
Executive Summary of the SCESF Report on the Economic Status of the Faculty

Introduction

This Executive Summary provides an overview of the 2018 Report of the Senate Committee on the Economic Status of the Faculty (SCESF). The Report relies on 1) a series of tables that summarize faculty base compensation provided by the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and 2) benefits information collected by SCESF from other institutions. The 2018 Report covers Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. This Executive Summary presents key observations and issues of concern. The full 2018 Report, including all publicly viewable tables provided to the Committee by the Vice Provost's office, is published on the *Almanac* website at https://almanac.upenn.edu/uploads/medial/SCESF_full_report_FY2017.pdf

Key Observations and Concerns

a. *Our report is limited to base salary, an incomplete measure of compensation.* The report uses base salary as a measure of compensation, but faculty at Penn earn additional compensation for a variety of activities, including supplemental teaching, summer research and department administrative tasks. The magnitude and distribution of these additional sources of compensation are unknown to the Committee, and thus, our report is limited in its ability to fully characterize compensation differences across schools and on the basis of demographic categories, such as gender.

b. *Data omit segments of the Standing Faculty. Data provided to SCESF covers all members of the tenure-line faculty in most schools of the University.* As in past years, however, these data exclude tenure-line faculty from the Perelman School of Medicine (PSOM), except those in basic science departments. Also excluded are roughly 1,000 Standing Faculty-Clinician-Educators from the schools of Medicine, Dental Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Nursing. Because SCESF's mission is to report on the economic status of all Standing Faculty at Penn, we note that our report is incomplete.

c. *Base salaries of Full and Associate Professors continue to lose ground compared to those at peer institutions.* In recent years, Penn has targeted a 3% annual increase in base salary for faculty continuing in rank. Data provided by the Vice Provost's Office confirm a median increase of 3% across schools and ranks, albeit with considerable variation. Consistent with previous SCESF reports, when salaries at Penn are compared to those at comparable research institutions, base salaries of full and associate professors are losing ground relative to peers, whereas base salaries of assistant professors remain near the top of the field.

d. *Gender gap in faculty base salaries persists.* After statistically adjusting for differences in field, rank and time in rank, a gap of approximately 1.5% in base salary persists between male and female Penn faculty at all ranks. A gap of this size has been observed by SCESF for several years.

e. *Penn provides excellent benefits for dependent education, but retirement contributions lag.* Compared to peer institutions, Penn offers excellent benefits for dependent education that benefit a select group of faculty each year. The current 9% limit on contributions to retirement accounts, however, is lower than the 10% norm at peer institutions.

Recommendations

SCESF offers the following recommendations to the Office of the Vice Provost.

a. *Provide data summarizing total compensation.* Base salary permits SCESF to compare salaries at Penn to those at other universities. Base salary does not, however, provide an adequate foundation for assuring gender equity in compensation. SCESF looks forward to continued discussion with the Vice Provost for Faculty about the best ways to address this important issue.

b. *Provide data for all Standing Faculty.* The pursuit of these data has been an ongoing concern of SCESF, as the Committee seeks to represent the interests of all Standing Faculty at Penn.

c. *Correct the downward relative trend in salaries of associate and full professors.* SCESF believes that Penn will benefit from correcting this trend by relieving some faculty of the need to seek outside offers in order to demonstrate their market value to Penn, and by not losing some of its faculty members to other institutions.

d. *Reduce the gender gap in base salary.* SCESF appreciates that the Office of the Vice Provost shares this objective and looks forward to continued progress.

e. *Increase the limit on benefits matching contributions to 10%.* Such an increase would bring Penn into alignment with competing institutions and better prepare faculty for retirement.

2017-2018 SCESF Members

Robert Stine, Wharton/Statistics, *Chair*
Kenneth Burdett, SAS/Economics
Robert Ghrist, SAS/Mathematics
Blanca Himes, PSOM/Biostatistics, Epidemiology, & Informatics
Sarah Kagan, Nursing
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Ex Officio:

Santosh Venkatesh, SEAS/ESE, Faculty Senate Chair
Laura Perna, GSE, Faculty Senate Past Chair
Jennifer Pinto-Martin, Nursing, Faculty Senate Chair-Elect

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the essential and invaluable assistance of J. Patrick Walsh of the Office of the Faculty Senate and the additional information provided in response to SCESF requests by the offices of the Provost, Institutional Research and Analysis and Human Resources. The Committee also notes that this year's report directly benefited from presentation and analysis described in reports from previous years and, where appropriate, some previous text is included here.

The full report of the 2018 SCESF including numerous
Tables and the Responses from the Administration can be
found online at

[https://almanac.upenn.edu/uploads/medial/
SCESF_full_report_FY2017.pdf](https://almanac.upenn.edu/uploads/medial/SCESF_full_report_FY2017.pdf)

Report of the Chair of the Faculty Senate

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The work of the Senate largely takes place within the various Senate Committees. They have done yeoman's work this year and generated insights and recommendations on difficult issues. The chairs of these Committees have provided exceptional leadership and it has been my great privilege to work with them: Neill Epperson (Ad Hoc Senate Committee on Academic Engagement), Dominic Sisti (SCSEP), Carmen Guerra (SCFDDE), Thomas Sollecito (SCOF), Pamela Sankar (SCOA), Robert Stine (SCESF), Vivian Gadsden (Senate Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility), and Martin Pring (Senate Committee on Publication Policy for *Almanac*). A large number of University administrators and faculty materially assisted these committees by providing information and expert advice. To each of them I extend my thanks.

Senate Executive Assistant J. Patrick Walsh provided seamless support to each of the Senate Committees. He has my heartfelt thanks for handling varied demands with equanimity and efficiency, especially during the hurly-burly of the production of the Teach-In. Without him we would have

founded at the first shoal.

I have had the very great good fortune to work closely with Past Chair Laura Perna and Chair-Elect Jennifer Pinto-Martin over the last year. Their wisdom and sagacity, coupled with the most even of temperaments, kept the ship afloat. It has been my signal privilege and pleasure to have served with them.

Let me close by extending a warm welcome to the incoming Chair-Elect Steve Kimbrough and by saying that I am very much looking forward to helping Jennifer Pinto-Martin over the coming year as I transition to Past Chair.

Santosh S. Venkatesh

—Santosh S. Venkatesh,
Professor, Electrical and Systems Engineering (ESE),
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Faculty Senate Chair, 2017-2018