

To: Executive Vice President and Provost Ed Ray
From: Marilyn Blackwell, Chair Faculty Council
Date: March 23, 2002
Re: Compensation Guidelines

At your invitation, I am herewith providing you feedback on the document "Fiscal Year 2003 Budget Process Guidance." I have asked the members of Faculty Cabinet to forward to me their concerns that in turn they might be forwarded to you. I have, of course, already registered some faculty perspectives during the meeting of the Competitive Compensation Oversight Group meeting on Friday, but shall include them here also for the sake of completeness.

B. (differentiations among departments). There is concern about differentiations between or among departments, specifically about what criteria will be brought to bear in making those differentiations. Faculty do not know what the relative merits of some departments vis á vis others are or, in most cases, how those determinations have been reached (the benchmarking project has not been announced by most deans). The language of the document gives deans discretion to reward or penalize individual TIUs while the guidelines neither gives an openly articulated reason for their doing so nor announces what the criteria for these evaluations are. Thus it is to be expected that many faculty will be quite distressed about this matter once the guidelines are implemented. It has also been pointed out that this policy contradicts the administration's (and the document's) commitment to merit-based pay since it establishes a policy whereby two faculty members, equally worthy and equally situated within their respective markets could be paid quite differently because they came from "differently worthy" departments. Is there a document summarizing the results of Larry Lewellen's benchmarking project and according to which, presumably, deans will establish what the "market" is for individual units. If so, would you be kind enough to share it with Faculty Council?

E. (performance is the primary determinant for pay decisions). The question arises as to how faculty are to be compensated for their non-raises last year. If they performed exceptionally well last year but only moderately well this year, how is last year's record going to be factored into this year's compensation? Unless deans are instructed to take last year's performance into account, the university will be virtually ignoring performance that it could not appropriately compensate.

E. (performing well @ 3.5%) As the bar got raised with the elimination (in the CCOG meeting on 3/15) of minimal compensation goals for faculty who are performing "satisfactorily," these compensation guidelines permit and tacitly encourage deans to ignore the legitimate salary expectations of all the rank-and-file faculty who may not be "excellent" but who nonetheless make this institution function, who teach often heavy coarse loads and teach them well, in essence who do most of the work as they find themselves becoming increasingly disenfranchised while the university values only its stars. In rejecting an across-the-board raise, the administration is, some fear, making a serious mistake with both ethical and political ramifications.

E. (notification in writing). One member is curious as to how faculty will know that they are to be notified in writing. All of which raises a larger issue, can you tell us where you intend to publish these guidelines so that faculty will be informed about them?

E. (raise cap) There is considerable concern about the 10% cap. Acknowledging that there may be inequities that need addressing, many faculty are of the view that this is not the year to make up the totality of those inequities, especially given last year's "non-raise" and its impact on faculty morale and institutional commitment and loyalty. A 7%-7.5% cap would in this view be much more appropriate. It

would encourage those who are well behind market and yet not give rise to the kind of deep dissatisfaction that occurs when the majority of faculty receive 2.5%-3% raises and others receive 10%.

Thank you for soliciting faculty feedback on this important issue. I'll look forward to hearing from you about some of these matters (for instance, how the guidelines will be distributed to faculty) whenever it is convenient for you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Blackwell
Chair, Faculty Council