

# BUFFALO STATE COLLEGE

## DIRECTORY OF POLICY STATEMENTS

Policy Number: VI:06:00

Date: September 1987

Subject: **Policy on Discretionary Salary Adjustments**

1. Discretionary salary adjustments serve: (1) to reward and encourage excellence in teaching, in scholarly or creative activity, and in college or community service; (2) to redress base salary inequities that have either escaped, or persisted in spite of, past rounds of discretionary adjustments; or (3) to respond to evidence of market value clearly beyond that reflected in current base salaries.
2. A discretionary salary adjustment is a permanent addition to the base salary – in effect, a commitment to the discretionary award annually for the duration of the awardee's employment. An adjustment is particularly appropriate for those whose base salaries, relative to the base salaries of those of comparable years in service, most conspicuously fail to reflect their relative merit or market value. Discretionary salary awards may thus be given in a variety of circumstances: one individual may be performing so ably that an award is appropriate even on top of an already relatively high base salary and on top of numerous awards in recent past years, and another may be clearly less talented or productive, but appropriately rewarded with a discretionary award on the basis of significant recent efforts and a relatively low current base salary.
3. Discretionary awards cannot be given to more than about one-third of the eligible faculty and staff and may not necessarily be equally distributed among units. Furthermore, in order to achieve an appropriate allocation of discretionary funds among the departments, **schools**, and vice Presidential areas, it is necessary to encourage at least a few more recommendations than the number that can, in the end, be awarded. Thus, a failure to receive an award, even if recommended at the department or **school** level, should not be construed as a judgment that one is perceived to be without merit or that one's efforts are either unrecognized or unappreciated.
4. Documentation is expected to accompany all recommendations. (Use the forms developed for this purpose.) For instructional faculty, evidence of strong, recent student evaluations of teaching will be expected. Evidence of strong scholarly or creative activity should also be recent and specific. It is appropriate for individuals to call such evidence to the attention of their chairs or directors.
5. While individuals are encouraged to call attention to their cases for discretionary adjustments, the primary burden for recommendations and documentations lies with the chairs and directors. Chairs, directors, and deans should be alert to those who may be

reluctant to promote themselves but whose contributions relative to current base salaries make good cases for discretionary adjustments.

6. Chairs, directors, deans, and vice Presidents should examine all women and minority group members and be assured that no salary inequities on the bases of either gender or race are allowed to persist.
7. Chairs, deans, and the academic vice President should take special care to recognize and to reward, where appropriate, those who perform ably in more than one department and who thereby promote interdisciplinary programs, especially through secondary appointments.
8. Chairs, directors, deans, and vice Presidents should take special care to recognize and to reward, where appropriate, those whose significant contributions may be on behalf of an entire faculty or of the college as a whole, rather than merely on behalf of the departments, offices, or units in which they are primarily appointed.
9. Chairs and directors should take a special look at those who have not been awarded a discretionary increase in any of the past five discretionary award rounds. The purpose of the “special look” is to satisfy the chair or director that the absence of discretionary awards is justifiable on the basis of relative merit and relative current base salary. This provision should not be construed to suggest that repeated failure to recommend an individual for a discretionary award is necessarily wrong, nor should it be construed to suggest that awards should, over time, be “passed around” or “evened out.”
10. A major goal of the process of discretionary awards – beyond the three end goals in #1 above – is to encourage constructive dialogue between faculty and professional staff and the chairs and directors to whom they report. From such dialogue should come not only the rewards and sanctions accompanying effective and ineffective behavior, but better evaluations, more constructive suggestions on how to improve performance, and better understanding of appropriate expectations.

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