



*protecting academic quality*

21 May 2009

Dear Full-Time UVM Faculty,

Welcome to the summer, which we hope is off to a good start for you. Soon, you will be receiving a letter detailing your salary for this coming fiscal year. The contract allocates 5% percent of the salary pool to raises this year: 3% percent to across-the-board (which everyone gets), 1% percent to performance (allocated by Deans in consultation with Chairs), and 1% percent to market/compression. United Academic's salary committee allocates market/compression funds, with the approval of UA's Executive Council. We have completed this year's market adjustment analysis and forwarded numbers to the administration. Most faculty will receive some market adjustment this next year. We wanted you to know about the process and its outcomes.

Briefly, market adjustments are allocated according to how far faculty fall behind national averages for their rank and discipline. If the average salary of faculty of your rank in your department (after adjusting for years in rank) is further below national averages, you will receive a larger adjustment; if the average salary is closer to or above national averages, you will receive less of an adjustment or none. The maximum adjustment allowed by the contract is \$2500.

### **Our Approach to Market and Compression**

The union has long sought to bring each rank and department up to national averages. To do this, we need to compare our salaries to national salaries by salary and rank. Since this process began in the first contract, UVM salaries have been compared to the salaries in a national database compiled at Oklahoma State University (OSU), supplemented by comparable national data for library and extension faculty. We have used the OSU database simply because it is the largest database that has salary information broken down by discipline and rank (including lecturers), not because it is the most representative of what UVM salaries should be. It does not include private universities, for example, and includes many schools that are not our competitors.

Thanks to the work of the union, our salaries have been creeping up towards OSU averages; we're not there yet, but closer. However, we feel that "average" salaries are not the appropriate salary target for an institution such as UVM, which competes with many private universities for students and faculty; hence, we set the target for where we want to be slightly above 100% of the OSU survey average salaries.

## **Compression and Inversion**

Identifying compression precisely and fairly is difficult. In many cases, differences within departments and ranks reflect such factors as subdisciplinary differences, years of experience in other institutions, or differential performance. In previous years, marked compression in salaries occurred due to changes in minimum salaries and promotion increases, and a portion of the market-compression salary pool was allocated to alleviating this policy-induced compression. In many cases, correcting compression was not possible due to the cap on maximum salary increases, and past compression was carried over into future fiscal years. As the salary structure increasingly reflects the rationality and principles promoted by United Academics, it becomes harder to identify structural compression, and for FY10 the market adjustment committee allocated 92% of its 1% pool to market adjustments, with the remaining 8% directed to meeting carried-over compression from previous years.

## **Outcomes**

About 500 faculty, or 85 percent of those in the bargaining unit, will receive some market and/or compression adjustment this next year. The adjustments are spread among all ranks and among all units. In percentage terms, the average adjustment is .9% of an individual's salary, and the highest adjustment is 4.4 percent. The EC decided to give some priority to overcoming past compression, so we met 100 percent of the compression gap for continuing faculty, up to the \$2500 cap. We also met 12% percent of the market gap.

Please feel free to contact Jenn Strickler ([jennifer.strickler@uvm.edu](mailto:jennifer.strickler@uvm.edu)), the head of the UA Salary Committee, if you would like more detailed information or have questions or concerns. And have a great summer!

Sincerely,

The UA Salary Committee and Executive Council

P.S. For more details about how the market/compression numbers are determined, see: [http://www.unitedacademics.org/market\\_adjustment\\_faq.html](http://www.unitedacademics.org/market_adjustment_faq.html)