

## MEMORANDUM

To: RIT faculty and staff  
From: Bill Destler, President  
Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Subject: Faculty compensation  
Date: 10 March 2011  
Version: 1.5  
Cc: All deans, chairs, directors

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**Context and purpose:** RIT has built a substantial portion of its reputation by its focus on serving the student, and it is through the efforts of our faculty and staff that RIT achieves a tangible degree of student success. While RIT offers a wide array of benefits, few, if any, are more important than compensation as a reflection of the institution's commitment to recognize and reward our employees.

For this reason, RIT has maintained a long-standing commitment to competitive salaries for faculty and staff. Throughout the years we have used a set of peer institutions to guide salary decisions towards a goal of achieving RIT faculty salaries that match the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile salary for faculty across the peer institutions. We have established similar goals for both exempt and non-exempt staff using the market band framework to guide our progress. For a variety of reasons, this effort has achieved mixed results and the reality is that faculty salaries have experienced erosion in comparison to the market.

Because there are substantial differences as to how faculty and staff salaries are managed, this memorandum specifically addresses faculty compensation. However, it must be preeminently understood that it does not reflect that RIT considers staff compensation to be a lesser priority. Indeed, senior management recognizes the need to monitor and address staffing market position as well and we are committed to providing a more comprehensive assessment of the staff market position in the coming year. We also recognize that there are pockets of concern and that on a limited basis there may be specific staff functions that need to be addressed. Vice presidents and the Human Resource managers will identify and address these concerns as appropriate.

The purpose of this memorandum is to clarify and re-establish RIT's commitment to competitive faculty salaries. The result of such clarification should be to not only insure our budgetary priorities support this commitment but also to make sure that our processes for awarding salary increments are effective and based on fundamental principles. Progress to these goals will take time. But we want to emphasize the commitment of the entire leadership team to addressing the compensation needs of all faculty and staff groups as aggressively as we can.

**Assumptions and principles:**

1. RIT will maintain an official list of peer institutions for the purposes of benchmarking faculty and staff salaries. The Senior Vice Presidents of RIT shall recommend this list to the President and the Board of Trustees for approval after appropriate vetting with the key constituent groups.
2. RIT strives to competitively compensate faculty by making material progress towards the goal that, on average, full-time salaries will match the average salary for the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of the average salaries from the RIT approved list of peer institutions. The tenured / tenure-track faculty group and the non-tenure faculty group will be handled separately but the processes and principles for both will be similar.
3. On the basis of the RIT compensation goal listed above, the campus will set aside an appropriate amount of salary increment monies prior to the budget cycle, with the approval of the President.
4. It is important to understand that in the course of working towards this goal there will be discrepancies at the progress towards the goal across the various ranks of assistant, associate and full professors.
5. Where possible, salary variances by disciplines will also be considered but only against the official list of peer institutions. At any given time, the average salary of a faculty member from a particular college (e.g., science) at RIT may have a large variance from the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of the average salaries from the corresponding colleges (e.g., science) of the official peer list. In such cases, the campus may elect to distribute salary increment monies in a differential manner across the various RIT colleges. However, no other list of institutions besides the official list of peer institutions will be used for allocating increment monies from the campus to the colleges.
6. In all cases, regular salary increments will be made on the basis of merit and performance.
7. Every year the campus will set aside an appropriate amount of salary monies to address issues such as salary compression, longevity, and equity. The Provost, in consultation with the deans and Academic Senate, will establish a fair, open and transparent process for the distribution of these funds.

**Processes and implementation:**

1. Beginning in fall 2011, the Office of Institutional Research will conduct a salary survey of the peer institutions on the official list of peer institutions. On the basis of this survey and the goals mentioned above, the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration will present recommendations to the President for a percentage of salary increment for the upcoming fiscal year. This recommendation will occur prior to the traditional budget presentations. Final decisions will not be made until the RIT Board of Trustees approves the RIT budget.
2. On the basis of the available salary monies, the Provost, in consultation with the council of deans, will make allocations of the pool by college. In some cases, the Provost may elect to distribute salary increment monies in a differential manner across the various RIT colleges to accommodate for large variances as noted above. However, no other list of institutions besides the official list of peer institutions will be used for allocating increment monies from the campus to the colleges.
3. The deans will oversee the process by which the pool allocated to the college is distributed to the faculty. Deans are instructed to award fairly and consistently using the

- performance evaluations of the faculty. The deans are given the latitude to distribute monies across various ranks. After the distribution decisions have been completed but before the end of the academic year, each dean will generate a report on the distribution that contains information about how much was distributed by rank and number of faculty at each rank. The report will be directed to the Provost and will be shared with all faculty in the respective college.
4. After the regular salary increment process is complete, the Provost will oversee a separate process for distributing the campus set-aside for compression, equity, and longevity issues. The Provost will consult with the deans and Academic Senate on establishing this process.
  5. After receiving the report from each dean but before the end of the fiscal year, the Provost will compile an institutional report on salary increment allocations that will be available for the RIT community.

RIT is an outstanding institution, and it is that way because of so many people who have devoted their considerable talents to it. We recognize that you are as committed to this institution as we are, and we thank you for all you do.