

FACULTY SENATE PROPOSAL

FSP 2003-04- 03R

I. Proposal Name: Establish a more equitable UCO “Years of Experience” Salary Policy by increasing cap levels for Full-time Faculty.

II. Stated Proposal: Extend UCO’s current “Years of Experience” caps policies and establish a salary policy in which cumulative annual salary increments will be closer to each faculty member’s total “Years of Experience.” Prioritize increasing Experience caps for Professors from 21 to 27 years. (Current top “Years of Experience” increment caps are: Instructor 8, Assistant Professor 10, Associate Professor 14, Professor 21 years).

III. Justification:

Justification for the Professor cap increase is based on the fact that those Professors eligible have not received equivalent Experience increments as other faculty have over the last 6 years. This cost conservative cap increase is further justified by data gathered that verifies that Professors have not received salary increases that keep up with national/regional trends, in part due to the fact that many Professors are not eligible for annual increments.

1. UCO’s annual “Experience” salary increments for all full-time faculty performing services consistent with UCO’s existing Performance Policies represents one of the most fundamental, equitable, and easily administrated merit salary recognitions with which to reward the continuous improvement of all UCO faculty, who are qualified by virtue of having fulfilled UCO’s Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review criteria.
2. UCO’s salary recognition for “Years of Experience” has been a central component and the stabilizing heart of the university’s Faculty Salary Schedule for over forty years. Such salary recognition attempts to equitably acknowledge the merit of education’s most important increment, the value of experience. Experience salary increments have, thereby, provided the university with an on-going sense of civility and community and eliminated the need for competitive salary review processes that can so easily alienate faculty from each other and the campus community to be served.
3. Unfortunately, UCO’s current experience caps policy inequitably divides faculty into two groups: (a) those faculty eligible for promotion to higher ranks, salary levels, and additional years for which they can receive “Experience” salary increments. (b) those faculty that have been promoted to the highest rank their Degree qualifications permit, and who, therefore, have no further promotion opportunities and become subject to “Experience” caps that leave them no further opportunity for additional “Experience” salary increments.
4. Current “Experience” caps policies restrict a more equitable system that recognizes each and every year of on-going experience, continuous improvement professional development, and meritorious service performed by faculty. In particular, the current caps policy inherently contradicts one fundamental goal of new UCO Tenure, Promotion, and Post-Tenure Review policies, which is to acknowledge that those promoted to Professor are UCO’s most qualified,

- successful, and dedicated faculty, yet increment caps for Professors make them ineligible to be rewarded with on-going annual “Experience” salary increments.
5. Professor “Experience” caps are further contradicted by UCO’s recent development of Post-Tenure Review processes, which should require on-going performance recognition. This inequity is further compounded by the fact that UCO’s salary scale for promotion to the rank of Professor is one of the lowest among the Institutional averages in the region.
 6. Extending “Experience” caps would, thereby, benefit all faculty and help begin improving one component of UCO’s status for Professor salary recognition among universities in the region. This will provide an initial step toward increasing senior faculty salaries to levels that would make UCO more successful and competitive in attracting and retaining well-qualified senior faculty.

IV. Budget Implications:

1. Costs for implementing this Proposal will only need to include full-time faculty already beyond or about to exceed their current “Years of Experience” salary increment caps at varied ranks.
2. Accomplishing the compensation of Professors beyond the current 21 year cap will be and should be the primary cost factor in implementing this Proposal and should, therefore, be the prioritized first phase of funding required. The increase of caps for Professors to 27 years. The estimated costs of increasing experience caps for Professors to 27 years would be \$95,000 per years, plus additional benefits.
3. The retirement of Professors having received increased years of salary increments, as a result of implementing this Proposal, will continually help offset the cost of those Professors that begin to exceed the current 21-year “Experience” cap.
4. Adoption of this Proposal should encourage retirement incentives, because senior faculty will be eligible for retirement income at salary levels more consistent with regional averages.

V. Submitted By:

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