

**WINTHROP UNIVERSITY
FACULTY AND STAFF CLASSIFICATION AND PAY STUDY
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1) What is a pay study?

The pay study involved a review of all classified and unclassified position descriptions to determine a fair and competitive market salary point for each. This analysis was based on both a review of market survey data for comparable positions at other institutions and organizations (see # 7 below), and a review of internal relationships between jobs.

2) Why did Winthrop decide to conduct a faculty and staff pay study?

The compensation study allowed us to fairly evaluate our pay levels compared to relevant labor markets and create a plan that will allow us to make adjustments and improvements in the coming years with respect to both external and internal equity and the University's pay philosophy.

3) Who is conducting this study?

Segal Consulting conducted the study with the assistance of the Winthrop project team (led by Zan Jones in Human Resources, Employee Diversity, and Wellness) and the senior leadership team. Segal is a human resources consulting firm that is nationally recognized in higher education. The project team consisted of faculty and staff across various units on campus.

4) What is a "benchmark" job?

Benchmark jobs are those whose job duties are substantially comparable to positions found at other higher education institutions or other organizations. This allows us to compare the pay for a given job.

5) Does this study factor in non-salary benefits?

Not in a formal way, although non-salary benefits, such as retirement, health benefits, leave accruals, and others, play a role in the university's decision on how close to "market" we want to be with our base wages (85% to 110% of the market median).

6) Did the study include a review of temporary and/or adjunct faculty pay?

It did not. Temporary assignment pay for non-adjunct positions is reviewed by HR using as a baseline pay for similar duties in FTE positions. Academic Affairs determines pay for adjunct faculty based on a per credit hour rate according to the discipline and academic credentials of the employee.

7) To which businesses or universities did we compare our salaries during the pay study?

Winthrop University benchmarked faculty and staff salaries against the markets within which Winthrop competes for talent. The markets include national and regional public and private doctoral and master's institutions of similar size, local and regional higher education competitors, aspirational institutions, and national general industry organizations for jobs that exist outside of higher education.

Winthrop established three peer lists: one list includes a group of national peers; one includes a group of regional peers; and one is specific to athletics.

8) The higher education institutions listed in the national peer group are less familiar to me than those institutions listed in the regional peer group. Why would the national group be used at all?

These are institutions across the nation that are most like Winthrop. A national job search would likely be conducted for certain positions, including deans, faculty, directors, and positions that report directly to the President. For these positions, the institutions in the national peer group are those with which Winthrop is likely to compete. The national peer group comprises public doctoral and master's institutions whose indicators are comparable to ours in all seven of the following areas: total expenses; student retention rate; tuition and fees as a percentage of core revenue; total student headcount; number of regular staff employees; number of regular faculty; and graduation rate.

9) What is a pay philosophy?

A pay philosophy is a formal statement documenting the university's position on employee pay. It documents pay strategy and essentially explains the "why" behind faculty and staff pay structures. It also creates a foundation for consistency and supports the university's strategic plan, initiatives, goals, competitive outlook, operating objectives, and pay strategies.

10) What are pay administration guidelines?

The pay administration guidelines will serve as a framework for Winthrop's pay programs. The guidelines provide detailed information regarding Winthrop's commitment to establishing, implementing, and maintaining fair, competitive, and equitable pay for all employees.

11) Is the study complete?

The research and analysis portion of the study is complete. The implementation plan will begin in FY2022 and last 5 years.

12) What were the results of the study?

As expected, the study identified employee salaries that need to be adjusted to be more competitive with the market. Over a five-year period, the salaries of some employees will be adjusted to a more competitive level. Winthrop's administration and Board of Trustees allotted \$400,000 (including fringe benefit cost) in the FY 2021-2022 budget to address annual salaries that were identified in the study as needing the greatest adjustment. The study determined Winthrop would need to identify approximately \$2.5 million (or 6.2% of the total FY22 budgeted salaries) over the next five years to bring all employees (according to Year 1 data) to the minimum of the structure or minimum of the competitive market range for their positions.

13) What was the process for determining which employees received increases in Year 1?

The salaries of the employees with the largest gap to the minimum of the structure or the minimum of the market range for their positions were adjusted in Year 1.

14) Will everyone whose salary is found to be lower than minimum of the structure or a competitive market range receive a salary increase?

According to the current workforce and market data, the five-year plan assumes that the availability of approximately \$2.5 million will allow us to bring all employees to the minimum of the structure or the minimum of the competitive market range for their positions. Winthrop is committed to this implementation and will evaluate the funding needed based on information available, including updated market data, updated workforce data, and unforeseen changes that would affect the availability of funding. At the end of the five years, we will reassess the employee and market data available to determine the level of competitive pay and whether additional pay adjustment consideration is warranted.

15) How many employees received pay adjustments in Year 1?

The \$400,000 annual budgeted for pay adjustments associated with the classification and pay study for FY 2021-2022 was divided evenly between faculty and staff, resulting in pay adjustments for 34 faculty members and 37 staff members.

16) When and how will Winthrop determine whose salary will be adjusted in Year 2 and in subsequent years?

Our target date for Year 2 adjustments is October 1, 2022. The timing of the approval of the institutional budget for FY 22-23 will be crucial to meeting the target date.

Employees who will receive salary adjustments associated with the study in years 2 through 5 will depend on several factors:

- the funding available to make adjustments each year;
- the updated workforce data, to include any workforce changes that occurred during the year; and
- re-evaluation of employee salaries relative to updated market data (would include any employee salary updates associated with legislated increases that may occur).

As with Year 1, the salaries of employees with the largest gap to the minimum of the structure or the minimum of the market range for their positions will be adjusted in subsequent years.

Winthrop will not be able to inform current employees if they will receive salary adjustments associated with years 2 through 5 of the study until the data is refreshed at the beginning of each fiscal year.

17) How will I know where my individual pay falls within the pay structure?

Faculty and Unclassified - The pay administration guidelines include the target salary structure for faculty and unclassified staff employees.

Classified Staff – The State of South Carolina identifies and maintains the state pay bands for classified staff. This information is available in the pay administration guidelines. As a state agency, Winthrop must defer to the state pay structure for classified staff. However, because we recognize that the state pay bands are broad and the minimum of a band may not be competitive, we have, through the pay study, identified competitive market pay ranges for all classified positions based on job duties. These competitive market pay ranges will be reviewed in making determinations about pay rates for classified employees. In determining which staff were eligible for pay adjustments in Year 1 and in Years 2 through 5, competitive market pay amounts were and will be considered for classified staff rather than relying on the state pay band minimum.

18) Will I be informed of the competitive market pay range that was identified by the study for my individual position?

No, employees will not be provided with data at this granular level. While we are committed to providing employees with as much information as possible about the study, the outcomes, and the implementation of an action plan, the competitive market pay range is one data point used in determining individual employee pay. Other data points include internal equity (the pay of other similarly situated Winthrop employees), time in rank and salary tier (for faculty), and available funding. Obviously, the pay of other similarly situated employees is confidential information, and available funding can vary. Providing only one data point would be incomplete information and not within the realm of a best practice. Please see the pay administration guidelines regarding the process for determining market pay for individual positions.

The classification and pay band for classified staff members can be located on the employee's position description in PeopleAdmin. Unclassified staff can find their pay band and position by viewing Appendices D and E in the pay administration guidelines.

Questions Received Associated With The January 27, 2022 Town Hall

19) Could you explain why faculty members making the lowest salaries across campus were excluded from pay adjustments? These faculty members currently make salaries well below the minimum amount in their rank as listed in the "Faculty and Staff Pay Administration Guidelines" and in fact fall into salary classifications near the lowest tier of ranks below their positions.

Time in rank and gap to market were the primary factors used for allocating the first round of implementation adjustments. Given the parameters and available funding, not all faculty members currently below the minimum could be addressed in the first round of increases. Individual faculty members may be eligible for increases at different points in the multi-year implementation process, subject to annual refreshes of the analysis.

20) How is "time in rank" used to factor salary adjustments? If a faculty member faces compressed and inequitable salary at one rank, they would continue to be

compressed at every rank, when raises based on promotion are the same for all faculty members. "Time in rank" is mentioned in the FAQ as a data point that was used in the study, but it's only mentioned once and vaguely in the Pay Philosophy statement and in the "Faculty and Staff Pay Administration Guidelines." If this is a disqualifying factor for adjustment, more transparency about how this data point is used seems crucial.

Factors used for developing implementation scenarios are specific to implementation and strategically allocating available funds. Factors such as time in rank and distance from the market median are used to assess market gaps. Overall pay compression is outside the scope of implementation.

21) It has come to my attention that the study did not involve a look at salary disparities based on gender, which seems odd in today's climate. So many corporations are getting publicly called out right now on their pay gaps between male and female employees. I did see a recent gender breakdown of Winthrop salaries via the [Chronicle of Higher Education](#) that showed we do indeed have a considerable gender disparity in our salary breakdowns at Winthrop University. Much of the disparity seems to be a result of systemic gender representation between female-dominated arts fields and male-dominated science and business fields, but that doesn't make it right. Will this be addressed?

Pay equity explicitly from a gender/race/ethnicity standpoint was not in the scope of the study. However, the establishment of fair, consistent, and equitable pay programs and processes allow an institution to actively avoid bias. Pay equity studies, when conducted, are generally conducted after the establishment and implementation of the programs and processes and are complex in nature, taking into account multiple variables to determine if any systemic pay inequities exist and need to be addressed. The whole reason for the study was to ensure equitable compensation structures are in place to determine pay, thus eliminating the potential for bias in compensation decisions. We need to have the framework in place first, then can do analyses to see if we have any areas of concern.

22) Were any criteria *other* than the degree to which they are below the market midpoint (or even the minimum salary range listed) used to exclude faculty members from salary adjustments? If so, what were these criteria?

The primary factors used were time in rank and gap to market for initial adjustments. Other criteria used for all employees included:

- Staff employees must have completed their 1-year probationary period as of December 1, 2021
- Faculty must have been employed as of January 2, 2021 to be eligible
- Any employee who was under a formal performance improvement plan on December 1st, or any employee who had a formal disciplinary written warning or suspension during calendar year 2021 were not eligible.
- Employees who had announced resignation or retirement plans with an effective date what was within 90 days of the implementation date were not considered
- And employees in FTE grant positions were not included in the study.

23) After all pay adjustments are completed as part of this study, will there be a long-term plan for implementing regular position evaluations and/or adjustments due to inflation? I think we would benefit from knowing that pay and classification will be a continuous effort beyond the scope of this study.

As the market gaps explored during the process will likely continue to increase based on inflation, it will be important for the University to continue to look for ways to invest in employees through annual cost of living increases and, hopefully one day once the budget has stabilized, merit increases. While it is impossible to determine when budget stabilization might occur, leadership and the budget team will continue to work together on an annual basis to review the market gaps and available budget dollars to see where investments can possibly be made.

24) Is there an avenue for employees to dispute the proposed salary adjustment for their position?

It is important for employees to understand that the starting point for determining competitive salaries is the position description for staff, or the rank and discipline for faculty. For staff, positions were benchmarked based on job duties (not titles). The project team met with department heads to match jobs to the salary surveys (CUPA, CompAnalyst, and Willis Tower Watson) whose duties matched at least 70% of the duties and requirements of the survey job descriptions. Jobs were then priced accordingly. If a staff member has had significant changes to his/her job or disputes the accuracy of their current position description, the staff member should meet with the supervisor to make updates to the position description. HR will then review the updates to determine whether the changes affect the job classification and market data.

25) Was an employee's performance rating on the annual review considered when determining the employees who received the pay increase in December? If yes, how? Why did Winthrop choose to exclude merit pay in the Pay Administration Guidelines?

The sole purpose of the study was to bring employees as close to the minimum of the competitive market range or pay structure as possible given the funds approved in the current budget. Performance and merit were not addressed at this time because Winthrop simply does not have the financial resources that would be required to support merit or performance based increases.

26) Who is defined as a "Senior Administrator" on page 4 of the Pay Administration Guidelines? Meaning which people at Winthrop?

As we have seen over the past several years, the President may change the name and/or the makeup of the group he or she considers to be senior administrators. Generally, Senior Administrators are the Provost and Vice Presidents.

27) An employee's job description must always equal 100%. How do you ever show additional duties of 10%-50% if the total must still only equal 100%? By adding new duties you must decrease current duties by same percentage. This seems to be an unattainable goal? How were the salary increases compared to additional duties determined? A 15% increase for 50% additional duties doesn't seem to correlate equitably.

State regulations allow up to a 15% base pay increase for additional duties, which is the reason for the cap. The guidelines for determining the amount of increase associated with additional duties DOES NOT assume that the employee would be assigned the duties of another position without also adjusting the duties of the employee's current job. After adjusting the position description to include the additional duties, the duties will still add up to 100%. An employee is not expected to perform more than a full time job and should reasonably be able to do the job assigned within the regular workweek.

Additional duties base pay increases generally assume the additional duties are at a higher level than the current job, or would increase the scope of the current job to a level where additional pay is appropriate.

Due to the FY 2021-2022 and projected FY 2022-2023 budget cuts, Vice Presidents were instructed that an additional duties increase would only be considered if an employee is taking on new duties as a result of the department losing a position, which in turn resulted in a cost savings for the department. The guidelines provided are used to determine how much of an increase the employee should receive based on the assumption of duties previously assigned to the vacated position. For example, if a department eliminates a position and a current staff member takes on 20% of the vacated duties, the employee may be considered for a 5% additional duties increase to their base salary.

28) Will Vice Presidents be allowed to give input on who is selected in subsequent years for salary adjustments? For example, if there are two similar employees eligible, but only funds to give to one employee, the one who is the better performer would be the more strategic person to give the funding too, but someone looking at a spreadsheet would be unable to make this determination as they don't know the individuals.

If a situation similar to the one described in the question above occurred, the Vice President would be consulted for input.

29) What tools and resources will HR and Provost's Office be providing to help us make pay recommendations for faculty and staff (reference page 4 of the Pay Administration Guidelines)?

Academic Affairs will continue to use the posted faculty salary structure to provide hiring ranges to hiring managers. Inputs from the chairs and deans in each discipline are taken into consideration, and data will be updated on a regular schedule. Likewise, HR will follow the pay administration guidelines and will work with supervisors on pay actions as outlined in the guidelines.

30) When and how will faculty members be made aware of their potential for future salary adjustments throughout the years of potential adjustments? According to the FAQs, October 1, 2022 is the target for the next round of salary adjustments, but faculty members could be applying for promotion sooner than this. If "time in rank" is an excluding data point, faculty members will need to know this information ahead of time so that they can fairly consider whether they should postpone promotion applications. If the goal of the study and process continues to be transparency, faculty members will need advance notice of where they fall in the study and how they might be excluded, since important career decisions could be deeply affected.

First, time in rank is not an excluding data point. After the first-year recommendations were made, we studied the model to check for any faculty who had recently promoted and were thus near or below the minimum at the new rank and were not recommended for an adjustment as a result. We discovered that with five time-in-rank targets (minimum, $\frac{1}{4}$ mark, midpoint, $\frac{3}{4}$ mark, and maximum), we needed to make sure the target compensation at the higher rank was equal to or higher than the candidate's last target compensation at the lower rank (remembering that each promotion step up comes with a fixed salary increase). In other words, we will use the $\frac{1}{4}$ mark at the higher rank to identify the target compensation (rather than the minimum) to ensure we do not negatively impact faculty for promoting to a higher rank. For subsequent years, we will review updated compensation – including any promotion increases and/or general increases – and then compare all employee salaries against the model.

31) How will faculty members know that they will be included in future adjustments if they are currently below the lowest salary tier for their rank and discipline?

Faculty will be notified in the appropriate year when an adjustment is slated to their compensation. In looking at the salary structure, faculty should first consider where their discipline falls in the tiers, then look at the target salary for their time in rank in the appropriate tier. If the current salary is above the target salary, they should not expect an adjustment. Remembering that we had a fixed amount of money to allocate, we distributed it across all faculty identified with gaps across all five years based on the funding available. Most faculty receiving adjustments were at the $\frac{3}{4}$ mark for their rank, have taught at Winthrop for more than ten years, and the largest group (by number in rank) were full professors.

32) What should faculty members do who are significantly below the lowest salary tier for their rank and discipline category, yet did not receive any salary compensation in the first round of adjustments?

Faculty are always encouraged to have conversations with their chair and dean first, who will share questions and concerns with the Provost. These questions help us make sure the structure is working.

33) While it makes sense that an employee's individual cost of living/lifestyle should not determine pay, some of our employees' base pay is below the poverty level. Is any attention being given to a baseline living wage that would be a campus-side standard to make sure that people who work here can afford the basic costs of living?

We recognize this to be a concern. As part of the implementation, we did increase the starting salaries of some positions at the lower pay scale which impacted some current employees. This study did not include poverty level or living wage in setting pay structures.

34) Is there a plan to move more employees toward the midpoint of the pay range rather than just getting them above the minimum?

The overall goal is to move employees to a competitive pay amount as soon as possible. The goal in Year 1 was to move those farthest from the minimum of the pay range or pay structure closer to those marks.

35) Does getting a recent raise in pay through other modes (such as a promotion or legislated increases) disqualify your ability to receive a raise through this particular mode?

No, receiving a promotional or legislated salary increase does not disqualify anyone from consideration. When the data is refreshed to begin the determination for Year 2 adjustments, the employee's salary at that time will be reviewed based on the competitive pay at the time.

36) How can you justify internal equity within a pay band as a reason to deny pay raises when jobs that only require a high school diploma and jobs that require a bachelor/masters degree are in the same pay band?

Internal equity does not consider all positions within a pay band. To determine internal positions for comparison, factors considered can include, but may not be limited to, positions on campus with similar job duties, similar levels of responsibility, and others in the same state classification. Classified pay bands are very wide and the minimum qualifications of positions assigned to the bands can vary significantly. We understand that the State Human Resources Division (Department of Administration) will soon be conducting their own study that will include a review of the current State pay band and classification structure.