




# University of Pittsburgh

*Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor*

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Patricia E. Beeson  
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**TO:** Deans and Regional Campus Presidents  
**FROM:** Patricia E. Beeson   
**DATE:** November 16, 2016  
**SUBJECT:** Annual Reviews of Faculty and Related Salary Decisions

Faculty evaluations are among the most important responsibilities of chairs, deans, and campus presidents. They provide feedback that helps shape and enhance a faculty member's career and alert a faculty member to concerns. Given their importance, we have the responsibility to provide annual reviews that are constructive, fair, and transparent and to apply associated salary adjustments in a similarly fair and responsible manner.

Current guidance for annual reviews of faculty is provided in the attached 1999 memo from then-Provost Maher. Every year, each dean and campus president has been asked to affirm that these reviews are taking place, and a random sample of these is reviewed annually and feedback provided. The annual reviews have become stronger through these interactions.

Currently, deans and campus presidents have broad authority regarding review of faculty and associated salary adjustments. With this authority also comes the responsibility to be fair and transparent, to provide protections for the faculty, and to be accountable for decisions taken. To this end, I am establishing guidelines intended to provide transparency and oversight on the salary decisions in cases where, in your best judgement, the result of the evaluation of a tenured faculty member is to reduce their salary. Specifically, this memo sets limits and defines the conditions that must be in place before a dean or campus president can reduce the base contract salary (salary less any administrative supplement or other add-ons) of a tenured member of the faculty.

As background, this guidance is in response to a resolution and recommendations from the Faculty Assembly and the Senate's Tenure and Academic Freedom Committee (TAFC), which grew out of considerable discussion within the Faculty Assembly and Senate regarding salary reductions, primarily in the School of Medicine. (It is worth noting that since 2008, fewer than 2% of the tenured faculty have received salary reductions, and almost all of those were for faculty members in the School of Medicine where tenured faculty members are typically on 12-month contracts with an expectation that a significant portion of their salary will be covered by grants and contracts.) In response to a Senate request, I convened an ad hoc committee to review the Senate report and make recommendations. Their report was shared with the TAFC and with the Council of Deans for discussion and comment.

The following guidelines regarding salary reductions for tenured faculty members grew out of these discussions:

1. Prior to receiving a salary reduction, the faculty member must receive written warning and a zero salary increase as part of the prior annual review.
2. Faculty members who receive a warning as part of their review must have had an opportunity to address concerns raised in that annual review through an agreed upon plan.
3. Individual salary reductions cannot exceed 20% in a given year.
4. The faculty member must have an opportunity to appeal a salary reduction through a clearly defined, school/campus-level procedure that includes review by a faculty appeals panel on which at least half the membership is either elected to the panel or elected to a school/campus governance committee.
5. Salary reductions can be appealed to the provost if there is disagreement between the school/campus-level committee and the dean/campus president, or if the cumulative impact of salary reductions exceeds 33% of the highest base salary received by the faculty member while employed at the University.

The current moratorium on salary reductions will remain in place for individual schools and campuses unless a plan approved by my office is in place. The guidelines above provide baseline protections for faculty that must be preserved. In evaluating plans, I will consider things such as the standard length of faculty contracts (e.g. 12-month vs 8-month), the portion of base salary typically covered by grants and contracts in that school, and other such factors. Given these differences, I urge you to consult with my office before developing a plan.

To provide ongoing oversight, I also ask that an annual report be submitted to my office documenting any salary reductions that have occurred during that fiscal year. As salary reductions may raise legal concerns that can be mitigated or avoided, I urge you to consult with the Office of General Counsel before finalizing any such reductions.