

Faculty Senate: Report on Compensation

10/5/15

In the September 9, 2015, Laramie County Community College Board of Trustees meeting President Dr. Joe Schaffer requested more information from the Trustees regarding compensation policy, including:

- Where in the market should we be?
- What do we want to reward, e.g., longevity, excellence, etc.
- What role should benefits play?
- Should the focus be on base or non-base building incentives?

Currently, raises are based on longevity and cost-of-living adjustments, he said.

The Trustees discussed at length several questions related to compensation, including:

- What should fall under policy and what under procedure?
- Should LCCC aspire to be an employer of choice?
- What should be rewarded, e.g., merit, longevity?

Faculty Senate Views on Compensation

LCCC Board of Trustees Chair Ed Mosher asked Faculty Senate and other groups to provide compensation policy recommendations. The report that follows focuses on faculty compensation.

Philosophy of Compensation

Several senators reviewed the current policies on Classification and Compensation (Policy 4400) as well as other related policies. Policy 4400 provides eight pages of detailed information. If the Board is seeking a philosophy of compensation, with the details reserved for procedures, the senators suggest including:

- LCCC values its employees who sustain and ultimately determine the success of this institution's mission, strategic goals, education purpose, and public outreach.
- LCCC should aspire to be an employer of choice, based on (1) faculty salaries that are competitive with salaries at local high schools and above the 50th percentile of the community colleges in Wyoming, (2) active appreciation of the faculty, (3) encouragement of educational and personal growth, and (4) remuneration of initiative.
- LCCC will offer a compensation package designed to both attract and retain highly qualified and competent employees.
- LCCC will always strive to hire permanent employees over temporary and part-time employees when possible to better ensure employee investment in the mission, goals, students, and community.

Faculty Senate asks that the new policy provide strong guidelines to aid the administration's development of procedures, and that the Board of Trustees and the administration engage all employees of the College in meaningful discussions over an appropriate period of time before finalizing the compensation policy and procedures.

Faculty Comments/Questions for the Board's Consideration

- Compensation that is based on longevity implies that longevity is rewarded with pay raises; the current step model appears to address this, but in reality, this has not occurred for a number of years.
- A large percentage of highly experienced faculty have left the College recently. Certainly, we lost some due to retirement, some early. However, many are leaving due to stress from overwork, burial in paperwork, and most importantly, the overwhelming feeling that the administration does not value their experience and contributions. No attempts were made to retain all this talent and experience, which indicates a lack of interest in retaining experienced employees.
- Paying new faculty more than current faculty (based on education and years of experience) is unfair and will increase the exodus of experienced faculty from LCCC.

- Compensation should be based on a combination of longevity and performance.
- Career and technical fields with terminal degrees are limited to the first category of pay and cannot advance as their programs do not provide bachelor's or master's degrees.
- As the base salary for new LCCC faculty with a master's degree is \$41,000, the second lowest in the state, there is no way LCCC can become an employer of choice without making funding for salaries a priority.
- Current adjunct pay is offensively low, especially considering the limited number of hours they are allowed to teach. This leads to a low adjunct pool, adjuncts that have lower qualifications, are more temporary, and have less of a commitment to LCCC, its mission and goals, its students, and this community.
- Longevity should be rewarded. It takes time to build up programs, scholastically important activities (e.g., clubs, internships), and the community connections that allow our programs and students to be successful. This can only happen effectively if we are able to retain faculty who can mentor and support new faculty and maintain some institutional memory. This means that faculty salaries need to be adjusted competitively over the time they are at LCCC.
- Allowances should be considered to include increases in salaries of longtime employees if over their time at LCCC they have contributed positively to filling more senior roles and mentoring other faculty.
- While working in higher education is usually not a 9-5 job, it is important that the institution stay in touch with and recognize the time of its employees and the fact that they have and need to have other commitments in their life outside of their job. That employees need to have time for lives outside of work to keep them excited and productive employees.
- It has become the expectation at this institution that “if you care about ____ then you will find time to do ____.” This is a dangerous and undermining expectation. It is dangerous because this expectation can be easily abused and leads to overstretched employees, inability of employees to do their jobs well, and causes employees to seek employment at institutions that are respectful of the other demands on employees' lives. It undermines by insinuating that employees are not doing enough and that they do not care about their jobs, therefore corroding their sense of being valued by the institution.
- While the phrase “other duties at supervisor's discretion” is a way to accommodate ever-changing and unforeseen needs, this also can be abused. LCCC should better reward extra duties assigned to employees if this will be a burden above and beyond reasonable demands on employee time.

As the representative body of the faculty, Faculty Senate hopes to continue to participate and contribute to a robust discussion on compensation. We hope the Board of Trustees and the President will continue to solicit feedback from all employees of the college, and we hope the feedback has meaningful impact on the shaping of the policy and procedures associated with it. Finally, we hope that the finalized policy and procedures will offer a compensation package that is fair and equitable, one that will guarantee that LCCC fulfills its goal of attracting and retaining highly-qualified and competent employees.

Faculty Senate would like to thank the Board of Trustees for seeking input in this important matter. We appreciate you taking the time and effort to consider our thoughts and suggestions. Please do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions.

Respectfully,

Leah Noonan
 Faculty Senate President
 And Members of the Faculty Senate
 Laramie County Community College