

Report of Ad Hoc Committee on Pay and Benefits

Committee members:

Steven Binz
Christina Camillo
Sean Cooper
Elizabeth Emmert
Maida Finch
Joerg Tuske
David P. Weber

Charge:

The ad hoc committee shall create a report that includes all relevant information provided by the Provost, a prioritized list of recommendations on how to address concerns related to pay and benefits including, but not limited to, compensation for Summer, Winter, and overload courses; compensation for Chairs and Program Directors; and retirement eligibility for FTNTT faculty, a justification of the order of priority, and a recommendation on how to ensure these issues are addressed in a timely and fiscally responsible manner. In writing the report, the ad hoc committee shall seek input from all interested parties, in particular FTNTT faculty. The ad hoc committee shall provide a final report to the Faculty Senate President no later than March 18, 2025.

Report:

The committee continued the work of the 2024 Summer Advisory Committee. We met with the Provost, Associate Provost and the VP of Administration and Finance to determine how much different compensation models for special sessions and overloads, graduate assistants, Chairs and FTNTT Faculty would cost. The Provost and other administrative staff have continued to work with us in good faith and while we have not yet received all of the data and answers we requested they have continued to work on it and we would have made more progress if there were less turmoil at the state and national levels this year. We understand that the budget situation might not allow any increases in the short to medium term. However, we recommend to the Faculty Senate the following list of priorities (highest priority first):

1) FTNTT PIN lines and compensation:

This is the most expensive item on the list and there was some disagreement about the data. In addition, giving FTNTT colleagues PIN lines from their first year

would open up choices (which state retirement plan or healthcare plan) which in turn makes it difficult to predict the exact amount of extra cost to the university, as the university is required to not only fund retirement contributions, but a "retirement health contribution" to pay for anticipated retirement or disability retirement health care. This contribution is based on which health insurance plan the FTNTT faculty member is in, and it can change over the years from single, married, married with children, and then again married after children age out. The most likely total increase for all existing FTNTT Faculty who do not currently have a PIN line would be somewhere between \$300,000 and \$800,000. This is obviously a sizeable amount of money, but not that substantial considering the large number of FTNTT faculty on our campus who are currently deprived of these benefits, who number approximately 20. The members of this committee strongly believe that providing PIN lines for FTNTT from the first hiring date would help to make them be treated equitably, as at present, FTNTT faculty are deprived of retirement benefits, flexible spending accounts for dependent care and health care, as well as the ability for their health care costs to be paid from pretax money through payroll contributions, as all other campus members pay theirs.

In particular, it would allow FTNTT Faculty to have access to retirement benefits from day 1, allow them to be able to pay them out of salary as deductions on a pre-tax basis, and would also allow for them to be able to pay their parking fees out of salary deductions on a pretax basis. In addition, FTNTT faculty would finally obtain access to both the dependent care savings account and health care savings accounts offered to all other SU employees to make pre-tax contributions, as FTNTT faculty have the same childcare costs and health care costs as any other employee.

Perhaps most concerningly, and not well understood by most faculty is that by not providing retirement benefits to FTNTT faculty on day 1, the university places FTNTT faculty in a precarious position with regards to their employer-paid health insurance benefits, should the FTNTT faculty member become disabled or incapacitated due to any major injury or illness. Under the Maryland state requirements, unless a state employee or faculty member is already enrolled in one of the state retirement systems (and many if not most faculty enroll in the Optional Retirement Program ("ORP")), **there is no retirement disability payment of employer health benefits for the faculty member or his or her dependents.** This means that if a FTNTT faculty member becomes incapacitated or seriously ill, and as a result is no longer able to serve as a faculty member, they immediately lose the employer-paid health benefits when they are placed in a non-payroll

status. The sole way to avoid this harsh reality is to immediately ensure that all FTNTT faculty are allowed to enroll in one of the Maryland state retirement systems upon hiring by SU and have employer-paid contributions to this retirement plan.

Given the current budget situation and the high cost of this step we strongly encourage the administration to take what steps they can to minimize the inequities between TT and FTNTT faculty benefits. This could mean reducing the number of years until a FTNTT faculty gets a PIN line until it reaches 0 or even smaller items like offering the 7% retirement buyout until funding is available for the proper retirement program.

We consider this a moral imperative, particularly as it leaves our FTNTT faculty colleagues potentially without employer-paid health care in the event of a major injury or illness. We have confirmed that among the University System of Maryland, SU is an outlier, one of only two schools in the system, out of 12, that does not provide these retirement benefits to FTNTT faculty on day 1.

Many FTNTT Faculty serve SU for decades and perform the same jobs as TT/T Faculty, including meeting expectations not only for teaching, but for research and service at the identical level as tenure line faculty. For this reason, it is important that, in addition to giving them PIN lines from the start of their employment, FTNTT duties must be clearly laid out and made consistent across the university. Currently, different schools have different expectations for FTNTT Faculty. While some differences are to be expected in the workload of FTNTT Faculty, workload needs to be equitable across the university, and FTNTT faculty who are expected to meet identical requirements as tenure line faculty for research and service should also have identical teaching loads.

2) Chair/Director stipends:

The committee believes that the criteria for Chair/Director compensation (including release time) need to be standardized across the university. This also includes criteria for having Associate Chairs/Associate Directors. At a minimum, Compensation/release time should take into consideration the following:

1. Number of Faculty members in the department
2. Number of SCHs generated by the department
3. Number of majors served in the department
4. Number of disciplines within the department

5. Number of students served in the department
6. Programmatic or accreditation responsibilities
7. Number and complexity of grants administered by the department

The following factors should be recognized to support the appointment of an Associate Chair:

1. The department has an advisee/faculty ratio of more than 25 to 1.
2. Two or more of the following responsibilities exist, and no other Faculty member in the department receives release time for meeting those responsibilities:
 - Coordinating graduate programs
 - Programs requiring coordination of clinical experiences, supervised experience, internships, field experiences, or practicum loads
 - Overseeing program accreditation processes
 - Complex programs or facilities (e.g. maintenance of labs, studios, equipment, or community relations)

At the moment Chair compensation and release time is insufficient, resulting in most Chairs only serving because someone needs to do it and everybody else has said "no.". Raising compensation or increasing release time would encourage more faculty to take on the task which could benefit the departments and university.

3) Overloads and special sessions:

There needs to be parity between compensation for overloads of regular courses (i.e. courses other than independent studies or undergraduate research experiences) and special sessions. Compensation for a course during a special session should be the same as the compensation for teaching that course during a normal semester using a percentage of a faculty member's overall compensation from their teaching load. In addition, considerable school-specific overload issues must be discussed further, such as compensation for graduate level courses.

4) Graduate Assistants:

Providing a 3% raise to all Graduate Assistants at SU would cost less than \$14,000. While this falls outside the purview of the Faculty Senate, which is why it comes last in our list of priorities, we recommend that SU allocate this very modest amount of money to do this.

Questions/Data that we have not yet received or requested:

- SU pays its portion of FTNTT health insurance premiums by paying USM (or the state?) a lump sum for all employees who do not have PIN lines. This amount is determined months before the start of a fiscal year. Therefore, moving all FTNTT faculty to PIN lines would increase SU's insurance costs significantly on a one-time basis. The administration is unsure how USM calculates these payments so it is possible these payments would decrease over time if SU had fewer employees in that system. If those lump sum payments would go down if we moved FTNTT faculty to PIN lines then this would partially offset the costs listed in our first priority above. The administration said they would look into it but we have not met again so we do not know if they were successful.
- We do not know how much our proposed model for overload and special session pay would cost as the administration is still trying to compile the data required to see how much it would have cost in the past.
- The administration asked us to see how other universities compensate Chairs and Directors. We have not received replies from all of the institutions we contacted and therefore we have not yet given those models to the administration for them to calculate how much they would cost.