

How PSU Prioritizes Its Money

An Analysis of Personnel and Salary Allocation



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Executive Summary

This report analyzes how PSU prioritizes its resources on personnel and salaries over the decade between 2002 and 2012. While enrollment and tuition grew, faculty size was increased at a rate too slow to overcome increases in student to faculty ratios. Faculty inflation adjusted salaries were also virtually stagnant in the decade ending in 2012. Meanwhile, the numbers of administrators grew at a faster rate than faculty growth, and executive level administrators' salaries increased significantly compared to both inflation and faculty salaries. During the same decade and under the same budget cuts, executive level administrators' salaries increased significantly.

Growth in Student Enrollment

PSU has consistently had the most students of any campus in the OUS system and the number increased by 32% between 2002 and 2012.ⁱ

In 2012 the number of student FTE's at PSU was 78% of the total headcount of students, while at OSU and UO student FTE was 89% and 99% respectively of total headcount. The lower student FTE but higher student headcount at PSU is likely explained by a higher percentage of part-time students at PSU than at either OSU or UO.

Growth in Student Tuition and Expenses

Over the decade it became increasingly expensive for students to attend PSU. Between 2002 and 2012 the cost of tuition and fees increased 86% for resident undergraduates and 79% for resident graduate students.ⁱⁱ 2012 rates for tuition and fees for resident undergraduates were 419% higher than 25 years earlier in 1987. When adjusted for inflation the 25 year increase is 158%.

In addition to the cost of tuition and fees, the OUS Facts and Figures Handbook estimated average student budgets, or the cost of living and attending PSU as a full-time student, are the highest for all of the Oregon University System universities and colleges.

Change in Faculty Composition

In this study we distinguish between faculty members who have attained Tenure and those who are on a Tenure Track contract working toward tenured status because there is a difference in salary and composition of these two groups.

Since 2002, the composition of the faculty as represented by the bargaining unit data has changed from a small majority of Tenured plus Tenure Track faculty to a majority of Fixed Term faculty and Academic Professional staff.

The total number of Tenured faculty increased by 37.9% over the ten years but the number of Tenure Track faculty decreased by 5.9%, due in part to the drop in numbers of Tenure Track Professors and Associate Professors especially dramatic in 2008. The numbers of Fixed Term faculty and Academic Professional staff was increased at a relatively steady pace over the ten years.

The number of Instructors in 2012 is nearly 50% higher than in 2002. The number of Academic Professionals, jobs that HR designates as non-teaching, No Rank status, nearly doubled over the ten years.

Student to Faculty Ratios

When measured by headcounts, student to faculty ratios are high by national standards. When we use FTE as a proxy for full-time students and faculty, the ratio appears only somewhat better.

Between 2002 and 2012 student faculty ratio worsened by 6.4% when looking at student and faculty headcounts, and by 2.1% when measured using FTE.

Considering the steady tuition raises over the decade, it appears that PSU students are getting fewer teaching faculty for what they are paying. This trend suggests that they may also be attending larger classes. However, the university is being staffed by an ever-growing number of non-teaching staff, many of whom provide direct services to students.

Faculty Salaries

In spite of having the highest student enrollment within the Oregon University System, PSU faculty salaries are lower than faculty salaries at all ranks at the University of Oregon or at Oregon State University–Corvallis.

Fixed Term Faculty and Staff

Average salaries for Fixed Term Faculty and Academic Professional staff have remained relatively flat or when adjusted for inflation have declined in purchasing value over the decade. At a 1% increase average inflation adjusted salaries for Senior Instructors just kept up with inflation over the decade, while average salaries for Instructors and Academic Professional staff fell behind inflation.

Tenure Track Faculty

Average annual salaries of PSU Tenure Track Associate Professors stayed just ahead of inflation by an average of 1.2% increases per year between 2002 and 2012.

After correcting for inflation Tenure Track Assistant Professors are, on average, earning the same as their counterparts a decade ago.

Tenured Faculty

The inflation-adjusted, average, annual salary of Tenured Professors increased by only 0.6% per year over the decade. Average inflation-adjusted annual salaries for Tenured Associate Professors in 2012 decreased in value from what they were in 2002.

Numbers of Administrators

The number of employees at all ranks of administration is growing. Between 2002 and 2012, the total number of administrators not in the bargaining unit increased 54%.

Between 2002 and 2012 the number of Executive Administrators with a job title of Assistant Dean and above increased by 20 positions, a 65% growth rate. However, because of their relatively small numbers in 2002 the growth in numbers of “Executive” level administrators (Assistant Deans and above) is not particularly dramatic. These positions make up only a small fraction of the overall growth in the administration. In light of increases in student enrollment and their relatively low numbers in 2002, the growth in number of administrators at the rank of Assistant Dean and above in 2012 does not suggest overt administrative bloat. But, the same may not be said for their salaries.

Executive Administrative Growth Compared to Faculty Growth

The number of Executive Administrators grew by 65% between 2002 and 2012, while the number of Tenured plus Tenure Track faculty members increased by 18.8%.

Perhaps a better comparison of growth priorities in an institution committed to serving students is Student to Executive Administrator Ratios vs Student to Faculty Ratios. The Student to Executive Administrator Ratios improved over the decade by 20%. In contrast the Student to Faculty ratio worsened by 6.4%; this counts Tenured, Tenure Track, and Fixed Term contract teaching staff combined.

Salaries of Executive Level Administrators

When compared to his peers at other universities across the country the President of PSU is doing relatively much better than his faculty when their salaries are compared to faculty salaries nationally and at peer institutions.

The growth in average annual salary of Administrators with vice president in their job title stayed well above inflation over the decade between 2002 and 2012 at 23% for Assistant Vice Presidents to 29% for Vice Presidents.

Similarly, the growth in average annual salary of the Provost and administrators with Vice Provost in their job title has also stayed well above inflation rising between 56% for the Provost, 54% for Vice Provosts and in a one year raise, 2011 to 2012, 30% for Associate Vice Provosts.

In 2012 the growth in average annual salaries of Deans and their Associate and Assistant Deans is also well above the rate of inflation.

Faculty Salaries Compared to Executive Administrator Salaries

Comparing the salary growth figures of PSU Faculty to those of PSU Administrators at the Assistant Dean and above level over the decade clearly indicates that the Administrators' salaries have stayed well above inflation, while Faculty salaries have not.

PSU Faculty Salaries Compared to Peer Institutions

Average salaries for Full and Associate Professors at PSU are closer to the average salaries for those ranks at Master's level universities than for the same ranks at Doctoral Universities. Average salary for PSU Assistant Professors falls just below

those at Master's level institutions, and Instructors' average salary is nearly \$5,000 below average salaries at Baccalaureate only colleges.

In short, PSU administrators' salaries are increasing rapidly, while those of faculty are significantly below comparable institutions and are barely keeping up with or falling behind inflation.

ⁱ There was a decline of 227 in total number of students from mid-2011 to November 2012, the first drop in enrollment in the decade.

ⁱⁱ Percentage increases calculated from tuition and fees reported in the Oregon University System: Facts and Figures 2012, "Annual Tuition and Fee Rates for Full-Time Students 2001-02 through 2011-12. pg. 78. (www.ous.edu). Tuition and fees include tuition, and universal resource, building, incidental, health services, and recreation center fees.