-wide and not be based on the content area of individual faculty.
6. The responses to the salary surveys revealed a surprising lack of basic understanding about faculty salaries and the budgetary process. The Task Force recommends that a FAQ be created on the UNG website to provide basic information about salary issues. Additionally, the Task Force recommends that information about faculty salaries be included as a component of the New Faculty Orientation meetings. Topics that should be covered include, but are not limited to: what a merit raise is and how it is determined; when merit raises are allowed; and what COLA is and why it does not exist for faculty.
7. The Task Force noted several comments expressing concern about gender inequities in faculty salaries. The data analysis shows that gender inequity is not a university-wide problem. It is the belief of the Task Force that if any such inequities exist at the departmental level, they would be addressed by a university-wide, gender neutral, equity adjustment, and thus should not be a central emphasis of any salary adjustments.
8. The Task Force also noted a broad university concern about possible salary inequities between campuses. The data analysis demonstrated that although some such inequities did exist, they

were comparatively small. It is the belief of the Task Force that such inequities could be dealt with as a part of a university-wide equity adjustment and should not be a central emphasis of any salary adjustments.

9. Finally, the Task Force strongly recommends that the process of addressing salary issues be extremely transparent. The university should develop a document that explains how salary issues will be addressed, explain the use of the CUPA data in that process, and the specific actions that will be taken. This document needs to be publically released, placed in the newly created salary FAQ on the university website, and then followed with frequent updates discussing progress.

### **Summary**

In summary, the UNG Presidential Salary Study Task Force has completed its work and has found that UNG faculty are paid at a rate that is below the median of its peers, based on comparisons of UNG faculty salaries to various sets of CUPA data. To reach median, an additional \$3,750,000 would need to be committed for equity adjustments. This would be a significant increase for a single year, but potentially could be accomplished over a 3-4 year period.



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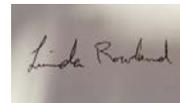
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