

University of Oregon AAUP Salary Survey for 2010-11

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We again present the analysis of UO faculty salary data reported by the National AAUP. (Available at the end of these comments and at <http://aaup.uoregon.edu>.) We include a comparison for average salary and average compensation (salary plus benefits) with our eight AAU standard comparator (*peer*) institutions.

We note the following:

1) *Salary Averages.* Average 2010-11 Salary for Full Professors is at \$104.9k, Associates \$75.5k, Assistants \$72.0k and Instructors \$45.2k.

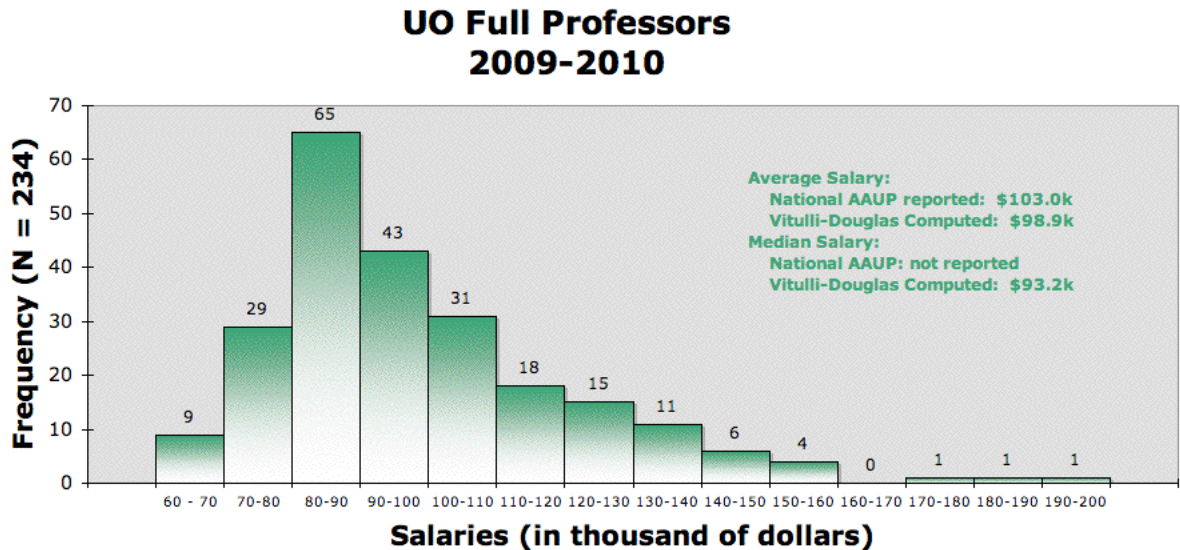
There was a slight increase in average salary for all categories with Full and Associate Professors receiving the least (+1.3% and +0.9% respectively) and Assistant Professors and Instructors receiving the most (+2.8% and +4.1%). Given that we did not have any salary COLA or merit increases last year, we are not sure how to account for these changes. In the Assistant Professor category we did have open positions and hired new people at “market” rate supported by the fact that Assistant Professor salaries are at 93.6% of the peer average. We cannot account for the increase for Instructors except to praise it and say, it’s about time!

2) *Comparison with Peers.* The Full Professor and Instructor categories are still at 80% of our peers while Associates are at 86%. As mentioned above, Assistant Professor salaries are at 93.6% of the peer average, closest of all the ranks to the level of 100% called for in the 2007-2008 Update on the Senate Budget Committee White Paper of 1999-2000. (Visit the SBC site at <http://pages.uoregon.edu/uosenate/dircom/budgetcom.html>.) We note that Instructor salaries for peer U. North Carolina (UNC) are quite high. In correspondence with National AAUP Research Director John Curtis last year, we were told that these result from very high salary for few faculty (eleven for 2009-10). AAUP verified these numbers with UNC and was told that they were correctly categorized. This suggests that UNC uses the “Instructor” category for what we at UO would categorize as highly paid Adjunct Professors. For this reason, UNC Instructor averages should probably not be used for Instructor peer calculations. We would recommend using instead the “Lecturer” data for UNC available directly from national AAUP.

3) *Concerns about the Statistics Reported.* Last year (2009-10) we noted that the salary average (\$103.0k) reported by National AAUP seemed quite high for the Full Professor category. After further correspondence with John Curtis at AAUP, we discovered that UO salary data is reported by OUS not UO, and is in aggregate form with salary averages already computed. We conducted our own analysis of salary statistics using data from the UO for the same reporting period (based on October 2009 payroll data) showing each individual faculty member’s salary, stipends, rank, FTE, etc. Our counts and salary averages for Full Professor were significantly different from what OUS reported to AAUP. For example, we computed average salary of \$98.9k while OUS reported \$103.0k. This is a difference of 4%, quite high for data that is a population, not a sample. We believe that the OUS computer-based selection criteria might not have properly excluded high-salaried individuals who are omitted from the AAUP category: administrators, retirees including 600-hour faculty, etc. We also checked the data reported for Associate Professors and were pleased to find that our statistics agreed with the OUS-AAUP report.

4) *Concerns about using Average Salary for Full Profs.* Averages are used as the comparison statistic in many studies. The use of an average (mean) is meant to show the mid-point for symmetrical distribution of data when a normal distribution is assumed. We conducted a number of statistical tests that convinced us to reject the hypothesis that the data is normally distributed ($\alpha = .01$).

To illustrate this point, here is a histogram of the data we analyzed for Full Professors:



This distribution shows that many salaries lower than the average make up a large part of the data. A few very high salaries tend to pull the average higher. For this reason, we would recommend using the *median* rather than the *mean* for Full Professors. The median represents the point where half the salaries for individuals fall below and half above. This is a common practice in areas such as real estate sales where the median sale price is used because the average inflates what most people would expect to pay. (Real estate sale prices are not normally distributed either.)

What kind of distribution is this, if not normal? We cannot reject the null hypothesis at $\alpha = .01$ that Full Professor salary data is best represented by a Johnson S1 distribution. This is not a well-known distribution, but is commonly available in statistical packages. It is important to consider that salaries may not be normally distributed in future salary analysis.

If we use our computed average at \$98.9k rather than the median at \$93.3k, the average inflates salaries by +6%.

If we use the AAUP reported average of \$103.0k rather than the median at \$93.3k, the average inflates salaries by +10.5%.

Respectfully submitted,
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