

**To: Salisbury University Faculty Senators From: Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC)**

**Date: 4/16/2024**

**Re: Overload pay, Chair compensation, Graduate Assistantships, and Program Director compensation.**

A faculty senate motion approved on March 23, 2023 charged that the Faculty Welfare Committee (FWC) should “look into aligning overload pay with special session compensation, and shall evaluate and make recommendations regarding chair compensation, program director compensation, and graduate student assistantships (in consultation with representation from the Graduate Council)”. This report is a fulfillment of that charge.

### **Background**

Currently at Salisbury University (SU), a faculty member can teach a summer or winter course and receive more monetary compensation than if they teach the same course on overload during the fall and spring semesters, even if the fall or spring course has more students than a summer or winter course.

Currently, department chairs across campus are given a download of teaching responsibility as well as a monetary stipend as compensation for being the chair of a department. The amount of the download and monetary stipend varies from department to department.

Graduate assistants receive a stipend and partial tuition remission as part of their compensation from SU. Although there is a minimum stipend set by SU, different schools and departments can increase the stipend if they so choose.

Program directors have many different job duties depending on their school and department. Typically, each program director gets a download of teaching, and in some cases, a monetary stipend which varies from department to department.

### **Methodology**

[Overload Pay](#): The FWC reached out to SU’s budgeting office, asking for the following items: the total monetary compensation to faculty for overload for Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023; the total monetary compensation to faculty for teaching during summer/winter semesters, along with the number of credit hours for these courses, and the number of students taking each of these courses. We also asked each school’s Dean/Director’s office for the number of overload hours taught during Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 from their school.

Although we were initially told that the budgeting office could get us the data we requested in short order, we received an email stating that due to a large number of requests by faculty committees, the budget office would not be able to give us the requested data until near the end of the spring 2024 semester, and we would need to work with the Provost’s office to make this request happen. We did receive some overload hour data from some schools, but not from others.

*Chair Compensation:* The FWC reached out to former Associate Provost Rich Wilkens and current Assistant Provost Jessica Clark to obtain information about a chair compensation study that had been completed in 2019 by Associate Provost Wilkens, which studied chair compensation at different USM institutions, as well as ideas created by a 2018 Faculty Learning Committee (FLC) specifically for department chairs. We reviewed this data and the recommendations that were put forth by Associate Provost Wilkens and Provost Olmstead.

In the study by Associate Provost Wilkens, he suggested four ways to modify how chair compensation was calculated. Provost Olmstead approved of these four modifications, and we have found that two of the four items have already been implemented. The first modification was to increase the base compensation for chairs regardless of department size (was increased to \$5,257 in 2018 or 2019). The second modification was to include adjustments for the number of student credit hours (SCH) taught in their department (\$0.102 per SCH) and for Full Time Equivalent Faculty (FTEF) supervised (\$60.35 per FTEF). This modification has been phased in as the initial three-year terms of chairs have come to an end or have been renewed, and all chairs will have this in place for the Fall 2024 term. Currently, this stipend is calculated every three years, although there is some confusion whether or not this is the three years of the chair's term or every three academic years, although the FWC is presuming it is the chair's three-year term.

The two modifications still not implemented are as follows. (1) It was recommended that during a chair's 3-year term, the chair compensation could increase if the number of student credit hours and full-time equivalent faculty supervised increases, but a stipulation should be made that the chair compensation should not decrease during the chair's 3-year term. (2) Currently, after a 3-year term, 30% of the chair's initial stipend is reallocated to their base salary, and after a 6-year term, another 40% of the chair's initial stipend is reallocated to their base salary, thus rewarding faculty for being chair long after they have left the position and encouraging some continuity in the chair position. However, when these percentages are returned to the base, the overall compensation doesn't change. For example, if a chair's stipend was \$10,000, during their first three years, this will be paid contractually. If a chair completes 3 years as chair and signs up for another 3-year term, \$3,000 will be put in their base salary, while the other \$7,000 will be the contractual payment. If a chair completed six years, and returned for another 3-year term, \$7,000 will be put in their base salary, while the other \$3,000 will be a contractual payment. Associate Provost Wilkens and Provost Olmstead suggested that this policy should be changed so that the return to base policy does not decrease the amount of the contractual amount received for being chair. The numbers in the 2019 study suggest this increase in chair stipends campus wide would cost the University approximately \$25,000/year.

In the Chair's Faculty Learning Committee report, they mentioned many issues, two of which the FWC would like to address. (1) There seems to be no consistent method to determine the teaching download time given to chairs, but rather it seems to be assigned by the Deans with no transparency of how the download was determined. (2) If an associate professor takes on a role as chair, it is extremely difficult for this individual to be promoted during their time as

chair, as the teaching download does not allow enough time for their chair duties and time for professional development ends up being reduced.

*Graduate Assistantships:* One of the FWC members is also on Graduate Student Council and discussed with them their thoughts on graduate assistantships.

*Program Director Compensation:* The FWC reviewed the different types of director positions on campus, and what information we could obtain about these positions. We also received some information from the Graduate Council on program directors. In addition, we also received information from a former program director about changes they believe should be made.

## **Recommendations**

*Overload Pay:* It seems wrong and is inequitable that someone teaching a class on overload during the fall/spring semester would receive less for teaching this class than during the summer/winter semesters.

We recommend increasing overload pay to match what is paid during summer/winter semester. We feel that this is the equitable thing to do. The FWC hoped to obtain data that would give us an idea of the monetary value of this proposed change. We were unable to get this data, and thus cannot give a number to the Faculty Senate on how much this recommendation would cost.

If there is opposition to linking overload pay to the number of students in each overload section of a course (similar to what summer/winter compensation does), we suggest that the Provost's office use past data to determine the average pay for summer/winter courses per credit, and that the Faculty Senate and the Provost's office work together to change overload pay to match this value. Raising overload pay will only be equitable if compensation for adjunct faculty is increased to match. We recommend that this also occur.

*Chair Compensation:* We recommend that the final two modifications suggested by former Associate Wilkens and endorsed by former Provost Olmstead be implemented. The items are as follows:

- 1) We recommend allowing chair compensation to increase during a chair's three-year term as indicated by the modifiers of student credit hours taught by the department and full-time equivalent faculty supervised. A stipulation should be included that during the 3-year term of the chair, the compensation will not decrease, even if modifiers would indicate that the compensation should decrease. To accomplish this, the University would need to calculate the number of SCHs and FTEF supervised annually, and use these numbers to determine whether a chair's stipend should be increased. If a chair continues after the 3-year term is complete, then the chair stipend should be recalculated based on the modifiers, and compensation could go down at that time. We recommend that this be implemented by the Fall 2024 semester.

The FWC believes that this would reward chairs who are doing substantial work in getting students into their courses. This should cost the university a minimal amount.

- 2) We recommend modifying the chair compensation so that when a return-to-base adjustment is made (30% after year 3 and 70% after year 6) the return to base is not treated as part of the chair compensation. As such, the chair compensation should be calculated as before and paid entirely on a contractual basis with the return-to-base being in addition to the chair stipend. The 30% and 70% return-to-base should be calculated based on the average chair stipend during the 3-year term. This policy should stipulate that the return-to-base policy should only be allowed for the first two 3-year terms (if an individual is chair for more than 6 years) but individuals will continue to receive the full value of the chair stipend for as long as they serve as chair. We recommend that this be implemented by the Fall 2024 semester.

The FWC believes that this policy change would increase equity as the current policy is punitive for chairs who occupy the position for more than 3 years. This policy change would cost the University ~\$25,000 (2019 numbers).

We would like to add a third recommendation, based on the 2019 study.

- 3) The base chair salary, along with the amount paid for SCH and FTEF, should be increased proportionally if Merit or COLA pay are given to faculty at SU.

We would also like to make two other recommendations, based on the 2018 Chairs FLC.

- 4) We recommend that a methodology of calculating a chair's teaching download be created for Salisbury University. The Deans/School directors can have some latitude in this, but there should be a transparent method to calculate the teaching download for chairs that the Dean/School director can then use as a starting point to make the final decision. We recommend that this be completed by the Fall 2025 semester.
- 5) We recommend that the Faculty Senate work with the Provost's office to create a way to recognize chair service toward promotion to full professor. One possibility might be adding a "fourth" leg of leadership (besides teaching, service, and professional development) for promotion, where a chair or former chair applying for promotion would need to show evidence in three of the four categories (Towson University does something like this). A second possibility would be allowing chairs to count some of their work as chair toward professional development. For example, a chair who completes an Academic Performance Review has arguably completed and published a peer-reviewed research document and could submit that work toward the professional development section of their promotional packet. There may be more possibilities here, but there should be some way for a chair or former chair to use some of their work as chair toward promotion.

*Graduate Assistantships:* With the formation of the new Graduate School, we recommend that a comprehensive review be done by the Graduate School to determine the compensation and duties of graduate assistants. Once this data is collected, we recommend that a discussion be had on how to make assistantships equitable.

*Program Director Compensation:* We recommend that the Provost's office and the Human Resource office complete a comprehensive study to determine the duties, the teaching load, and the monetary stipend given to all program directors. After this study is completed, we recommend that a consistent policy on how to calculate the stipends for the program directors be developed and implemented. For program directors who are overseeing an entire department (similar to an academic chair), a policy should be considered where part of the director's stipend is returned to their base salary.

### **Closing Thoughts**

With regard to overload and chair compensation, we have reviewed and discussed these items and feel that these items should be acted on quickly by the Faculty Senate. We feel that for Graduate Assistantships and Program Director compensation, we simply don't have enough data to make substantive recommendations at this time, and thus our recommendation is for studies to be completed regarding these issues.

Faculty Welfare Committee

Ani Mathers, Christina Camillo, Echo Leaver, Douglas Dewitt, Matt Bailey (Chair)