

2007-2008 Group on Faculty Affairs
AAMC Listserve Queries & Responses

Query: Salary Question

Question from Paula Trief, SUNY Upstate (triefp@upstate.edu):

One of my faculty posed the following question:

"Are there any standards that you are aware of (guidelines, tips, etc..) either at our institution, or nationally about structuring salary packages when you bring in new "entry-level" faculty to an established department? I remember the consternation when 2 new, fresh out of residency faculty were brought into the department of medicine at levels above the existing faculty. (And that is even before we address the specialist vs. generalist piece.) Are there guidelines or position statements (or anything?) about how to handle balancing the need to recruit, and help pay entering faculty until their practice/income/referral pattern becomes established, without alienating the faculty who are already here?"

I have heard this complaint many times, both here and at other institutions. Has anyone been able to address it and develop guidelines?

Responses:

From Kevin Grigsby, Penn State (rgrigsby@hsc.psu.edu):

This was a problem at Penn State COM a few years ago. We now benchmark all salaries (current and new) annually to make sure we maintain salary parity. Offer letters are reviewed to be certain the benchmarks are maintained when making offers. It has been tremendously helpful.

From Susan Scott, University of New Mexico (sscott@salud.unm.edu):

We follow a similar path as Penn State. We require an equity grid for each new hire. This is generated when the request to post a position. The departments are asked to compare the proposed salary to AAMC numbers and to clarify/justify how this compares to others within the group by rank. It often allows us to adjust salaries for those who are already on faculty.

We also review most departmental salary distributions every year using the AAMC numbers.

From Lisa Sutton, Brody School of Medicine (suttonli@ecu.edu):

At the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University, we follow a similar process listed below in that we consult the AAMC (All Schools and Southern Region) in addition to comparing the salaries to other faculty in the department at the same rank. We typically hire at the median of the AAMC specialty but junior faculty may be hired at slightly less. Of course, supply and demand factor into this as well.