

# Pay Inequities Addressed by Panel

## Senior Faculty Salaries Suffer Most When Compared with Peers

Brett M. Rhyne, *Perspective editor*

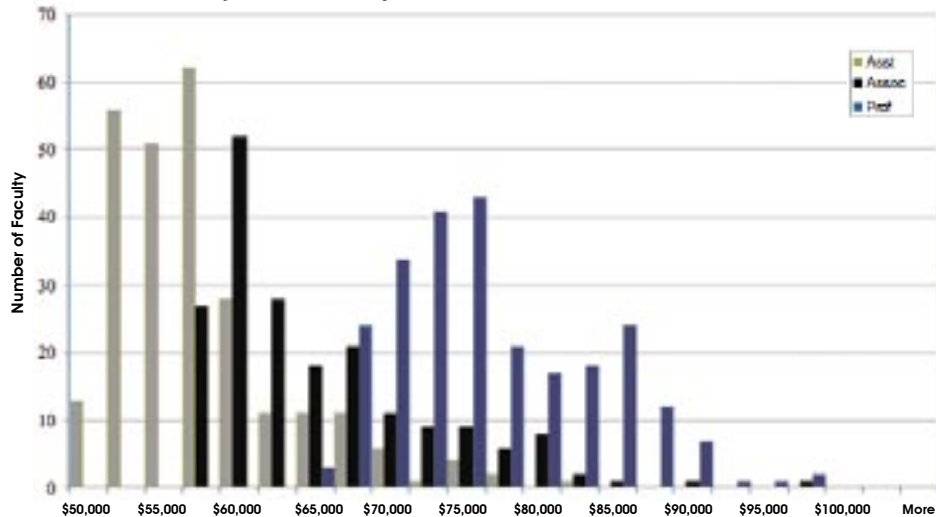
In 2004, two studies—one commissioned by MSCA and one undertaken by the Council of Presidents—determined that state college faculty at the senior ranks and with extensive service suffered the most in comparison to the salaries earned by peers at the same rank and with comparable service and credentials.

The MSCA study, conducted by JBL Associates of Bethesda, Md., compared state college faculty salaries to those of faculty at peer institutions as defined by the Board of Higher Education. The 2004 Council of Presidents Salary Study, compared full-time state college faculty salaries to those of faculty at public, unionized Masters I institutions nationwide.

Both studies found two major issues affecting state college faculty: salary inversion and salary compression.

**Salary inversion** is the condition in which a faculty member who has less relevant service or who holds a lower academic rank is earning a higher salary than a faculty member who has more relevant service and/or who holds a higher academic rank. **Salary compression** is the condition in which the range of salaries among full-time faculty at the same academic rank does not

Projected Salary Distribution on June 30, 2007



(included September 1, 2006 Minimum Salary adjustments, excludes PTR Alternative One, 2006 Promotions and Terminal Degree adjustments)

vary appropriately in relation to years of relevant service, experience and/or possession of a terminal degree.

Anecdotal evidence reported by MSCA suggests that the skewed salary structure of state college librarians echoes that of faculty.

The most serious salary inversion problems exist at Bridgewater, Salem and Worcester State Colleges, where, as the number of years of relevant service increases, faculty salaries fall closer to the minimum salary formula. At the remaining six institutions, the number of years of relevant service has no effect on faculty salaries when compared to the minimum salary formula, creating salary compression.

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During negotiations for the current contract, MSCA and management agreed to form a joint committee to make recommendations to address these salary issues. Committee members from MSCA comprised President **Patricia Markunas**, Vice President **Christopher "C.J." O'Donnell**, Salem chapter former President **Paul McGee** and MTA consultant **Donna Sirutis**; COP members comprised **David Caruso**, **Frederick Clark**, **Peter Martel**, **Mark Peters** and **Nicholas Wojtowicz**.

### Recommendations

The committee recommended that conditions of inversion and compression internal to the bargaining unit be addressed by making significant changes to the minimum salary formula, with particular attention given to the weighting of factors for members at the upper academic ranks. The committee recommended a goal of increasing the median salaries for state college faculty at the upper academic ranks to bring them more in line with the median faculty salaries at peer institutions.

Specific recommendations included:

- Since salary compression is most serious at the upper two academic ranks and since salaries at those ranks also suffer most in external comparison, the minimum salary formula should be adjusted in three ways: to substantially increase the value given to academic rank for associate and full professors; to assign different values to years of teaching and relevant professional experience based on academic rank, with the highest value given to full professors and the lowest value given to instructors; and to increase the value of the terminal degree.
- The current minimum salary formula assigns less value to relevant professional experience than to full-time teaching, having a negative effect on salaries in professional disciplines such as business and nursing; the minimum salary formula should value relevant professional experience and full-time teaching equally.
- Since it is not yet possible to know the impact of the recently-implemented post-tenure review process on salary inversion and compression, salary adjustments associated with PTR should be set aside until after PTR has been fully implemented in AY 2008-09. At that time, information about PTR's impact on salaries, as well as a new external comparative salary study, should be collected and incorporated into adjustments to the salary structure.
- The minimum salary formula for librarians should incorporate all the recommended changes for faculty members.
- The union and management should address issues of salary inversion and compression during the negotiation of the 2007-2010 agreement and apply for the necessary funding to implement the negotiated salary adjustments.

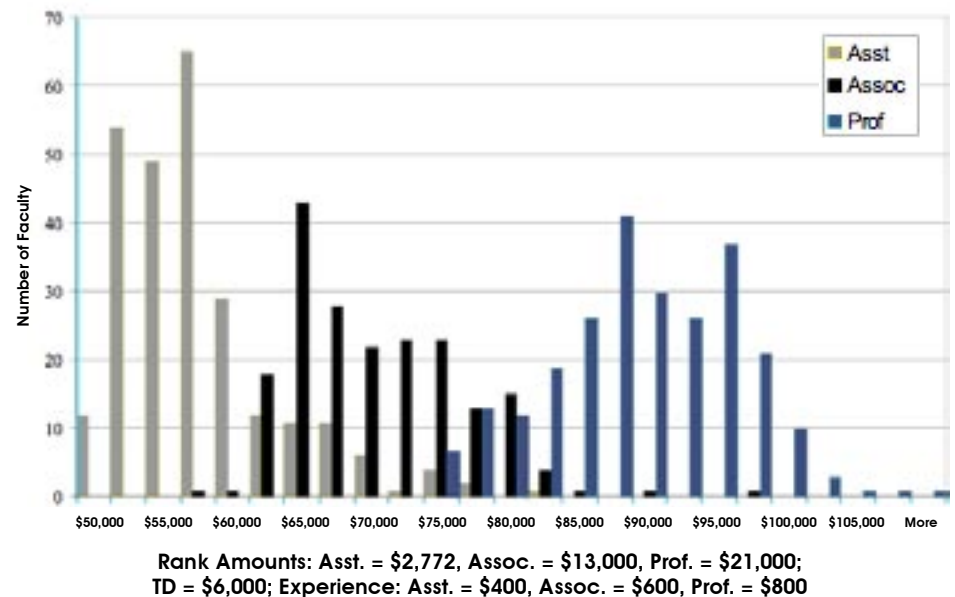
In order to address internal salary inversion and compression, the committee proposed three models of changes in the minimum salary formula. The chosen models resulted in median state college faculty salaries by academic rank that are closest to the external faculty median salaries documented in the COP study. Models 19, 20 and 26 are reprinted on this page.

In all three models, the values assigned to the upper two academic ranks are increased, the value assigned to the terminal degree is increased, the value assigned to the assistant professor rank is decreased, and the values assigned to teaching and professional experience are equalized and graduated by rank.

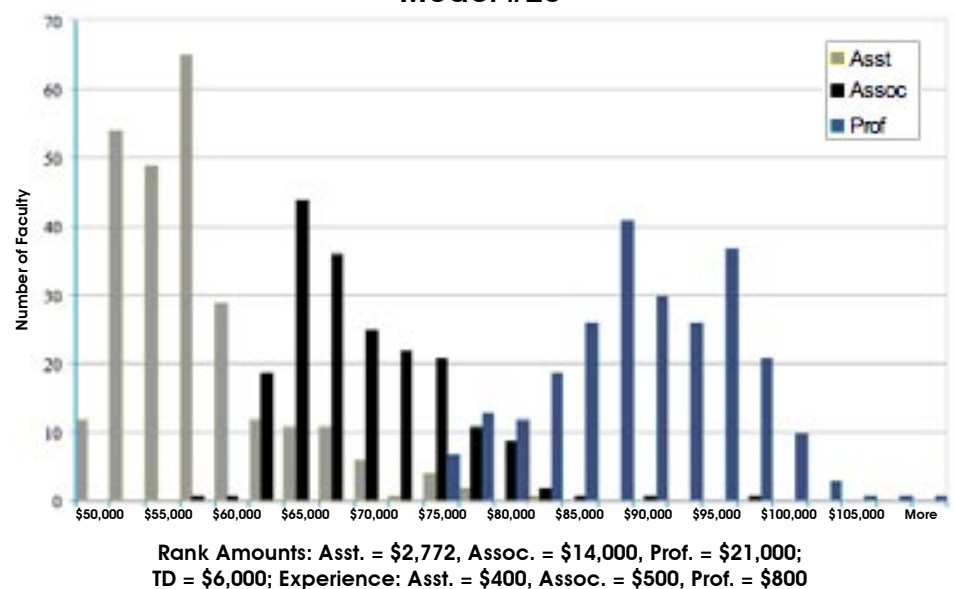
The committee agreed to update the 2004 COP Faculty Salary Study to determine what progress had been made toward increasing state college faculty salaries when compared to those at peer institutions nationwide. The updated report is in progress and should be completed this semester.

The full joint committee report and all appendixes are available at [mscaunion.org/salarystudy](http://mscaunion.org/salarystudy).

Model #19



Model #20



Model #26

