

Faculty Caucus Minutes
October 12, 2005
(Approved)

Call to Order

Senator Crothers called the Faculty Caucus to order immediately following the Senate meeting.

Approval of Faculty Caucus Minutes of September 28, 2005

Motion: By Senator Fowles, seconded by Senator Borg, to approve the Faculty Caucus Minutes 9/28/05. The minutes were unanimously approved.

10.03.05.01 Faculty Compensation Adjustment (Provost Presley)

Provost Presley: We are asking for an endorsement of a special, one-time compensation adjustment program. That is not to indicate that this is the only time that it will ever happen, but we would assume that we would need to come back and ask for endorsement of a second or third, etc. iteration of this, which is outside the usual ASPT process. I think that the relevant issues are probably in the fourth and fifth paragraphs of the faculty compensation adjustment memo.

If you grant this endorsement, I will ask DFSCs and SFSCs to forward ranked names of faculty members who have demonstrated significant and consistent merit that may have been insufficiently rewarded in the last four years. Then CFSCs will be asked to map this information regarding merit onto an analysis of current compensation at ISU that will be provided to them. This analysis by rank and department will plot ISU's compensation as a percentage of the average at benchmark comparator institutions. It will also provide comparisons both within and among disciplines. Academic deans, in consultation with CFSCs, will formulate recommended adjustments for individual faculty members and will forward their recommendations to the Provost's Office.

A preliminary version of this analysis has been shared with the deans and Senator Crothers during the conversation from which this memo results. As the result of the salary incrementations of the last several years, full professors are at 90.3% of the peer group median, associate professors are at 95.1%, and assistant professors are at 99.1%, which probably reflects two things—that we pay market value the first year and then years two through five, those folks have tended to regress because of the salary incrementation programs here.

The data that we are looking at is from the College University Personnel Association, CUPA. It uses data from the annual faculty-salary study done by CUPA and it uses IBHE-approved CIP codes for programs in order to look at that CUPA data. We are still continuing to tweak this data because there are ways of coding CIP codes that make more sense than other ways. CIP codes can be used broadly or narrowly and we are trying to get the most accurate results possible. One thing that we are particularly concerned with is salary compression and salary inversion. Different analyses show different versions of that, but it is consistent enough that we know that it is an issue.

Senator Borg: What constitutes insufficient rewarding? Why are the CFSCs being asked to do the mapping and not the SFSCs and the DFSCs?

Provost Presley: To make this adjustment as effective as possible, it will have to be varied across the units within any college to match up with the fact that the variations from the mean, nationally, vary tremendously, discipline by discipline and rank by rank.

Senator Crothers: That was actually my specific idea because in certain colleges, there are departments and schools that are above peer group norms and others that aren't. The point of this is to address those kinds of imbalances.

Senator Borg: How will you determine insufficient rewards?

Senator Crothers: That seems a straight-forward matter. Having done annual evaluations, they will go back and read the letters and discuss whether some people have done better or worse than they should have.

Senator Borg: Since we eliminated the system of describing insufficient merit, that sort of descriptor is no longer part of the record. The colleges may not be able to provide as much information as most SFSCs and DFSCs, which would have greater institutional memory.

Senator Crothers: Our expectations were that most deans and most chairs could do this pretty intuitively. This was a way to expand maximum faculty participation in the decision making. You are right. In the end, it is going to be a judgment call. I don't know how you can get past that.

Senator Maroules: I am concerned about the scope of the analysis. What I am reading in the Provost's memo is that it is very targeted—that we are looking for the two or three highest ranked professors in a department. I would say that many more are deserving because they suffer from compression, which is more a junior faculty member problem.. What I worry about is that this is going to have a negative impact for those who are doing pretty well and deserve an adjustment, but who won't fit within the parameters for the amount of money that might be available.

Senator Crothers: This being aimed at the high performers is not necessarily the case. The judgment calls are being left in the hands of DFSCs and SFSCs specifically for that reason. It is aimed at those good-performing people who haven't been getting sufficient pay raises that a department might choose to award. As for the compression problem, you are right, that's not going to go away with the amount of money that we are talking about here, but there are cases of compression that are appropriate.

Senator Maroules: The compression problem is the worst in the assistant ranks. They are making about what the next incoming person with a brand-new Ph.D. is going to get. Yet, the comparative data suggests that, on the whole, our assistants don't have a problem.

Senator Crothers: I would agree with you and that is why a DFSC or an SFSC would make an argument to the college in specific cases.

Senator Alferink: There is nothing in this memo that talks about how large the fund will be for the salary adjustments.

Provost Presley: Let me deal a little bit with Senator Maroules' concerns. There is not a sense that we are looking to hand this to a small group of people. This is a morale issue; it's an average salary issue; it's a compression issue. It's complex and that is why we don't have the data in front of us. At the same time, I have had detailed conversations with the deans about this. The deans are the administrative link back to this process. They are adamant that we do want to raise average salaries. We do want to deal with unrecognized merit and compression. What we do not want to do is to spread it so thin or spread it to only a few people so that we erase the results of merit judgments made over the years. That is why that language is in there about the roles of the DFSCs and SFSCs.

To address Senator Alferink's concern is a bit difficult, but right now we are looking at a 1% increase of the

total aggregate salaries. We are talking about making that effective January 1, 2006. If we do this correctly, which I think is mapping it on to this analysis, we can make this have the effect of a 2% raise in individual cases.

Senator DeSantis: It seems when uncompensated merit is mentioned in the same breath as compression, merit becomes negated. In the phrasing of this document in the fifth paragraph, “rank names of faculty members who have demonstrated significant and consistent merit that may have been insufficiently rewarded in the last four years.” That paragraph has nothing to do with compression or inversion, is that correct?

Provost Presley: I don’t follow your argument because it is my impression that the two must be the same if you are taking merit into account. If you are talking about merit and compression, you have got to talk about them together or you are throwing out years of judgments by the DFSCs and SFSCs.

Senator DeSantis: Maybe I am not understanding what compression really means.

Senator Crothers: I think that there are two types of compression. There is the compression that is from relatively low-performing faculty who don’t get high-merit pay raise increases; that’s appropriate compression. The other kind of compression is where you have got people who are good-performing faculty, but because of the thin years, they haven’t gotten ahead of each incoming class and that is a different kind of problem.

Provost Presley: The 10% aggregate in usual years that is held in my office tends to get used for compression issues, critical issues for particular faculty members, that sort of thing, but it’s just not enough to deal with it. In fact, in some areas, we have more than compression, we have inversion. I think that the morale issue must be dealt with there. One of our goals is to raise the average salary. We could do that by giving all of this to just a few people, but the plan is to try to do several things at once and I think that that is what is confusing.

Senator Riegler: One of the problems is the large disparity in salaries by rank. This particular document is limited to looking at the last four years; that will not solve problems related to full professors, problems which are not related to compression but to institutional policies.

Provost Presley: In discussion with the deans, it is clear to us that the average issues differ across ranks. I think that with a multi-year project in which we make more of these kinds of adjustments, we can deal with all of these at the same time.

Senator Ellerton: Does this compensation plan only apply to those who have been here for at least four years?

Provost Presley: I would say up to four years, because no matter how long you have been here, your salary has suffered.

Senator Crothers: I would like to ask for a Sense of the Caucus Resolution to endorse the memo before you, along with the commentary provided by the Provost. I can assure you that, in my conversations with the President, the Provost’s comments are exactly in line with the President’s intentions as well. The Sense of the Caucus Resolution would simply read:

“We endorse the memo of October 3, 2005 from Provost Presley to the Faculty Caucus regarding the special, one-time compensation adjustment program.”

Motion: By Senator Borg, seconded by Senator Maroules, to endorse the Sense of the Caucus Resolution. The resolution was approved unanimously.

Executive Session:

09.13.05.02 Salary, Promotion and Tenure Review – FY06 (Provost Presley)

Senator Crothers: We will now go into executive session under Section 5ILCS 120/2 section c, 1 of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, which permits going into executive session when discussing matters of personnel. This is the annual meeting we have with the Provost regarding salary, promotion and tenure for the last fiscal year.

Motion: By Senator Borg, second by Senator Maroules, to move into executive session. The motion was unanimously approved.

The caucus concluded its discussion in executive session and returned to open session.

Adjournment