



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY

WSU Faculty Senate Ad-Hoc Committee on Salary Steps

Final Report and Recommendations
WSU Faculty Senate Steering Committee
September 12, 2024

Committee Charges

- Investigate how step salary systems at other universities are set up and implemented.
- Characterize faculty perspectives in those universities with a step salary system.
- Any other objectives that an ad hoc committee might determine as relevant to implementing a step salary system.
- Determine the existence of any legal barriers to implementing a step salary system.
- Investigate advantages and disadvantages of such systems.

Study Methodology - WSU Strategic Planning Peers

WSU assesses its institutional practices relative to a group of research-intensive public universities (next slide).

- Each of us were responsible for gathering the following information for our select number of campuses from the Strategic Planning Peers list:
 - ❖ Institutional reports on compensation studies
 - ❖ Institutional websites related to faculty base salary or other compensation policy
 - ❖ Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) for each institution as well as WSU.

Methodology was appropriate for the time and resources available to the ad-hoc committee (neither course releases nor stipends were available for committee service).

WSU STRATEGIC PLANNING PEERS, 2020-2025

Colorado State University - Ft. Collins, Colorado

Iowa State University – Ames, Iowa

Louisiana State University - A&M – Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Mississippi State University – Starkville, Mississippi

North Carolina State University – Raleigh, North Carolina

Oregon State University – Corvallis, Oregon

Purdue University – West Lafayette, Indiana

University of Georgia – Athens, Georgia

University of Maryland - College Park, Maryland

University of Missouri – Columbia, Missouri

University of Nebraska – Lincoln, Nebraska

University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Tennessee

Virginia Polytechnic University – Blacksburg, Virginia

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**How do WSU base salaries compare to our
Strategic Planning Peers?**

WSU

WSU Compensation vs. Strategic Planning Peers: Tenure Track Base Salaries

Table 1: Average Salary Equated to 9 Months of Full-Time Work: IPEDS Data, 2022-2023 - Strategic Planning Peers					
Institution	Full Professor	Institution	Associate Professor	Institution	Assistant Professor
University of Maryland - College Park	185,725.00	University of Maryland - College Park	131,058.00	University of Maryland - College Park	116,205.00
Purdue University - Main	158,118.00	Purdue University - Main	115,620.00	Purdue University - Main	103,631.00
Oregon State University	156,891.00	Virginia Polytechnic University	114,183.00	University of Georgia	103,312.00
University of Tennessee - Knoxville	156,891.00	Oregon State University	108,835.00	Virginia Polytechnic University	100,884.00
Virginia Polytechnic University	156,305.00	University of Tennessee - Knoxville	108,835.00	University of Nebraska - Lincoln	94,649.00
Colorado State University - Ft. Collins	141,529.00	University of Georgia	106,252.00	Oregon State University	91,814.00
University of Georgia	140,647.00	Colorado State University - Ft. Collins	103,891.00	University of Tennessee - Knoxville	91,814.00
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	139,317.00	University of Nebraska - Lincoln	103,346.00	Iowa State University	90,213.00
North Carolina State University	139,126.00	North Carolina State University	102,807.00	Louisiana State University - A&M	89,727.00
University of Missouri - Columbia	138,116.00	Iowa State University	100,380.00	University of Missouri - Columbia	87,594.00
Iowa State University	136,025.00	Louisiana State University - A&M	96,250.00	North Carolina State University	87,366.00
Louisiana State University - A&M	135,129.00	University of Missouri - Columbia	93,790.00	Colorado State University - Ft. Collins	86,922.00
Washington State University	126,732.00	Washington State University	92,429.00	Mississippi State University	81,856.00
Mississippi State University	118,988.00	Mississippi State University	89,856.00	Washington State University	79,441.00

WSU Compensation vs. Strategic Planning Peers: Career Track Base Salaries

Table 2: Average Salary Equated to 9 Months of Full-Time Work: IPEDS Data, 2022-2023 - Strategic Planning Peers

Institution	Instructors		Lecturers
North Carolina State University	186,300.00	Louisiana State University - A&M	86,205.00
University of Maryland - College Park	82,000.00	University of Maryland - College Park	83,581.00
Washington State University	74,633.00	University of Georgia	81,511.00
Oregon State University	67,980.00	Virginia Polytechnic University	74,851.00
University of Tennessee - Knoxville	67,890.00	Oregon State University	66,158.00
Colorado State University - Ft. Collins	64,030.00	University of Tennessee - Knoxville	66,158.00
University of Georgia	61,081.00	Iowa State University	60,415.00
Purdue University - Main	59,649.00	Purdue University - Main	59,665.00
Virginia Polytechnic University	59,256.00	North Carolina State University	57,877.00
University of Missouri - Columbia	54,589.00	Washington State University	50,746.00
Louisiana State University - A&M	53,618.00	University of Missouri - Columbia	49,264.00
Mississippi State University	53,183.00	University of Nebraska - Lincoln	48,707.00
University of Nebraska - Lincoln	51,750.00	Mississippi State University	31,674.00
Iowa State University		Colorado State University - Ft. Collins	



What types of compensation strategies are WSU's strategic planning peers using that differs from WSU's?

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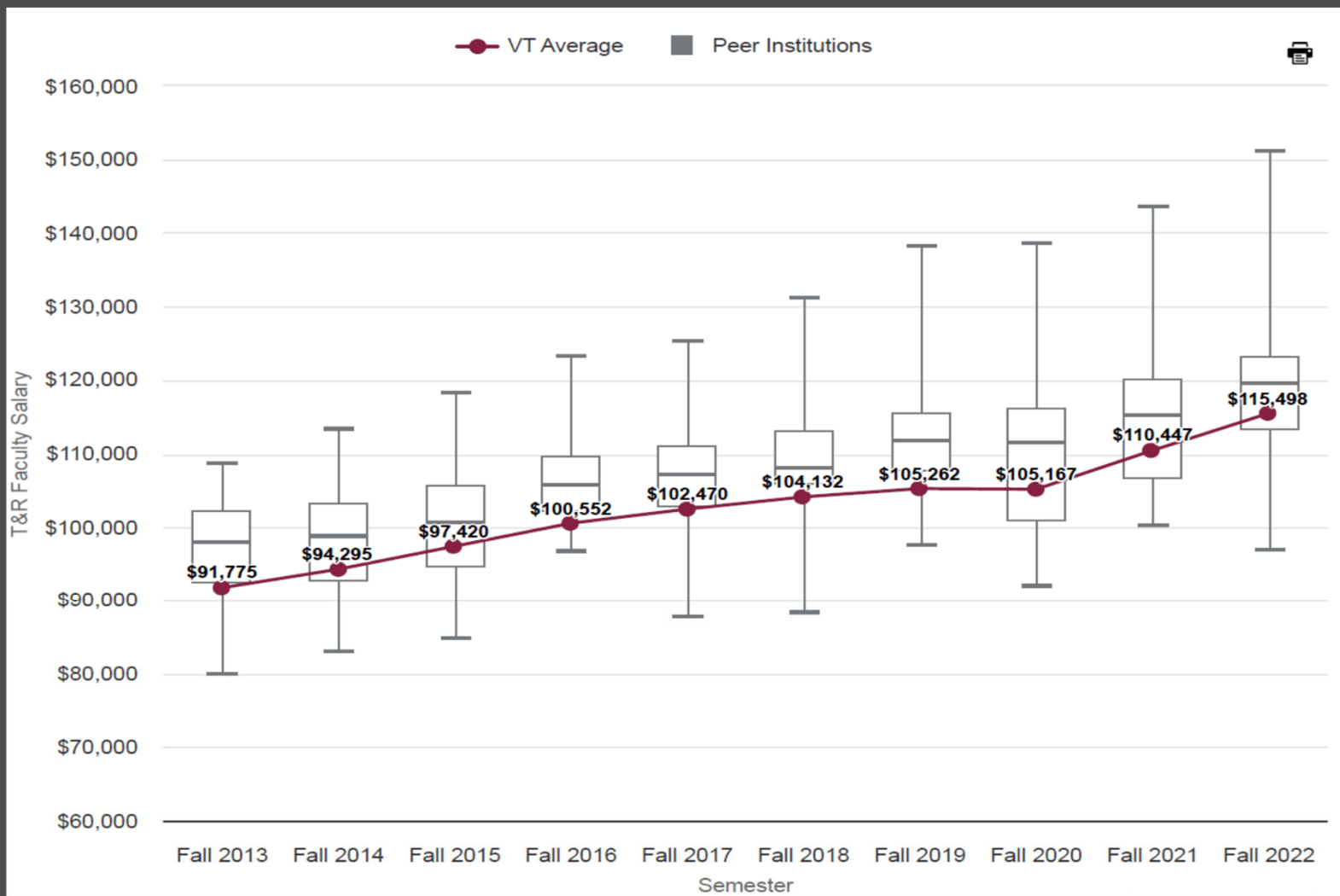
WSU's Strategic Planning Peers Have a Common Theme: Transparency

- **Public listing** of base salary data easily accessible via the Internet.
- **Public acknowledgment** of variation in faculty salaries by illustrating pay bands according to their minimum, midpoint, and maximum salary amounts.
- **Public comparisons** of aggregate base salaries (by faculty rank) between the WSU peer institution and its designated peer institutions.

Virginia Tech: Faculty Compensation Philosophy Centered on Faculty as Talent

- A core part of Virginia Tech's Strategic Plan is to "Be a Destination for Talent"
- Faculty salaries are a critical part of the talent recruitment and retention strategy:
- "Achieve progress in competitive faculty salaries towards 50th percentile of the top 20 land grant universities by 2024."
- VT provides users with an infographic comparing VT's faculty base salaries with those of its selected peers over the past ten years. This allows for a public accounting of how VT is faring on achieving this Key Progress Indicator (KPI).

WWSU



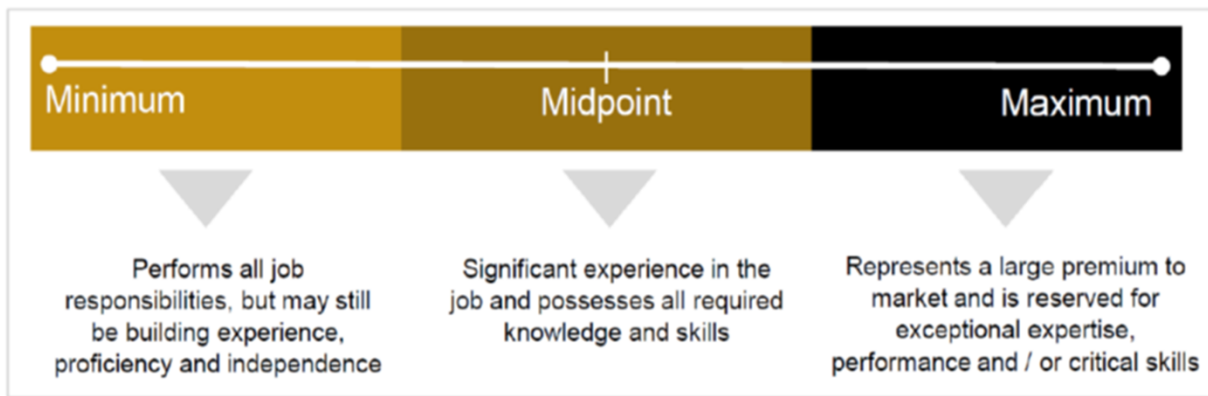
Purdue: Pay Bands Illustrate Commitment to Managing Faculty Salary Disparity

- Purdue University uses a pay band approach, exhibiting minimum, median, and maximum salary ranges within salary steps set by the board of trustees.
- These bands are posted publicly on the Purdue University web presence in addition to a full listing of each faculty member's current salary.
- The university conducted a faculty compensation in 2018-2019 to identify areas for improvement in faculty salaries, taking care to compare Purdue's salaries with other schools in the Big Ten.
- For 2024-2025, Purdue University Board of Trustees approved a 3% increase in faculty salaries and has invested close to \$300 million in recurring compensation increases since 2021.

Specific Examples from WSU's Peer Institutions: Purdue

UNDERSTANDING PAY BANDS

The pay bands represent market competitive pay and have been designed to be wide enough to accommodate a variety of experience and expertise levels. An individual's position within the pay band may vary dependent upon experience, performance, skills, competencies, and available budget.



CURRENT STAFF PAY BAND CHART AND INFORMATION

The pay band minimums, midpoints and maximums are based on a full time fiscal year schedule.

Pay Band	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
S025	23,300	32,400	41,500
S030	25,600	35,600	45,600
S035	28,200	39,200	50,200
S040	31,100	43,200	55,300
S045	34,200	47,500	60,800
S050	37,600	52,200	66,800
S055	41,400	57,500	73,600
S060	45,400	63,100	80,800
S065	52,200	72,600	93,000
S070	60,100	83,500	106,900
S075	69,100	96,100	123,100
S080	79,500	110,500	141,500
S085	91,400	127,100	162,800
S090	105,200	146,200	187,200
S095	120,900	168,100	215,300
S100	139,000	193,200	247,400
S105	159,900	222,300	284,700
S110	183,900	255,600	327,300
S115	308,600	412,000	515,400

Colorado State University, Fort Collins: Pay Bands by College, Faculty Rank, Relative to Strategic Planning Peers

- Like many of WSU's Strategic Planning Peers, Colorado State University Ft. Collins:
 - Provides a publicly accessible listing of all faculty salaries – tenure and non-tenure track – each year by individual faculty member.
 - Benchmarks aggregate faculty salaries for both TT and NTT faculty relative to CSU's selected peer institutions, providing summaries of these comparisons on its website.
 - Like WSU, conducts annual reviews of faculty to determine if merit increases are appropriate and if so, what the increase should be.

Specific Examples from WSU's Peer Institutions: CSU Ft. Collins

Code/Title	A. Focus Salary			B. Comparison Group Statistics							Focus Median Salary as Percent of CG Median Salary	Additional Percentiles		
	NP	Median	Average	Median	Average	Std. Dev.	Salary Factor	Median NP	NP	NI		5	95	
Across All Disciplines Selected														
Professor	467	139,386	145,085	145,306	148,720	20,417	1.00	220	12,630	50	96	118,464	184,214	
Associate Professor	326	101,208	108,899	105,110	108,012	13,421	1.00	194	9,913	50	96	87,698	134,479	
Assistant Professor (excl New)	180	86,437	93,673	96,900	99,162	11,919	1.00	116	6,066	49	89	83,237	120,321	
Assistant Professor (incl New)	226	86,253	93,198	96,005	98,537	11,728	1.00	134	6,878	49	90	82,912	119,977	
New Assistant Professor	46	85,000	91,340	93,130	94,878	14,267	1.00	22	812	36	91	77,574	111,698	
Instructor									1	5	4			
Across All Ranks	1,019	112,073	122,001	118,555	122,722	17,052	1.00	528	29,426	50	95	100,225	152,451	

Code/Title	A. Focus Salary			B. Comparison Group Statistics							Focus Median Salary as Percent of CG Median Salary	Additional Percentiles		
	NP	Median	Average	Median	Average	Std. Dev.	Salary Factor	Median NP	NP	NI		5	95	
Across All Disciplines Selected														
Teaching Professor	11	116,812	128,186	113,192	114,967	29,761	1.00	10	519	40	103	73,677	176,304	
Teaching Associate Professor	63	92,900	91,485	86,856	89,132	13,858	1.00	26	1,167	36	107	71,929	116,591	
Teaching Assistant Professor (excl New)	93	79,425	82,845	73,268	77,578	12,432	1.00	46	2,102	38	108	64,595	102,328	
Teaching Assistant Professor (incl New)	116	79,386	82,160	72,791	77,099	11,994	1.00	57	2,456	38	109	63,868	99,264	
Teaching New Assistant Professor	23	78,750	79,390	77,250	76,340	14,477	1.00	9	354	25	102	58,097	101,048	
Teaching Instructor/Lecturer	229	58,199	65,442	64,603	64,489	9,303	1.00	131	6,459	45	90	49,796	81,631	
Across All Ranks	419	68,983	75,633	70,748	72,271	9,911	1.00	221	10,601	48	98	59,454	88,359	

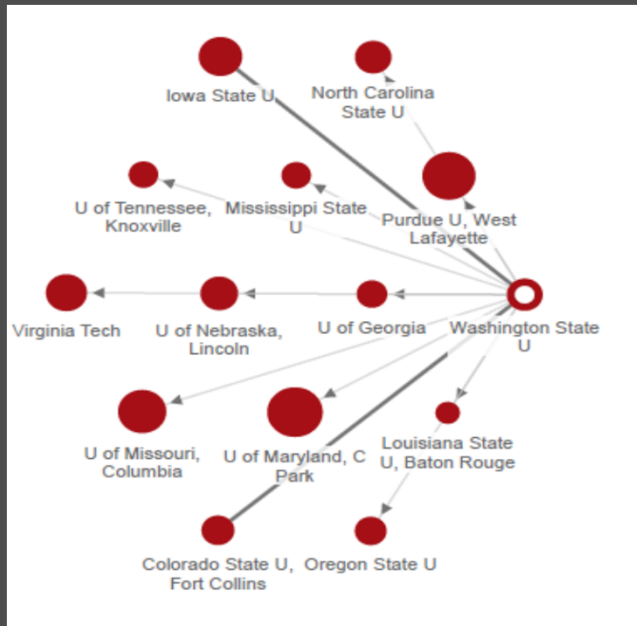


Recommendations

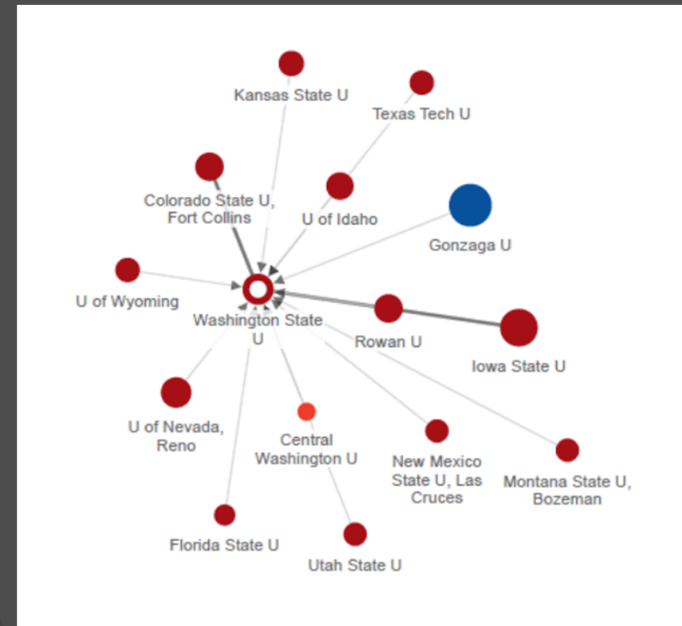
- **Overhaul WSU's faculty salary policy to promote greater equity in faculty compensation.**
 - Move away from the current 30:30: 40 model to narrow(er) pay bands or salary steps
 - WSU should hire a faculty compensation consultant to assist with this process – one that has experience in working with multi-campus university systems is *imperative*.
- **Public Listing of all WSU salaries on a WSU website easily accessible to the public.**
 - Listing faculty salaries allows us to identify salary inequities (compression and inversion) and proactively design more equitable compensation strategies than WSU's current reliance on Institutional Research (or the state's Office of Fiscal Information).
- **WSU Faculty Senate Monitoring of Faculty Base Salaries**
 - A permanent subcommittee devoted to faculty compensation among academic units within the WSU system should be created by the Faculty Senate.
 - Committee will monitor faculty base salaries, study salary dispersion and compression, as well as salary variations among the various campuses and Extension site of the WSU system.

WSU Peer Institution Selection is weakly reciprocated

Who WSU Selects



Who Selects WSU



WSU

Final Thoughts

- **WSU is not alone** in its quest for faculty salaries that pay enough to support home ownership, retirement savings, and other long-term financial goals (e.g., saving for children's future college attendance).
- In 2023, the University of Washington's chapter of the American Association of University Professors conducted a salary analysis of UW faculty compensation relative to their strategic planning peers and concluded UW faculty compensation was well below that of its competitors. It noted with concern administrators and administrative units benefitted from much higher levels of compensation.
- Long-term solutions to ameliorating weak faculty compensation at Washington's flagship university systems must engage factors to specific to their respective institutions as well as weak legislative fiscal support for faculty compensation in higher education.