# University Faculty Council (UFC)

# Motion to Recommend Faculty Equity Study

# for consideration at UFC meeting 12.1.21

## Rationale:

During the 2020-21 academic year, the administration tasked the UFAC with studying UMW’s plan for an externally contracted faculty equity study. After initial consideration of the proposal, the UFAC asked for a pause in the process to give them time to make recommendations for a study that would fully reflect *best practices*, based on current standards in higher education.

At the October 20, 2021, meeting of the UFC, members of the UFAC presented findings and recommendations in support of contracting an appropriately experienced consulting firm to conduct such as study. The UFAC report further recommended that such a study should follow principles of statistical rigor, thereby allowing disaggregation of ‘expected’ versus ‘unexplained’ differences that could identify patterns by race, ethnicity, or gender, for example. Additional recommendations include outcomes such as rates of advancement, faculty retention, and special assignment or paid leadership opportunities, including in administration. Finally, comparison with peer institutions and examination of the impact of the 2016 salary adjustment were recommended.

The UFAC report is attached as Appendix A, which includes links to the *Inside Higher Education* reporting of the AAUP faculty equity study and two institutional reports: a scholarly review of the literature on faculty equity from the University of Texas, and the University of Oregon’s Faculty Equity Study report.

## Motion:

Whereas, the UMW Administration, in 2020-2021, has committed to moving forward with an externally contracted faculty equity study;

*Whereas*,the UMW UFAC has considered both the current higher education context of U.S. faculty compensation standards, including standards for equity studies;

*Whereas*, UMW faculty (via UFC) have made formal commitments to ensuring diversity and inclusion for faculty and in support of our students and staff (see 2020 UFC resolution in support of the Black Lives Matter movement); and

*Whereas*, the UMW Administration and Board of Visitors formally committed to ASPIRE community values, in addition to repeatedly committing to a diverse and inclusive university environment;

*Therefore,* the UFC—in consultation with the UFAC and UBAC (report attached as Appendix B)—recommends that the UMW President and Provost convene an advisory equity study group, comprised of a limited number of tenured faculty from a diversity of disciplines and knowledgeable about equity in higher education;

*Further,* the UFC—following recommendation by the UBAC—asks the UMW President and Provost to consult with the USC and consider the feasibility of incorporating staff equity as part of one comprehensive study;

*Moreover,* we recommend that the President and Provost, in consultation with the advisory equity study group, initiate the process of entering contractual negotiations with reputable consulting firms with the intention of conducting such a Faculty Equity Study, so that full consideration of cost and scope of such a study can be better understood as we move forward.

# Appendix A:

UFAC Suggestions for Salary Equity study

10/13/21

1. A contracted third party should be able to provide a comprehensive and meaningful statistical analysis (not simply a base pay analysis as previously suggested)

A comprehensive statistical analysis is required to account for outliers and to identify longer trends, providing a holistic picture of how inequity is defined and located. At a very minimum, this should include a regression analysis to determine whether specific groups of people have systematically lower (or higher) salaries than a baseline reference group. This same analysis can also be used to determine which individuals have salaries that are “very unusual” within the different groups described by a common discipline and rank, etc. These individuals, commonly referred to as “outliers,” may have unexpectedly high salaries, or unexpectedly low salaries, compared to the average for other people in the same discipline and rank, etc.

2. Study of trends

Salary inequity is linked to a variety of factors beyond initial entry level offers and so a study must also look at institutional trends, which reinforces the importance of regression analysis.

Regression analysis permits the observed variations in salaries across people to be decomposed into components, so expected differences can be accounted for, and “unexplained” differences can be more easily identified. For example, given that salaries are expected to vary systematically by discipline and rank, regression analysis allows the analyst to control these expected differences across groups of faculty so that it is easier to look for “unexplained” differences.

The analysis process first controls for those factors that can be incorporated into the model and that are expected to impact salary, such as discipline, rank, department, etc., and then, additionally, analyzes the effects of indicators for gender or race/ethnicity. If these additional indicators are found to have systemic effects on average salaries among those finer groupings of employees, this evidence would suggest there may be systemic differences in salaries, solely due to gender or race/ethnic group, that show up on average, across all disciplines and ranks.

3. Rates of advancement

An equity study ought to also consider rates of advancement from the point of hire which includes the number of leadership positions (with monetary compensation) made available and when, for how long, and who makes the decision

This is a unique problem on UMW campus and a larger analysis of who occupies leadership positions--specifically, as an avenue for salary advancement--ought to be considered (including chairs, associate deans, college deans, associate provosts, provosts, and contracted stipend \*special leadership positions)

4. Retention trends and its effects on salary trends

It is believed that department turnover, specifically among women and POC, has been a long-term problem at UMW. The study should determine if this is true; and if so, document what departments see the most turnover and what impact this has made on salaries.

5. 2016 Salary adjustment deficit

Faculty hired during 2015-2016 academic year and after may be at a salary disadvantage due to the market study and adjustment only offered to employees who had been at UMW for more than a year, which possibly created a salary gap from 2016 forward. On the other hand, UMW hires at market rates each year which often results in newer faculty being paid more than faculty who have been employed for some time (salary compression). The study should evaluate if there is inequity in either direction for faculty at the same ranks in the same disciplines who were hired at different times.

6. Comparisons to peer institutions

The third party we select to complete the equity study should have experience in analyzing and helping an institution understand how it compares to its peers in terms of equity, to include tenure and promotion, institutional advancement, and overall salary equity after considering experience, rank, and salary compression. This can also help us develop a benchmark for how we might improve our institutional equity. When ranking institutions in Virginia in terms of salary equity by gender, UMW is ranked relatively low compared to other institutions (23 of 32 for full professors, 11 of 32 for associate professors, and 26 of 32 for assistant professors) (see https://www.insidehighered.com/aaup-compensation-survey/state/virginia-1508?institution-name=&professor-category=1601&order=field\_salary\_equality&sort=asc) We are interested to know why this is the case and what we can do better.

\*\*NB: Recommendations/language come from several publicly available studies:

https://www.utsystem.edu/sites/default/files/offices/strategic-initiatives/Faculty%20Salary%20Literature%20Review\_July2015.pdf

<https://provost.uoregon.edu/faculty-salary-equity-study-recommendations-provost>

# Appendix B:

University Budget Advisory Committee (UBAC) Report

on University Faculty Council (UFC) Motion to Recommend Faculty Equity Study

As requested by Kristin Marsh, Chair of UFC, UBAC considered the working draft of a motion to recommend a faculty equity study, meant for potential consideration at the 12/1/2021 UFC meeting. UBAC met to discuss the motion on 11/1/2021, and the minutes of that meeting will be posted shortly at

<https://ufc.umw.edu/committees/university-budget-advisory-committee/minutes-reports-of-budget-advisory-committee/>

In particular, Dr. Marsh asked UBAC to tap into our knowledge of the University budget and faculty perspective on budgetary priorities and to report on whether we endorsed a UFC motion to recommend a faculty equity study.

Before UBAC met, we communicated with Paul Messplay to learn about any allocation of funds for this study already in the budget. Paul Messplay reported that “There were some funds set aside in last year’s budget, but … the cost of the study will [likely] exceed what we’ve already set aside.” He also said that “there are [some] limited resources available to be used at the President’s discretion for one-time expenditures such as this.”

In addition, UMW’s 2022-24 State Budget Requests, which are pending approval by the Secretary of Education, ask for state funds both to provide funding to support faculty and staff diversity and to enhance UMW’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Those budget requests include $75,000 each year for the next six-years to support faculty and staff diversity in response to “equity and market studies for both faculty and staff. Once complete, the University will need to be in a position to respond to the results, make competitive offers, and address inequities as well as accumulated salary compression and inversion.” In addition, $580,000 was requested to enhance UMW’s Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion “to address a number of critical needs, including securing personnel to support the successful implementation of the inclusive excellence framework and the resources to provide the education, training, programming, and assessment necessary to move the University forward.”

In short, funding for the study is already available, although it will be President Paino’s decision as to whether the amount of the funding can be stretched to the full vision of the proposed study, and state funding is being sought for implementation.

While UBAC recognized the importance of a faculty concern passed along by Dr. Marsh that spending money on the study without money in hand for implementing its results could mean that the study would go out of date before action could be taken, it also decided that without such a study, there would be no impetus for identifying the scope of the problem or making it a budget priority.

UBAC also discussed the possibility of including staff in the study. Equity is an important issue for staff as well as for faculty, and doing one study for both faculty and staff seems more cost effective than doing two separate studies. UBAC recommends that the UFC approach the USC to ask whether it would support including staff in the study.

Although we do not yet know the full cost of the study or whether the University would be able to act on the results, given the importance of equity and inclusion and recognizing that a study is critical to addressing those matters, **UBAC endorses a UFC motion to recommend a faculty equity study.**