

Academic Chairs' Council Agenda
1:00-3:00pm Wednesday, 10 December 2008
University Union – Havasupai A/B

1. 1:00 to 1:10pm: Announcement: Cynthia Kosso
2. 1:10 to 1:30pm: Updates
 - President's Cabinet, Provost's Academic Leadership Council, etc. (Roy St. Laurent)
3. 1:30 to 2:00pm: Time with new Executive Director: Ray Michalowski
4. 2:00 to 2:30pm: Discussion of "Proposal for Change in Merit Allocation" (attached below):
Maribeth Watwood, Cynthia Kosso
5. 2:30 to 3:00pm: Discussion with the Provost: Liz Grobsmith
 - College-level budget planning
 - Involvement of chairs and faculty in budget process

Upcoming dates:

- Next ACC meeting: Wednesday, 14 January 1:00-3:00pm, University Union Havasupai A/B
- ACC Spring workshop: Wednesday, 28 January 1:00-2:30pm, duBois Fremont, topic: TBD



MEMORANDUM

October 6, 2008

To: Faculty Senate, Academic Chairs Council, Provost's Academic Leadership Council

From: Liz Grobsmith, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Re: Proposal for Change in Merit Allocation

This memo is a summary of the recommendations from the Merit Allocation Workgroup appointed last fall, in response to the Provost's request to consider a plan that would enable deans to award some of salary increases as the "dean's award for merit" or excellence. The workgroup was chaired by Laura Huenneke, and other members included Blase Scarnati, Cynthia Kosso, Maribeth Watwood, Michael Stevenson, Chuck Connell, Susanna Maxwell and Karen Appleby. On May 16, 2006, Dr. Huenneke presented me with a set of recommendations from the workgroup, which are briefly summarized in this memo. During the summer 2008, considerable discussion with the Provost's Academic Leadership Council occurred, with input both from members of the Academic Chairs Council and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. Because a shift in how merit is awarded requires a shift in the faculty evaluation process, I wanted to present these recommendations for consideration and discussion.

The proposal recommends that faculty salary increases fall into four components:

1. **Base merit.** This portion reflects "a dependable and regular way of adjusting compensation for all faculty who meet or exceed expectations (allowing faculty who meet expectations to count on increases in salary to keep up with inflationary pressures)". This component would draw upon the largest proportion of dollars available for raises in a given year. Base merit would resemble a cost of living increase, and the largest portion of the raise pool would provide a percentage of "base merit" to all faculty who receive a rating of "meets expectations". Note: the categories into which faculty would be placed would change from "highly meritorious", "meritorious", "satisfactory", and "unsatisfactory" to "exceeds expectations", "meets expectations", "does not meet expectations". The major rationale for this change is that the current process of determining who is rated "meritorious" and who is rated "highly meritorious" is an enormously burdensome job for committees, and often ends up with hair-splitting assessments of who belongs in each category. Furthermore, there has been great concern over inflated ratings in some colleges while other colleges have used the

“highly meritorious” category very sparingly. We know that in the 4-year period of FY 02-FY 06, in three colleges the percentage of faculty being awarded “highly meritorious” was over 80%, whereas in two other colleges, that rating was received by only 40-60% of faculty. The expectation in the new rating scale would be that most faculty will fall into the “meets expectations” category, and that a smaller subset would be assessed as having “exceeded expectations”. For the sake of simplification, let me suggest that approximately 75% of the increase pool would be allocated to “base merit”. The majority of faculty will be likely to fall into this category.

2. A second level or portion of the salary increase dollars would go to those faculty whose performance is deemed to **“exceed expectations”**. Because the largest portion of the increase pool will have been awarded to the majority of faculty—mindful of the need to increase salaries for all faculty who are performing satisfactorily—this portion would be a special allocation above and beyond the base merit increment that would go to a far smaller subset of faculty whose record for the previous year was truly outstanding and whose record reflected “truly exceptional performance”. The committee stated, “putting a relatively small amount into this category of raises should assist in the goal of reducing the workload on departments, chairs and deans to discriminate between “Meritorious” and “Highly Meritorious”. For the sake of simplification during this initial discussion, let me suggest, as the committee did, that approximately 10% of the salary dollars be assigned to the **“exceeding expectations”** category of increases. These increases would go to a minority of faculty.
3. A small portion of the salary pool would be allocated to the deans to distribute as the **“Dean’s Award”**, meaning that the dean would have the authority to allocate as a one-time award, an increment above and beyond the first two categories, to recognize a truly exceptional year, such as the publication of a book or monograph representing many years of effort, being selected for an extremely prestigious national or regional award, or the kind of “career award” that recognizes truly exceptional performance for a given year. The funds for this pool might reflect 5% of the salary increase dollars available. Although who would receive the “dean’s award” would vary from year to year, the portion of the raise pool would be given annually and distributed proportionally to the deans for them to award differentially.
4. The fourth category of salary dollars would be a fund given to the Provost to address **salary inequity and compression** issues that arise each year. Again, this portion of the funds would be made available each year, but the allocation to individual faculty would be variable based on issues of compression and inversion that have emerged over the past year. Cases presented to the Provost would be well-documented and clearly justifiable. Perhaps 10% of the salary pool could fund adjustments for the most egregious cases, and again, this pool would recur annually though distributed on a case-by-case basis each year.

The percentages of each portion of the salary increase pool are not fixed, but rather should be a source of discussion in the coming semester. Also, we are researching the feasibility of establishing any one-time award; it may be that that portion of the raise pool might better be

allocated as a one-time award in support of the faculty member's work (operations, travel, etc.)

The purpose of this memo is begin the discussion about the possibility of changing the faculty rating system from a four-category system (highly meritorious, meritorious, satisfactory and unsatisfactory) to a new, simplified system consisting only of three ratings: exceeds expectations, meets expectations, and does not meet expectations). Assuming we are able to embrace this new model, at that time we could begin more specific conversations about the amounts that would be dedicated to each new category of rating.

I want to express my appreciation to the committee for their extraordinary work over the past year, and for bringing forward an innovative approach to salary allocation. The members of the committee have offered to come to any meetings or discussions of the proposal to provide more detail and explain more fully their rationale.

Thank you for your consideration.