Salary Equity Study Committee Report 2019-2020

Chair & Senator: Cristiana Stan (COS)

Committee Members: Nirup Menon (BUS), Allison Redlich (CHSS), Kyle Warfield (Equity Office appointee), Robert Weiler (CHHS), Neda Masoudian (Equity Office appointee)

The Committee had three face-to-face meetings this academic year. The focus of the first meeting in October was to elect a chair, review the Committee’s charges and share the previous activities of the Committee. The Committee decided to focus on two objectives:

1. Effective of Fall 2020 GMU established new salary minimums for instructional faculty. The Committee will follow up with the administration on how the minimum salaries are implemented through the units and what steps are being taken to address the salary inversion and compression reported in the previous salary equity study. Salary inversion and/or compression is one of the main sources of salary inequities.

2. Evaluate the frequencies of men/women and of members of different race/ethnic categories within LAUs. If gaps are identified, the committee would like to work with the Office of Compliance Diversity and Ethics (OCDE) to investigate the potential for individual equity measures.

The Office of Human Resources and Payroll was invited to meet to the Committee and the vice president Lester Arnold kindly agreed to arrange a meeting between his office and the Committee. The second face-to-face meeting included VP Arnold, Laura Welsh and Michelle Lim and was focused on the first objective. The HR office was just completing the transition of leadership and restructuring the team. The discussion was focused on the lack of documentation regarding the faculty members with salary below the published minimums and using the comparative analysis studies conducted by GMU to establish minimums on par with peer institutions.

The second face-to-face meeting in February was a follow up meeting with VP Arnold and members of HR office. The HR reported that an evaluation of the salary minimums was conducted, and an undisclosed number of salaries were adjusted to meet the minimums. A review of internal practices by HR revealed the lack of a salary formula for compensation of instructional faculty. HR is developing a data-driven formula that will include variables meant to prevent salary compression/inversion. A study of the market conducted by HR using CUPA-HR data revealed that minimums currently published as 3 groups (Group A: CEHD, CHSS, CVPA, INTO Mason, Honors College; Group B: CHHS, COS, S-CAR, SCHAR, SMSC; Group C: ASLS, SBUS, VSE) require further refinement. The Committee recommended that future publications of the salary minimums include all breakdowns. The committee recommended HR to benchmarking salaries against the job marked to improve the outcomes of faculty recruitment process. Currently, HR does not keep records of offers turned down due to unsatisfactory salary. The
Committee recommended that search committee training sessions emphasize the importance of documenting the reason of rejection given by selected candidates.

To address the second objective, the Committee reached out to OCDE through its representative in the Committee, Neda Masoudian, and requested an analysis of the frequencies of men/women and of members of different race/ethnic categories within LAUs. OCDE reported that data required for this analysis is collected by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning (formerly known as IRR). The data that OCDE uses is for fulfilling Code of Federal Regulations and the Executive Orders as required by the university. A request for data was never fulfilled by IRR. The Committee noted some lack of coordination between IRR and OCDE.

In summary, the Committee feels that interaction with the HR and Payroll office was productive and the ongoing work has potential to address some of the salary inequity issues affecting instructional faculty. Since results of the pilot for testing the new salary formula will become available later in the year, the Committee recommends that the dialog with the HR and Payroll office be continued. The Committee feels that work should be continued on increasing the dialog between the HR and Payroll and OCDE. The Committee feels that there are many tasks that need to be tackled to ensure that faculty feedback is part of practices adopted at GMU to promote equity.
Appendix

1. During the past calendar year has the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President (or their respective offices) announced initiatives or goals or acted upon issues that fall under the charge of your Committee? If so, was your Committee consulted by the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President in a timely manner before the announcement or action? If not, do you believe your Committee should have been consulted? Would it have been helpful to have had the input of your Committee from the outset?

The Provost announced the initiative to publish the salary minimums on the Provost Office website.

2. Did your Committee seek information or input from the President, Provost, or Senior Vice President or members of their staffs? If so, did they respond adequately and in a timely manner?

As noted above, we sought information from HR Personnel. They responded adequately and in a timely manner.

3. Please suggest how you believe the President, Provost, Senior Vice President and/or their staffs might more effectively interact with your Committee in the future, if necessary.

4. Please relate any additional information you may have regarding interactions between your Committee and the President, Provost, Senior Vice President, or their staff.