

Faculty Review and Compensation at the University of California

The unique compensation system by which faculty are reviewed, advanced, and paid at UC has played a large part in building the excellence of UC. Although UC faculty have standard ranks of assistant, associate, and full professor, the system also has a set of steps within these ranks, with each rank and step carrying a specific salary. The peer review process and attendant salary scale system was designed to create consistency and equity across campuses and disciplines, but market forces—including increasing differences by discipline and campus—present challenges for administrators and faculty.

The UC President, the Provost and Executive Vice President, and OP Academic Personnel (AP) play key roles in administering systemwide salary decisions, and the Academic Personnel Manual (APM) contains the policies that govern campus review processes and standards as well as compensation practices. All review of individual faculty members takes place on the campuses, however, and each campus has additional guidelines to operationalize APM policies.

UC's integrated system of regular peer review and attendant salary scales

The system of regular peer review and attendant salary increments for strong performance by UC faculty is premised on assumptions that peer review encourages strong performance and that productivity should be encouraged over an entire career. Criteria and processes of review vary by title series, but the policy for ladder-rank faculty sets a pattern for all other faculty groups. Unique elements of the system for the ladder-rank faculty follow:

- 1. Integration of the faculty salary scale system with specific levels of scholarly achievement determined through peer review.** A system of rigorous performance review is linked directly to compensation on salary scales. These salary scales are published by Academic Personnel (AP) at UCOP, and include minimum salary for 20 “steps” of faculty achievement (Assistant Professor I-VI, Associate Professor I-V, and Professor I-IX). A “general” scale used for the majority of faculty and disciplines is accompanied by higher scales for faculty in three areas, 1) Business/Economics/Engineering, 2) Law, and 3) Health Sciences; these discipline-based scales reflect market conditions. (Additional information on salary scales on page 2.)
- 2. Continuous, periodic peer review.** Faculty are reviewed on average every two to three years by faculty peers and administrators. All reviews include peer review in the department, and—depending on the kind of action under consideration—review also follows at the school/college and perhaps the campus level. These practices vary from campus to campus, but are all agreed to by the Divisional Academic Senate and Academic Administration and must fall within APM policy. For advancement to a new rank (to Associate Professor or Professor) peer review also includes input from disciplinary experts across the nation and the world; advancement through “barrier” steps (Professor Step VI and Professor Step IX) usually includes such external review as well. Each campus has a Committee on Academic Personnel (CAP) or equivalent committee that reviews major advancements for faculty across the campus; CAP is a hallmark of UC academic review. On some of the campuses, the CAP or equivalent committee advises on the new salary as well as reviewing the advancement action. Academic administrators are also involved in review (Department Chair, Dean, Vice Provost, Executive Vice Chancellor/Provost and Chancellor [in the case of tenure and major advancements]) and cases move from the department to the school/college to the CAP and central administration.
- 3. Merit review.** The phrase “merit review” has special meaning for academic review at UC, and is used to refer to the regular review process described in #2 above. It refers to the peer-review process to move up a step in the scales. The concept is important, since it clarifies that each move up a step on the scales is based on a review of performance by peers and is “meritorious.”
- 4. Continuous post-tenure review.** Faculty continue to be reviewed regularly after tenure is conferred. Senior faculty who reach the highest “step” at the professorial level (Professor, Step IX) may receive a special review and be placed “above scale,” where they still undergo regular review but the salary exceeds the maximum salary designated for the title series. On many UC campuses, these “above scale” faculty are awarded the title of “Distinguished Professor.”

Tenure and security of employment; criteria for appointment and advancement

Faculty in the Professor series and the Professor in Residence series are evaluated on achievement in a full scope of activities in teaching, research and/or creative work, professional activity, and university and public service. Faculty in other series—Professor of Clinical X (e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, etc.), Visiting Professor, Adjunct Professor, Health Sciences Clinical Faculty, Lecturer with potential security of employment (PSOE) and Lecturer with security of employment (SOE)—have more focused responsibilities. In the Health Sciences, with a broad range of faculty titles, criteria for faculty evaluation usually include clinical achievement as well. The APM contains the criteria by which faculty are evaluated.

Tenure and security of employment. Only ladder-rank and equivalent faculty (“equivalent” faculty include Clinical Professor of Dentistry, Supervisor of Physical Education, Astronomers, and Agronomists) are eligible for tenure, and tenure is awarded with advancement to associate professor. Tenured faculty must meet very high standards, including this basic one: “Superior intellectual attainment as evidenced both in teaching and in research or other creative achievement, is an indispensable qualification for appointment or promotion to tenure positions” (APM - 210-1-d).

A tenured appointment cannot be terminated except for good cause and after the opportunity for a hearing before a properly constituted advisory committee of the Academic Senate; The Regents must approve dismissal of a tenured faculty member. A Lecturer SOE has “security of employment” that is very similar to tenure. Other faculty titles all have term appointments, most of which are renewable although contingent on need and, sometimes, on certain kinds of funding.

Evaluation criteria. As noted above, ladder-rank faculty are evaluated in four areas: 1) teaching, 2) research and creative activity, 3) professional achievements, and 4) university and public service. In teaching, “clearly demonstrated evidence of high quality” is essential for appointment, advancement, and promotion. In their research or creative activities, faculty are expected to show “evidence of a productive and creative mind.” Faculty in professional schools must demonstrate “distinction” in the special competencies of their fields. And all faculty must meet high expectations in service: on campus, for the UC system, and for the state and nation.

Salary and salary scales

Faculty members at all campuses are paid on academic-year (nine-month) or fiscal-year (twelve-month) salary scales with parallel scales developed for the two groups. The same scales are used for all ten campuses and issued by Academic Personnel at the direction of the President. The scales are published online: <http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel/compensation/2014-academic-salary-scales.html>. The scales are premised on the principle that faculty across most disciplines and across UC campuses are doing similar work and should be paid in comparable fashion.

The salary scales were developed under three key assumptions: 1) that UC faculty peers would be paramount in the determinations of salary (i.e. UC peer review would be the primary factor in determining rank, step and thus salary); 2) that with a few exceptions, salaries would be the same across disciplines and across campuses; and 3) that salaries would be augmented both through regular advancement through rank and/or step and through general range (or cost-of-living) adjustments to the scales. However, there are increasing disparities among disciplines, a nationwide trend. Differences among UC campuses are also notable. Finally, general range adjustments to all of the scales have been sporadic; while at one time they were annual, they have been applied only three times in the last seven years.

Salary increases

There are four basic ways in which a faculty member may receive an increase in salary. These are:

- **Merit increase.** When a faculty member receives a positive merit review, s/he moves to a new step in the salary scales. The increments between steps vary, with roughly 5.5% between steps for assistant professors (with review every 2 years) and 8% between steps for full professors (with review every 3-4 years). In any given year, roughly one third of the faculty is awarded a positive merit and moves up in the scales.
- **Promotion increase.** When a faculty member receives a positive promotion review, s/he moves to a new rank in the title series, e.g., from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor or Associate Professor to Professor, and to the corresponding step assignment on the salary scales.

- **General salary scale increase.** When the President calls for a general adjustment to salary, raising the salary scales, each faculty member receives a raise. A small number may not receive the raise based on various specifications in contracts and prior reviews.
- **Off-scale increase.** When justified, appointment or advancement to a position with an off-scale salary may be approved to meet certain conditions: to meet market conditions, with promotion from one rank to a higher rank or in lieu of a promotion, with a merit increase or in lieu of a merit increase, or as a consequence of a general scale adjustment applied to an off-scale salary.

Additional compensation

Faculty can augment their base salaries in various ways, all governed by APM policy. Ordinarily, full-time faculty members may not receive additional compensation from University sources for services directly related to recognized duties during the year (whether academic or fiscal). Exceptions to this general rule may be granted for activities such as summer session teaching, overload teaching, teaching for University Extension, consulting, honoraria, and conducting extramurally funded research. (See APM - 600 series.) Any outside professional activities (and income) undertaken by faculty are governed by APM policy.

Academic-year appointees are allowed to earn a maximum of one-third of the nine-month academic year annual salary rate for services during the designated summer period and fiscal-year appointees may earn a maximum of one-twelfth of the twelve-month salary rate during one month of forfeited vacation. Such activities are largely funded by non-state funds (research grants and contracts, endowment income, etc.).

Other current salary and compensation issues

Compensation reports to the Regents. The President reports to the Regents all compensation actions as well as compensated outside professional activity for Academic Deans and Full-time Faculty Administrators. These reports are prepared by Academic Personnel and approved by the Provost and Executive Vice President and President.

Health Sciences Compensation Plan (HSCP). A special compensation plan, the Health Sciences Compensation Plan HSCP (APM - 670), is authorized by The Regents and approved by the President. It offers a competitive salary structure indispensable to the health science schools' recruitment and retention efforts. Comparable with plans at other competitor universities, it builds salary components based on the faculty member's rank and step, sub-disciplinary specialty, research support, clinical activity, and administrative responsibilities.