SALARY EQUITY COMMITTEE
Campus Commons 2200
October 19, 2026 | 3:00-4:00 p.m.
M I N U T E S

Present: Brown, Elkins, Gregory, Hepperle, Kyle, Newman, Senbet, Shafie
Zoom: Hall
Absent: Lindillo, Manshad, McCamey

Call to Order 3:02pm
Approval of the Agenda approved without objection
Approval of October 5, 2026 Minutes approved without objection

Chair's Announcement – Senbet recently found out that administration is considering reducing the planned 3% increase to 1% in January as a cost-saving measure to address a $4 million budget deficit, with more information coming soon.

- Clarification is needed on how the increases will be distributed, whether it will be across the board or parity.
- It was shared that the BOT supports using reserves and operating at a deficit to address long-term financial needs, with pressure to demonstrate progress.
- There is a potential compromise of a 3% increase in July.
    - This approach would align with classified employee compensation.
- There were concerns about the impact of healthcare cost increases with insurance premiums expected to increase by 5.9%.
- Once the 1% increase is confirmed, a recommendation on how to allocate the funds will need to be determined.
    - Updated employee data will be needed to account for departures and new hires when developing the allocation recommendation.

Unfinished Business
Faculty Salary Benchmark: Doc All vs. Updated Peer Group

- It was clarified that the CPI measures inflation and price changes in the Denver metro area, not cost of living (COL), where the BEA uses a different measure.
- The 2021 peer-group analysis cost $4,500. Hepperle has approval to request a quote from NCHEMS for an updated analysis and expects to reach out this week.
- Two options were discussed: return to the available Doctoral All (DOC-ALL) peer group or develop an updated custom peer group through NCHEMS.
- DOC-ALL is free and readily available but may include institutions that are not sufficiently comparable to UNC.
    - Although data will be comparable the parity percentage and benchmark will most likely drop.
- As for a peer group, members shared that it establishes a benchmark, and reaching 100% of the median was identified as one potential rationale for having a custom group.

- It was noted that peer groups serve purposes beyond salary comparisons and that a group of more comparable institutions would be valuable. At UNC, they have primarily been used for salary comparisons.
    - Brown is optimistic about the NCHEMS data and has located all but one data point so far.
    - Members agreed on the potential use of a custom peer group for other institutional purposes and recommended exploring its broader applications.
- Members noted that UNC is in an unusual period and finding an accurate peer group is a genuine challenge, which is why DOC-ALL may be the best option if the group will be used only for salary comparisons.
- Members recommended that the administration make the final decision on whether to develop a custom peer group and determine the associated cost. Otherwise, using DOC-ALL since it is free may be the best option.
- Members asked how using NCHEMS data versus DOC-ALL would affect staff.
    - Operationally, the process would remain the same, with users selecting a different option from a dropdown menu. The change would not necessarily produce different data points.
    - Staff positions require further analysis because job titles and responsibilities are not consistently defined across institutions. Faculty positions are generally more straightforward to compare.
- The timing of the decision needs to be prioritized.
- Members asked whether the Hanover report would be used.
    - The Hanover report provided information about COL adjustments and that Gregory will need some time exploring to determine its potential applications.
- Participants noted that relying on DOC-ALL could dilute the data, leaving the group with the same underlying concerns about the usefulness of the benchmarks.
- The committee will return to this topic at the next meeting.

New Business

Full Professor Comprehensive Review Stipend: Initial Eligibility Structure

- Discuss two approaches for first-round eligibility:
    - **Current-review-schedule approach:** eligibility follows the existing comprehensive-review schedule; voluntary or early reviews would not accelerate stipend eligibility.
    - **YIR-phased approach:** initial eligibility is phased by years in rank, with earlier eligibility for longer-serving Full Professors; once a faculty member's eligibility date is reached, eligibility remains open until a satisfactory comprehensive review results in the stipend.
- The possibility of establishing a Distinguished Professor rank was raised last year, but discussion has not progressed because this rank would involve a highly selective and rigorous process.
- A $3,000 stipend was considered for faculty who successfully complete a comprehensive review with a full report. Based on a model from Metro, the previous administration reduced the amount from the initial proposal and incorporates figures from the model.
    - The stipend would be a promotional payment, typically funded separately from regular compensation.
- Members noted that the stipend could be implemented without changing the existing evaluation timeline, but a provision would be needed to address comprehensive reviews requested outside the regular schedule.
- A couple ways this can be implemented include,
    - Maintain the current schedule, with implementation in January 2028, potentially delaying the stipend for up to four years.
    - Implement a phased-in approach.

- Under either approach, recipients of the initial stipend would establish a new five-year stipend cycle.

Comments to the Good of the Order
Adjournment 4:00pm