

The Evergreen State College

Exempt Staff Compensation Plan

Procedures

August 2008

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I. Philosophy

The Evergreen Exempt Staff Compensation Plan is market-based and will compensate each position on the basis of the position's level of responsibility and accountability. The plan will establish pay rates in a fair and objective manner and promote employee recruitment and retention to support Evergreen's mission.

The underlying values of the Evergreen Exempt Staff Compensation Plan include:

- Internal equity
- External equity
- Transparency
- Fiscal responsibility
- Timeliness

II. Program Goals

The long-range pay level goal for exempt staff positions is the 60th percentile (based on market). The interim goals are to raise exempt pay levels to at least the 45th percentile for in the 2008-09 academic year and then to move exempt pay to the 50th percentile or midpoint of the market as soon as financially feasible. The intent is to attempt to reach the 60th percentile goal by 2014. Average exempt staff pay at the initiation of this plan (August 2008) is at the 47th percentile.

III. Plan Summary

The Exempt Staff Compensation Plan is designed to provide a market-based compensation approach that is fair, objective and consistent. The plan creates a framework for market comparison and valuation of exempt positions at The Evergreen State College. Job comparisons are based on scope and level of job responsibility, supervision, accountability and professional capability requirements. Exempt positions are placed into one of 15 salary levels/ranges based on these compensation factors and market comparisons.

IV. Procedure/Authority for Increasing Exempt Staff Pay Beyond the 50th Percentile

This policy allows vice presidents to increase individual exempt staff pay within the assigned salary level up to the 65th percentile of the salary level range for additional duties, retention and/or equity reasons, after consultation with the associate vice president of Human Resource Services (AVPHRS). Individual salary increases within a salary level may not be authorized whenever they cause internal inequity. The basic standard for internal equity will be the Equal Pay Act which requires equal pay for equal work. The Equal Pay Act applies four factors to the measure of pay equity:

- Responsibility
- Skill
- Effort-mental and /or physical
- Working Conditions

If the proposed position salary increase exceeds the 65th percentile and is based upon retention, evidence of a competitive offer to the incumbent, or evidence of at least three comparable job opportunities with salaries equal to or greater than that which is proposed, evidence of these circumstances must be provided in lieu of the supporting information noted below. Human Resource Services will review the request based on the documentation provided and confer with the appropriate divisional vice president regarding the increase request. The increase must not adversely impact internal equity. The president will approve any salary increases above the 65th percentile.

V. Guidelines for Assigning Exempt Professional Staff Titles

In order to provide consistency in the use of exempt professional and administrative position titles these guidelines are established by Human Resource Services as a framework for the assignment of titles to exempt staff positions. Exempt position titles that fall within these guidelines, and that have been approved by the appropriate vice president, will be routinely accepted by Human Resource Services staff. Titles that fall outside these guidelines require the written approval of the AVPHRS and the appropriate divisional vice president.

There are five categories of administrative titles: Executive Officers, Directors, Administrative Managers, Professionals and Support Professionals.

Executive Officers

The provost, vice presidents, associate vice presidents and deans have primary responsibility for a major division and/or highly critical and specialized functional area of the college. These titles may only be authorized by the president and are normally only given to members of the most senior level exempt managerial staff positions in the college. These positions develop and direct divisional and organizational programs and policies. They act independently to direct and control programs impacting the total organization and more than one functional area. Positions at this level:

- Manage a division and/or department with organization-wide impact.
- Are responsible for employment and termination decisions (hiring, promotions, salary increases, termination, performance reviews). Associate vice presidents and deans may only recommend terminations.
- Make decisions that affect more than one division and the entire college.
- Are accountable for budget planning and controlling expenditures.

Directors

Directors have primary responsibility and accountability for directing management of a major and critical administrative unit with college-wide impact. These positions direct very complex programs that cut across functional areas. They act independently to direct and control resources and operations for a major functional area/activity. Directors typically supervise other professional staff and hold accountability for independent decisions on programs, resources and service. Programs and positions managed have college-wide impact. Positions at this level:

- Manage operations of a major function, unit, department or program(s) with college-wide impact.
- Are responsible for employment decisions (e.g. hiring, promotions, salary increases, discipline, performance reviews). Directors may recommend terminations.

Administrative Managers

Associate directors, assistant directors and managers have the primary responsibility for managing either the operational aspects of a specific function and/or program within a major administrative unit. Administrative managers typically supervise other professional staff and hold accountability for independent decisions on programs, resources and service. These positions have responsibility for programs and services impacting major aspects of the college mission. They supervise, negotiate, consult and instruct others. Managers at this level:

- Oversee administrative operations for a unit, program(s), or project(s).
- Provide input on employment and termination decisions (hiring, promotions, salary increases, discipline, termination, performance reviews). Administrative managers conduct performance reviews and may discipline staff.

Professionals

Academic advisors, research associates, career counselors, mental health therapist coaches, human resource representatives, major gift officers and business analysts are examples of positions that have primary responsibility for providing direct professional services to prospective students, students, staff, faculty and alumni to sustain and support specific college programs and functions within Advancement, Finance and Administration, Student Affairs and/or Academics. These professionals may negotiate, persuade, consult, treat and/or instruct others. They may also supervise and instruct lower level professional staff, support staff and student employees.

Support Professionals

These positions include administrative support staff for vice presidents and/or directors. These professionals may negotiate, persuade, consult, instruct and/or supervise student and lower level clerical staff.

VI. Procedures for Determining Compensation of New Exempt Employees

Starting (hiring) pay offers may be made up to the midpoint of a salary level/range when the new hire will not receive a pay rate above current staff holding the same position and salary level. Under certain circumstances, a divisional vice president may authorize a new hire pay rate above the salary level midpoint after consultation with the AVPHRS. These circumstances include:

- a. Competitive Market Conditions – Current labor market competition for qualified candidates has established a competitive pay level that is above the starting pay level for the exempt position salary level assignment set by the Evergreen Exempt Staff Compensation Plan.
- b. Availability of Qualified Candidates – The recruitment process has continually failed to produce a pool of qualified candidates for the appointing authority.
- c. Exceptional/Specialized Candidate Qualification – The candidate possesses job-related skills and an ability that substantially exceeds the desired qualifications and/or is uniquely relevant to the specific position being filled and significantly enhances the candidate’s ability to perform the full responsibilities of the job.
- d. The candidate is a former permanent employee and is being rehired into the same position and salary level within one year of leaving.
- e. The candidate is currently employed in the same, or substantially similar, position classification with another Washington State agency or institution of higher education.

The AVPHRS will review proposals to increase a salary above the midpoint of a salary level to ensure maintenance of internal and external (market-based) equity. The AVPHRS will consult with the appropriate divisional vice president whenever a salary increase proposal may impact pay equity.

VII. Procedure for Reviewing Requests to Change Exempt Staff Salary Level and/or Title

An exempt employee or his/her manager can request a change of salary and/or title for the employee’s position. To initiate the process, the individual or manager must complete and submit a Salary Level Review Request Form (with the required supporting materials – noted below) to the appropriate divisional vice president for review. If the vice president approves the request, he/she will forward it to the AVPHRS for review. If the AVPHRS also approves, the change will be implemented. If the vice president does not approve the request, it will not move forward to Human Resources.

Position/Title/Grade Reviews

An exempt employee, supervisor, director or dean within the division may initiate a position review by completing and submitting a Salary Level Review Request Form, along with the supporting materials noted below, to the appropriate divisional vice president. A divisional vice president or the provost can also initiate a review. Requests to review an exempt staff position for changes in responsibilities, title and/or salary should be based on:

- changes in the scope and level of the position’s duties and responsibilities; and/or
- reorganization; and/or
- increased level of accountability and functioning; and/or
- salary/title relationships are out of alignment.

If a request is approved (or initiated) by the divisional vice president, it is then forwarded to Human Resource Services. The Salary Level Review Request Form must be signed by the employee’s supervisor; the director or dean; and the divisional vice president before it is submitted to Human Resource Services.

The AVPHRS or a designee will review the form, supporting materials and accompanying position description to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act for essential functions; exemption from civil service; and exemption from the Fair Labor Standards Act. He or she; will then conduct the market pricing and job content evaluation of the position description. This review must be completed and approved by the AVPHRS before an assignment of the position to a new salary level and salary within the Exempt Staff Compensation Plan will be authorized.

Title Adjustment Procedure

A change in title may be initiated by a letter from the supervisor, or appropriate dean/ director to the provost or divisional vice president. The provost or divisional vice president may also initiate a title change request. If approved in writing by the provost or divisional vice president, the request letter will be forwarded to Human Resource Services. Human Resource Services will review the request for title change for consistency with Exempt Staff Compensation Plan guideline provisions on title assignment. A title change without a salary increase may be approved by Human Resource Services whenever the change is consistent with the title change guidelines.

Position Salary Level Adjustment Procedure – Supporting Information

Requests for changes in salary level must be accompanied by the following supporting information:

- Salary Level Review Request Form
- statement of the increase desired, both old salary and new
- statement of the rationale for the increase
- specific effective date for the increase and a rationale for same
- copy of the former job description and the proposed new job description

The following items may be obtained from Human Resource Services:

- an organization report showing higher, lower and equal positions, the names of their incumbents and their salaries;
- a listing of comparable positions in the college, in the same pay range, with names and salaries;
- a listing of comparable positions and their market pay range in the local/regional area.

Notification of Decisions

The AVPHRS will make a recommendation for approval or denial of a request for change in salary, grade or title based on the criteria noted and supporting information. If approved, the AVPHRS will notify the divisional vice president, supervisor and/or manager of the approval. When the divisional vice president and AVPHRS disagree on the outcome of a request, the request will then be presented to the vice presidents for discussion and final determination.

Implementation of Changes in Title, Grade or Salary

When a change in salary, grade or title is approved, the appropriate dean or director will complete a Personnel Action Form, have it reviewed and approved by the division budget coordinator and vice president, and then forward it to Human Resource Services for implementation.