

COSOW (Committee on the Status of Women) Report to Faculty Council

March 2022

Committee Membership

Chair:

- Misha Becker (Linguistics)

Members:

- Ana Felix (Medicine)
- Ayesha Hashim (Education)
- Kenya McNeal-Trice (Medicine)
- Brent Wissick (Music)
- Kirsten Kainz (Social Work)
- David Pfennig (Biology)
- Hannah Cabre (EXSS)
- Megan Winget (SILS)

Non-voting Member:

- Stephanie Forman (Employee Forum Rep, Public Health)

Committee Charge

“The Committee addresses ongoing concerns of women faculty members, identifies obstacles to achievement and maintenance of equality in the representation and status of women on the faculty, and proposes steps for overcoming these obstacles.” (Faculty Code, 4-22)

Report of Activities for 2021-22

1. Meetings:

We held meetings (via Zoom) on September 13, October 11, and November 10 in fall 2021. Spring 2022 meetings have been held on January 10 and February 7, with additional meetings planned for March 9 and April 18.

2. Update: COSOW’s Study of Gender and Salary at UNC:

Over the past 20 years, six faculty salary studies have been conducted at UNC Chapel Hill: five were conducted by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA; studies completed in 2002, 2007, 2012, 2017, and 2020), and one was undertaken in 2019 by the Committee on the Status of Women (COSOW). Each study revealed that male faculty, on average, earn more than female faculty, and that white faculty, on average, earn more than faculty who are African American, Latinx, Native American, or identify as belonging to another racial category (note: the 2019 COSOW study looked only at gender, not at race). In some studies, the gap reached the level of statistical significance in the regression analysis. In all studies, the gap is plain to see in the descriptive statistics, and while the regression analysis is important to consider alongside the descriptive means and medians, statistical significance (or lack thereof) must be interpreted with caution in analyses of this kind. In fall 2021 members Kirsten Kainz and Misha Becker met with experts in statistical methodology in the School of Education, School of Social Work, Psychology & Neuroscience, and the Director of the Odum Institute to talk about methods for analyzing salary data. Through these meetings we learned about the importance

of using **multiple methodologies** to triangulate patterns in salary data. This is because the regression analyses employed in most salary studies in institutions of higher education (including the studies conducted by OIRA) control for variables, such as tenure track vs. fixed term status, tenure status, years of service, and holding a Distinguished Professorship, that are themselves gendered (as of 2020, in Academic Affairs, 20% of male faculty hold a permanent Distinguished Professorship, while less than 8% of female faculty hold that distinction). Controlling for discipline is also tricky, because there are fewer women faculty in the higher paying disciplines, like biomedical engineering and computer science, and more women faculty in lower paying disciplines, often in the humanities and humanistic social sciences. Thus, in addition to looking at descriptive statistics and using regression analyses, it is vital that UNC employ other methods, such as those used in the 2019 study conducted by COSOW, and **obtaining qualitative data** by conducting focus groups and/or surveys, for example by collaborating with TEAM ADVANCE on surveys they are creating to obtain a fuller and more accurate picture of salary equity.

Equally, if not more, important is the need to sustain attention and efforts to eradicate salary inequity over the long term. The OIRA study completed in 2012 was the most comprehensive of the studies conducted by UNC, analyzing not only the snapshot of salary distributions, but also time to promotion (both promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor and from Associate to Full), and equity in hiring and retention. That study's report articulated concrete recommendations for closing gaps in salary, time to promotion, and hiring and retention. But without a long term focus from campus leadership on following through on these recommendations, there has been little progress made, as revealed in the salary studies in 2017, 2019 (by COSOW), and 2020. **In fact, the gap between male and female salaries for tenured full professors in Academic Affairs has widened from \$8,497 in 2001 to \$26,897 in 2020.** Had a 20-year initiative been implemented 20 years ago (or even in 2012), perhaps equity would have been achieved by now, and UNC could boast of being one of the only universities in the US to hold the distinction of employing lasting, effective measures that achieve equity in hiring, retention and compensation of its faculty.

Recognizing that pressure to address salary inequity must come both from above (leadership from the Chancellor, Provost and Deans) and a grass-roots approach from faculty and efforts from department chairs, we invited Leah Cox, Vice Provost for Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer, Meg Zomorodi, member of the Faculty Executive Committee and the Carolina Next Planning Group, and professors Christina Burch and Maria Servedio from the Biology Department to our November meeting. Professors Burch and Servedio had conducted a detailed salary analysis within their own department. Their project demonstrates the importance of examining salary data at the department level as well as at the unit level and broader levels (Academic vs. Health Affairs). Their work also underscores the important role that department chairs can play in perpetuating or resolving salary inequity, when funds are available for distribution.

Towards this end, the members of COSOW, with input from Professors Burch and Servedio, compiled a document ("Best Practices for Equitable Salary Increases in the Annual Raise Process: A Guide for Department Chairs and Deans") containing guidelines for department chairs and deans in allocating raises equitably and using a merit-based raise distribution to correct inequities in their units. We included two salary audit tools, one for gender and one for race, that allows chairs to easily see where gender- or race-based inequities might lie among their faculty. We did this in the fall, in anticipation of possible raise distributions this year, and the documents and tools we developed were distributed to all Deans in the University, as well as all Senior Associate Deans and all Chairs in the College of Arts & Sciences.

While the work of department-level leaders is critical, it remains vital for the senior leadership of our campus to maintain focus on this issue, and Prof. Cox and Prof. Zomorodi offered support for keeping this issue on the radars of our leaders in the upper administration. In particular, Prof. Zomorodi emphasized the ways in which correcting salary inequity aligns with several components of the Carolina Next strategic plan (something COSOW has pointed out before; see the COSOW 2020-21 Annual Report). Objective 1.3 of Build Our Community Together states that the University will “develop contemporary instruments and establish metrics and benchmarks to annually track diversity, equity and inclusion efforts across schools and units.” Objective 3.3 of Enable Career Development states that the University will “create opportunities to develop the careers of faculty and address the changing conditions affecting the professoriate,” and this includes mentoring, promoting, and compensating our female faculty and faculty of color on the same level as our white and male faculty. Objective 6.2 of Serve to Benefit Society states that we will “achieve impact by providing platforms, processes and policies that support faculty, staff, students and external stakeholders in co-developing solutions that address problems with critical implications for North Carolina and beyond.” Implementing a practice of equitable promotion, compensation, and recognition of our female faculty and faculty of color certainly has “critical implications for North Carolina and beyond.”

At our January 10 meeting we discussed the results of a comparative study we undertook to look at what our peer institutions are doing in addressing gender and racial salary inequity. We compared publicly available information from UC Berkeley, University of Washington, University of Michigan, Duke University, NC State, University of Virginia, and University of Colorado. Of these institutions UC Berkeley stood out as a model worth replicating. In 2015 UC Berkeley undertook a comprehensive salary equity initiative that employed multiple analytical models, provided concrete recommendations for addressing equity problems, and followed through with annual studies that tracked their progress. By 2020 major gains had been made in closing the gap in salary between female and male salaries, and between white and underrepresented minority faculty salaries. UC Berkeley also injected significant funds into their initiative, which is a necessary component of a successful effort to address inequity. Berkeley spent nearly \$3 million in 2015, \$2.4 million in 2016, and \$2.3 million in 2017 to raise salaries of faculty who were below where they should be for their rank and discipline, according to their 2020 report. These are significant sums of money, but short of reducing salaries of highly paid white male faculty, funding will be necessary to address the problem.

Resolution

Based on the foregoing, we have joined with the Fixed-Term Faculty Committee and the Faculty Welfare Committee and plan to put forward a resolution on salary equity for faculty members of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill at the April meeting. In this resolution, we will recommend the following steps as part of a 20-year initiative to identify, address, and diminish faculty salary inequities:

- (a) Formation of a salary equity oversight committee charged with reviewing annual salary equity analysis, investigating university wide and university unit policies and practices that maintain or exacerbate salary inequities, reporting progress toward institutional goals;
- (b) Completion of an annual salary equity report of faculty compensation that disaggregates and compares salaries by gender, race, ethnicity, rank, years at UNC-CH, and track (i.e., tenure, fixed-term, teaching) across the University and within each unit of the University (i.e. within the College of Arts & Sciences, within the School of Government, the Law School, etc., separately);
- (c) The creation and maintenance of a University website that provides public information regarding the institutional goals related to salary equity, major strategies for reaching institutional goals, and a dashboard to display progress toward goals over time; and
- (d) The collection and analysis of exit interview data from all faculty who leave UNC for any reason.

Parts (a), (b), (c), and (d) create the pathway for follow-through and an opportunity for real progress to be made by holding University leadership accountable for assessing whether recommended changes are being implemented and how effective those changes are.

Part (c) allows for transparency in this process by creating a public-facing mechanism for sharing information about what progress is being made in terms of equity.

Part (d) supports parts (b) and (c) by providing critical information and feedback about how we can better serve and retain faculty on our campus. The best way to retain faculty is to not *have* to retain them—that is, to create an environment where people are so well supported in their work that they have no desire to leave. But we cannot work towards that end unless we know why faculty who *do* leave, leave. There is currently no such data being collected in a systematic way.

3. Other Topics: In addition to salary equity, COSOW has addressed and discussed the following topics:

- A. Caregiving and Pandemic-related Pressures on Female Faculty:** We invited Erin Malloy, Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence and lead PI on the TEAM ADVANCE grant to our October meeting, to discuss how we might partner with TEAM ADVANCE to obtain survey data from faculty on how shifts and challenges during the pandemic have specifically impacted women faculty in terms of career advancement, work-life balance, and well-being. We contributed several questions to the fall TEAM ADVANCE survey.
- B. Search for Director of Carolina Women’s Center:** We invited Joseph Jordan, Vice Provost for Academic and Community Engagement, to our October meeting to ask for an update on the search for a new director of the Carolina Women’s Center.

**Appendix A
GENDER EQUITY SALARY AUDIT**

TENURE TRACK										
	Time in Rank	Female			Male			Nonbinary		
		Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range
Assistant Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									
Associate Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									
Full Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									
Endowed Chair	Any length									

FIXED TERM										
		Female			Male			Nonbinary		
	Time in Rank	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range
Assistant Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									
Associate Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									
Full Professor	1 year									
	2-5 years									
	>5 years									

Reflection Questions

1. Where do you observe salary inequities across gendered and racialized groups?
2. What method or criteria will you use to allocate raises?
3. Will your allocation method exacerbate current salary inequities across groups?
4. Will your allocation method remedy current salary inequities across groups?

**Appendix B
RACIAL EQUITY SALARY TOOL**

Years in Rank		TENURE TRACK														
		African American			Asian			Indigenous or Tribal Group			Latinx			White		
		Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range
Assistant Prof.	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															
Associate Prof.	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															
Full Professor	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															
Endowed Chair	Any															
		FIXED TERM														

Years at Rank		African American			Asian			Indigenous or Tribal Group			Latinx			White		
		Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range	Number @ Rank	Average Salary	Salary Range
Assistant Prof.	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															
Associate Prof.	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															
Full Professor	1 year															
	2-5 years															
	>5 years															

Reflection Questions

1. Where do you observe salary inequities across gendered and racialized groups?
2. What method or criteria will you use to allocate raises?
3. Will your allocation method exacerbate current salary inequities across groups?
4. Will your allocation method remedy current salary inequities across groups?

Appendix C

Best Practices for Equitable Salary Increases in the Annual Raise Process: A Guide for Department Chairs and Deans

Committee on the Status of Women
UNC Chapel Hill

November 2021

I. Context

UNC Chapel Hill faculty have not received raises since 2018, at which time the average raise allocated to departments in the College of Arts & Sciences was 1.2%. As this followed about ten years of mostly meager raises (since the financial crisis of 2008-2009), the result is that faculty who have not received raises due to retention counter-offers or distinguished professorships have seen their salaries stagnate for almost fifteen years, ultimately falling far behind those of their peers at both private and public peer institutions. At the same time, in national studies men are more likely than women to receive outside offers (which typically lead to retention offers, which normally include a salary raise or other benefits) (O'Meara, et al., 2017), and men are significantly more likely to be full professors and to be distinguished professors than women at UNC (OIRA, 2021). The status quo tends to perpetuate salary inequity, and the gap between male and female salaries continues to widen particularly at the higher ranks: in 2001 in Academic Affairs (the College of Arts and Sciences and the non-health professional schools), the median salary for male tenured full professors was \$8,497 higher than for female tenured full professors; in 2020 the median salary for male tenured full professors was \$26,897 higher than for female tenured full professors.

The problem of gender salary inequity will not correct itself. In addition to addressing the problem from multiple other angles, at every possible raise distribution department chairs and deans at UNC can work at correcting any gender- or racially-based inequity within their unit. This is important because, among other things, **women should be paid the same as men for the same work, and people of color should be paid the same as white people for the same work.** Failing to enforce this basic principle of equity reveals a perpetuation of bias and discrimination, even if unconscious. Moreover, salary inequity breeds discontent, lowers morale, and degrades collegiality; conversely, when faculty feel compensated fairly, they are more likely to be happy, productive, and willing to give more to their institution.

II. Factors in “Productivity”

Departments and disciplines can vary in terms of how products of scholarship are weighted in evaluating a faculty person's research productivity (books, journal articles, conference papers, grants, performances, etc.). Across departments and disciplines research is generally weighted more heavily than service in considerations of promotion and tenure for tenure-track faculty. However, service is important and benefits the department, often more directly and tangibly than research. It also takes time away from research.

We recommend taking service into account in determining merit-based raises, particularly as women faculty and faculty of color may be asked to take on departmental and university service at higher rates

than white male faculty. That is, “merit” can be construed not only as the number of products of scholarship produced in a given cycle, but also the number of committees one serves on, number of students one advises, number of potentially unpaid departmental service roles one holds. All of this work is integral to the operation of the department and should be recognized as such.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented challenges for female faculty members, especially those with young children and other dependent family members, that may lead them to appear less productive than their collegial peers. This has been documented not only nationally (Gabster et al., 2020; Zamarro & Prados, 2021) but also through survey data collected by [TEAM ADVANCE](#) at UNC-Chapel Hill. Therefore, schools and departments should not apply a one-size-fits-all approach when assessing the productivity of faculty members and making decisions about merit-based salary increases. In fact, following such an approach would cause salary inequities to worsen.

III. Process

Some departments may already have a rubric in place for determining merit-based raises, or a salary committee that has a set procedure for determining merit-based raise distributions. If your department does not have a rubric, or if it has not been reviewed recently, we recommend creating a rubric to reflect how teaching, research and service will be weighted in consideration of raises, and if other factors will be taken into account. For example, faculty whose base salary is heavily supplemented with recurring stipends or grant income may receive a lower weighting compared to faculty without those salary supplements (but who engage in similar kinds of work). Faculty whose salary is already significantly higher than others at the same rank may likewise receive a lower weighting in order to help even out long-standing asymmetries. If the rubric is made available to faculty along with the raise distribution it can increase transparency about how raises were allocated; even better, if it is made available well in advance of the raise distribution, it gives faculty the opportunity to make informed choices about how they spend their energy and effort, and it helps them anticipate their standing.

Recognizing that departments and units vary widely in terms of the presence and degree of gender- or race-based inequity among faculty salaries, we offer the steps below which can be implemented to address and correct any such inequities. The basic process should be easily adaptable to departments of different sizes and circumstances.

1. Calculate mean salaries for male, female, and nonbinary faculty at each rank (separately for teaching-track vs. tenure-track). Repeat for faculty of color and white faculty. This gives a general picture of equity in the department or unit. If there is a gap between groups within a rank, this is the inequity that you can now address. [See audit sheets provided]
2. Consider salary supplements if that is part of your department’s approach for compensating faculty and adjust the picture accordingly.
3. Calculate what it would take to bring male, female, and nonbinary faculty in each rank to the same level. All things equal, this is the amount that should be allocated to lower-paid faculty in each rank. There may be other factors to consider (e.g., years of experience even amongst faculty within the same rank), but this basic math can serve as a starting point for understanding the magnitude of salary inequities in your department and that could be addressed through the annual raise process.

4. For schools and departments that have a rubric for determining salary increases, compare the rankings of faculty in this rubric with your data on salary inequities. Does following the rubric allow you to address salary inequities? If not, how might the rubric need to be revised to support pay equity? Examples might include: (a) increasing the weight of service and teaching loads in the rubric, (b) adjusting standards for research productivity in light of the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic, (c) prioritizing salary increases for certain tracks/ranks of faculty who have been the lowest paid at your institution (e.g., junior faculty, clinical faculty).
5. Following rubric revisions and the allocation of salary increases, recalculate the mean base salaries of male, female, and nonbinary faculty in your unit. If a prior gap has narrowed, you have increased equity in your department. It may not be possible to eliminate inequity in a single raise distribution, but we should try to make as much headway each year as we can.

References

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