

Oklahoma State University Staff Advisory Council

Recommendation No. RPP-2025-3

Brought Forward By: Samuel Cypert-Worley, Secretary

Seconded By: Ramitha Raja, Events Committee Chair

 X PASSED TABLED FAILED

Date: April 9, 2025 (votes collected at April general meeting)

A Recommendation for the Formation of an Ad-Hoc Staff Salary Committee

WHEREAS, the Staff Advisory Council (SAC) at Oklahoma State University (OSU) serves as a voice for staff and a conduit between university leadership and staff employees; and

WHEREAS, competitive and equitable staff compensation is critical to the recruitment, retention, morale, and performance of the university's workforce; and

WHEREAS, adequate staff compensation is a vital factor to ensure critical university effectiveness and function; and

WHEREAS, there is growing concern among staff regarding salary compression, stagnation, and lack of transparency around compensation structures and market alignment; and

WHEREAS, anecdotal evidence shows that the university has funding in other areas available to reallocate toward staff salaries; and

WHEREAS, internal data has found that there have been 327 registered visits from December 2023 to March 2025 by OSU staff and faculty members to Pete’s Pantry, a campus-wide food insecurity alleviation program, showing via concrete evidence that there is a systemic-level concern that some staff salaries are not currently meeting their basic needs to live; and

WHEREAS, OSU has not conducted an institution-wide raise since 2023; and

WHEREAS, OSU’s Interim President, Dr. Jim Hess, stated on public record that the university retains the strongest financial footing among Oklahoma’s institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, the state of Oklahoma and the United States of America continue to experience rising costs of living in relation to persisting inflation, turbulent financial markets, and the recent placement of domestic and foreign trade tariffs; and

WHEREAS, peer institutions and national trends increasingly prioritize data-driven approaches to staff compensation, including salary benchmarking and equity assessments; and

WHEREAS, a formal committee is needed to explore these concerns, gather relevant data, and make informed recommendations:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RECOMMENDED, THAT THE OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL SHALL FORMALLY ESTABLISH AN AD-HOC STAFF SALARY COMMITTEE CHARGED WITH:

1. **Assessing** the current state of staff salaries across the university, including a review of pay equity, market competitiveness, and internal salary structures up to the Associate Director level;
2. **Identifying** gaps or inconsistencies in current compensation practices;

3. **Engaging** with Human Resources, Institutional Research and Analytics, Budget and Finance, and other relevant units to collect data and insights;
4. **Benchmarking** salaries against regional peer institutions and national standards for similar roles and classifications, with the committee serving as an independent third-party;
5. **Providing** findings and recommendations to university leadership, including possible strategies for addressing salary concerns over the short- and long-term.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this committee shall include at minimum five representatives from the Staff Advisory Council and shall be charged with including representation from other relevant units at the discretion of a majority vote of the Committee and that its work shall be initiated no later than July 2025 and conclude no later than June 2026.

REFERENCES:

1. Oklahoma State University Core Values
 - a. <https://go.okstate.edu/about-osu/mission-landgrant.html>
2. Oklahoma State University Compensation Philosophy
 - a. <https://hr.okstate.edu/compensation/philosophy.html>
3. Oklahoma State University 2023 Merit Raise Announcement
 - a. https://news.okstate.edu/articles/communications/2023/osu_am_regents_approve_fy_2024_budget_for_oklahoma_state_university_system.html
4. *Fox 25* - Interim President's Public Financial Statement Regarding OSU:
 - a. <https://okcfox.com/news/local/osu-interim-president-addresses-audit-discontinues-funding-for-the-innovation-foundation-oklahoma-state-university-interim-president-dr-jim-hess-former-oklahoma-state-university-president-kayse-shrum-transdisciplinary-institutes-employees>