

**The Evergreen State College**  
**Exempt Staff Compensation Plan**  
**Procedures**  
**July 2016**

**Table of Contents:**

- I. Philosophy Statement**
- II. Program Goals**
- III. Plan Summary**
- IV. New Hires – Procedures for Determining Compensation**
- V. Current Employees – Procedure for Increasing Pay Beyond the 50<sup>th</sup> Percentile of Assigned Salary Level**
- VI. Assigning Exempt Staff Titles - Guidelines**
- VII. Adjustment to Salary Level and/or Change of Position Title – Procedures**

**I. Philosophy Statement**

In order to fulfill its mission, The Evergreen State College will maintain an exempt staff compensation program directed toward attracting and retaining a qualified and diverse workforce within the boundaries of financial feasibility. Exempt employee compensation, including benefits, will be competitive and internally equitable, and reflect the following values and intentions:

- Average salaries will be targeted at the median salary level of employees in comparable positions in appropriately selected labor markets.
- Individual salaries may exceed the median of the particular labor market in order to respond to exceptional recruitment and retention needs.
- Within the parameters of discipline and function, employees will be paid similarly for similar work.
- Managers and employees will have access to job descriptions, pay guidelines and salary ranges.
- Compensation will be flexible in order to support a diverse organization to accommodate differences and changes in job requirements, job market and economy.
- Salaries for new employees will be established at levels that recognize the individual's skills and experience while considering the salary levels of current employees within the same job title.
- The College will review the exempt compensation plan on a periodic basis. The information drawn from these reviews will support the College's efforts to obtain appropriate salary funding from the state legislature.
- As funding permits, salary increases shall focus on maintaining market alignment and supporting internal equity.

## **II. Program Goals**

The interim goal is to raise exempt pay levels to as close to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile (based on market) as possible. The long-range pay goal is to move all exempt position pay to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or midpoint/median of the market as soon as financially feasible.

## **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 but not limited to: scope and level of job responsibility, impact on college operations, interpersonal skills and breadth of interactions, supervisory functions/responsibilities, accountability and professional knowledge/capability requirements. Exempt positions are placed into one of fifteen (15) salary levels/ranges based on these compensation factors and market comparisons.

## **IV. New Hires - Procedures for Determining Compensation**

The starting (hiring) pay offer may be made up to the midpoint of a salary level 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 or chief 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 pay offer proposals that are 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 or chief whenever a salary increase proposal may impact internal pay equity. The president will approve any pay offer above the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile.

## V. **Current Exempt Staff - Procedure/Authority for Increasing Pay Beyond the 50<sup>th</sup> Percentile of Assigned Salary Level**

Vice presidents and chiefs may increase individual exempt staff pay within the assigned salary level up to the 65th percentile of the salary level range for higher level 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, proof of these circumstances must be provided to Human Resource Services. Human Resource Services will review the request based on the documentation provided and confer with the appropriate divisional vice president or chief regarding the increase request. The increase must not adversely impact internal pay equity. The president will approve any salary increases above the 65<sup>th</sup> percentile.

## VI. **Assigning Exempt Staff Titles - Guidelines**

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

There are five (5) categories of exempt staff position titles:

### **Executive Officers**

The provost, vice presidents, chiefs, vice provost, associate/associate vice provosts, associate/assistant 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 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 organizational impact.
- Are responsible for employment decisions (hiring, promotions, salary increases, termination, performance reviews).

- The vice presidents and chiefs are responsible for termination decisions. The associate vice presidents and deans may 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, associate deans, assistant deans, 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, Communications, 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/or student employees.

### **Support Professionals**

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

## **VII. Adjustment to Salary Level and/or Change of Position Title – Procedures**

An exempt employee or his/her manager may request a change of salary level and/or position title in accordance with the procedures below.

Requests to review an exempt staff position for changes in responsibilities, title and/or salary level should be based on:

- changes in the level of 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.

### **Title Review - Procedure**

When the request is for a change in position title only, the request may be initiated by a letter or email communication from the supervisor, or appropriate dean/ director to the divisional vice president or chief. The divisional vice president or chief may also initiate a title change request. If approved, in writing, by the divisional vice president or chief, 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.

When the request is for both a position title change and a salary level review, the request must be submitted in accordance with the Position Salary Level Adjustment Procedure as outline below.

### **Position Salary Level Adjustment Procedure**

An exempt employee, supervisor, director or dean may initiate a salary level review by completing and submitting a Salary Level Review Request Form, along with the supporting materials noted below, to the appropriate divisional vice president or chief. A divisional vice president or chief may also initiate a review. If the is also for a position title review, such request must also be indicated on the Salary Level Review Request Form. The Salary Level Review Request Form must be signed by the employee's supervisor; the director or dean; and the divisional vice president or chief before it is submitted to Human Resource Services.

If the provost, vice president or chief does not approve the request, it will not move forward to Human Resources. If the provost, vice president or chief approves the request, s/he will forward the request to the AVPHRS for review.

The AVPHRS or a designee will review the form, supporting materials and accompanying position description to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) for essential functions; exemption from civil service; and exemption from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The AVPHRS 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 and implemented.

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

- a Salary Level Review Request Form
- a statement of the increase desired, both old salary and new
- a statement of the rationale for the increase
- a specific effective date for the increase and a rationale for same
- a copy of the former job description and the 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 or title based on the criteria noted and supporting information. If approved, the AVPHRS will notify the divisional vice president, chief, supervisor and/or manager of the approval.

When the divisional vice president or chief and AVPHRS disagree on the outcome of a review request, the request will then be presented by the requesting vice president or chief to the other vice presidents and chiefs for discussion and final determination. Should the vice presidents chiefs not agree, the President will make the final determination. The requesting vice president or chief will notify the AVPHRS of the final determination if it results in a salary and/or title change.

### **Implementation of Changes in Title, Grade or Salary**

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