

Frequently Asked Questions  
Exempt Compensation July 2016

**Q. Will I get a raise in July 2016 based on the recent exempt compensation study and under the revised Exempt Staff Compensation Plan?**

A. Yes. Every exempt employee will receive a salary increase this year.

**Q. How much of a raise will I receive and when?**

A. All exempt staff, both represented and non-represented, will receive a 1.8 percent salary increase effective July 1, 2016.

**Q. Will I receive any other salary increase beyond 1.8 percent on July 1, 2016?**

A. It depends on where your position's current salary is in comparison to available market data. In addition, it depends on whether you hold a represented or non-represented position.

A non-represented exempt staff employee whose current salary is below the market median for their position will receive an additional increase to move them closer to the median. In addition, in specific cases, a person's salary increase may exceed the median of the labor market in order to respond to internal alignment and salary compression issues, and/or exceptional recruitment and retention needs.

Any additional compensation for represented exempt staff beyond 1.8% is unknown at this time. The College will be engaging in discussions with the Student Support Services Staff Union regarding compensation for represented members of their bargaining unit.

**Q. Why isn't the College just moving all exempt staff immediately up to the market median on July 1, 2016?**

A. As much as we would like to, given the limited financial resources available, we cannot place all exempt staff at the market median. The priority is to bring represented and non-represented exempt staff who are furthest below the market median closer to the median.

**Q. Will my salary be decreased or frozen if I am currently compensated above the market median for my position?**

A. No exempt staff employee salaries will be decreased or frozen on July 1, 2017 as a result of the recent exempt compensation study.

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**Q. How will I know what my salary increase amount will be on July 1, 2016?**

A. Each employee will receive a statement reflecting the employee's salary increase for their position effective July 1, 2016. This written summary will show, at minimum, the 1.8 percent increase and, where applicable, any additional increase to move the employee's position closer to the median of the market.

**Q. What are the underlying values of the new Exempt Staff Compensation Plan?**

A. The 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 staff employee compensation, including benefits, will be competitive and internally equitable.

**Q. What sources did the College use to establish market data for each position?**

A. In 2014, the College engaged outside counsel to examine external position-matching and a range of market data sources. In an effort to find the best comparisons, the following sources were used:

- **CUPA (College and University Professional Association) – Professionals in Higher Education 2014-2015 (Master's Degree institutions)**
- **CUPA (College and University Professional Association) – Administrators in Higher Education 2014-2015 (Master's Degree institutions)**
- **Economic Research Institute (ERI) Salary Assessor 2014**
- **Milliman Northwest Management & Professional Salary Survey 2013**
- **Milliman Washington Public Employers Survey 2013**
- **State of Washington's non-represented jobs**

**Q. Why did the College choose these sources?**

A. These surveys prove a wide range of relevant

The CUPA HR surveys allow us to select regional and national peer master's-degree level institutions in the public sector for individual job pricing and determination of competitive salary range for exempt administrative and professional positions.

ERI's Salary Assessor provides compensation data (mean, median, percentiles) for both base pay and incentives for more than 6200 position titles. Data is reported by location, industry and size.

The Milliman surveys provides data on up to approximately 219 positions with information provided by 31 Washington public sector employers and 214 major employers within Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

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The State of Washington's non-represented jobs were assessed for comparability to our exempt staff positions. This effort provided additional comparison information from comparable public sector employees and data for salary compression and internal alignment issues.

**Q. What was the College's general approach to determining the market value of a position?**

- A. The valuation/placement process involved matching existing exempt staff position descriptions to jobs in available salary surveys to establish market value. Other factors, included peer equity, compression, vice presidents' and chiefs' knowledge of the job, and consultation with directors.

**Q. How were positions without market salary data assigned to a salary level?**

- A. The vice presidents, chief of staff, and chief communications officer continued to use the existing "compensable factors" for position that did not have a market salary match. The Evergreen compensable factors are:

**Scope of Responsibility** – appraises the position's breadth and depth of either administrative or managerial influence;

**Supervision**– appraises the number (head count & FTE) and responsibility level of the positions;

**Accountability** – appraises the position's accountability for the allocation of resources and program results;

**Communication Skills** – appraises the position's requirement for proficiency in interpersonal, oral and written skills;

**Professional Capability Requirements** – appraises minimum Knowledge, Skill and Ability (KSA's); education; experience; and training necessary to perform the job.

**Creative Professional Performance** – focusing on the primary duties of the position, appraises the position's involvement with work activities requiring problem solving, invention, imagination, originality or talent in a recognized professional field.

**Q. What if I believe that my position was not placed on the appropriate salary scale or at the right level on the scale?**

If you are a non-represented exempt staff member and you feel that your July 1, 2016 salary placement does not accurately reflect your position and work, you may submit a written request to your divisional vice president, chief of staff, or chief communications officer requesting a review of your position's salary placement. The written request must be received by August 8, 2016, and include, at minimum, a statement of:

- The salary level you believe is accurate for your position; and
- The reason(s) or rationale for the desired salary.

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The College will be engaging in discussions with the Student Support Services Staff Union regarding salary increases for represented exempt staff.

**Q. What happens after the July 1, 2016 salary increase? Are any other salary increases planned at this time?**

A. It is the College's hope and desire, within the boundaries of financial feasibility, to reach the median for all exempt employees by 2020. As such, the College plans to 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 for represented and non-represent exempt staff.

**Q. As a manager, what if I directly supervise a classified employee whose base salary is the same or higher than mine?**

A. This is called "compression." If compression existed, the vice president, chief of staff, or chief communications officer provided an additional increase to create a gap between the manager's salary and the salary of their highest paid classified direct report. If you believe that this condition still exists after your July 1 increase, please contact your vice president, the chief of staff or the chief communications officer as appropriate.

**Q. Does that mean that all managers should be making more than the highest paid classified staff employees anywhere in the college?**

A. No. The compression factor is considered only in relation to direct reports for a particular manager (since market compensation varies between fields, and recruitment and retention are specific to a particular field).

**Q. What role does an employee's length of service with the College play in the exempt compensation plan?**

A. The exempt compensation plan is based on the value of the position in the marketplace and the person's ability to fulfill the role, not length of service. There may be differences in placement within a specific band based on skills and years of experience (with an implied difference in mastery of the position), but not strictly based on time served. In many instances a person is considered to be fully productive in their position within a given number of years. Service beyond that level of full productivity doesn't necessarily change the value of the position in the marketplace. For example, a person with five years of experience in the role and a person with eight years of experience in the role may both be fully productive and therefore paid similarly.