

OBERLIN

COLLEGE & CONSERVATORY

Dear faculty and staff,

Competitive compensation has been on the minds of many of us across campus. As I have shared previously, the Board of Trustees has directed us to undertake a comprehensive classification and compensation study so that we can address this issue in a strategic, informed, and sustainable manner.

We're doing our best to balance the need for a comprehensive study with our concern for all of you living with very real financial pressures at this moment. For this reason, the study will not delay the Board's consideration of compensation adjustments in June and January. Board Chair Chris Canavan articulated this at the end of his March letter to General Faculty. As our Chief Financial Officer indicated to the Budget and Finance Committee in the March Board meeting, adjustments in compensation in June and January are one of the highest priorities of the administrative team.

Despite the more immediate work with respect to compensation, the study we are initiating will work to solve our long-term challenge. It will involve a look across approximately 700 employees, including roughly 350 salaried staff and 350 faculty, including both tenured/tenure-track, and non-tenured faculty. This includes salaried administrators and professional staff, confidential employees, and faculty within both Arts & Sciences and the Conservatory.

Goals of the study

We believe an investment in Oberlin's people is one of the most important investments we can make as an institution, and are committed to getting this right. We will be making recommendations to the Board of Trustees for their consideration. This looks like:

- **Market competitiveness.** We will suggest criteria for selecting appropriate comparator schools and institutions for compensation benchmarking, assess our salaries and benefits in relation to these institutions, and recommend where our compensation should be in relation to these organizations.
- **Internal equity.** We will examine existing salaries and identify where adjustments are needed to ensure equity between those in similar roles, and with similar scopes of responsibility.
- **Financial sustainability.** We will formulate a plan that offers a framework for the long-term funding of our compensation targets, within our financial means.
- **Sustainable processes.** We will develop processes that are reasonable to implement and maintain.
- **Alignment with Oberlin's values.** Our compensation will reflect the mission, values, culture and strategic objectives of Oberlin and be aligned with the goals of One Oberlin.

Compensation study team

For this study to be truly comprehensive and for it to include faculty and staff, we must bring multiple perspectives to the effort. In addition to consulting with existing deliberative and advisory bodies, I have asked faculty and staff from across the institution to serve on a working group that will advise the process. These individuals currently serve in elected leadership roles across the institution, and bring a broad perspective to this work.

Chair

- Rebecca Vazquez-Skillings, Vice President for Finance & Administration

Faculty Leadership

- Corey Barnes, Associate Professor of Religion (Chair, Compensation Committee)
- Ron Cheung, Professor of Economics (Member of Compensation Committee)
- Erik Inglis, Professor (Member of College Faculty Council)
- Joe Lubben, Associate Professor of Music Theory (Member of Compensation Committee)
- Alexa Still, Associate Professor of Flute (Member of Conservatory Faculty Council)

Administrative & Professional Staff Council Leadership

- Lori Ebihara, Manager Academic Operations (Member of A&PS Council)
- Thom Julian, Director of Community Life and Standards (Member of A&PS Council)
- David Kamitsuka, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences
- Bill Quillen, Dean of the Conservatory of Music
- Greta Williams, Manager of Academic Operations (Member of Compensation Committee)

Oberlin has engaged The Segal Group to provide its expertise in the area of compensation. Engaging a firm such as Segal is a widely accepted best practice to help institutions tap a perspective and expertise about compensation they would not otherwise possess. The Segal Group has been a leading, independent firm of benefit, compensation, and human resources consultants since its founding in 1939. Its higher education practice has a dedicated team of consultants who have advised and partnered with colleges and universities for more than 60 years in the following areas: organizational effectiveness, compensation and career strategies, retirement, health, and communications. The Segal Group has done this type of work for institutions very much like Oberlin, including Barnard, Bucknell, Dickinson, Swarthmore, and the Colburn School.

Project timeline

We expect a full compensation study to take several months to complete; depending upon the study's recommendations, implementation may be a multi-year process. This process will happen concurrently with June compensation adjustments, and we plan to begin making some of the highest priority compensation adjustments as soon as January 2023, based on the study's findings.

Some next steps include:

- Job description analysis for administrative and professional staff
- Gathering salary data about comparator institutions
- Assessing equity issues across campus
- Development of a framework for consistent job titles and groupings
- Salary structure design and creation of pay policies and guidelines
- Training for supervisors to ensure a consistent process over time

Immediate next steps

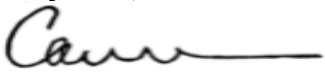
The faculty and staff selected for the compensation study team will begin their work this week. Additionally, all salaried staff (not faculty) and those who supervise these staff will receive instructions soon about training the week of April 18 to complete a position description

questionnaire (PDQ). The PDQ will collect information about employees' current duties and responsibilities in order to update position descriptions. The PDQ asks questions about everyday job duties and about how positions support the College's mission and goals. In addition, the questionnaire asks for opinions about the appropriate qualifications and skills needed to do your work. This will also be reviewed by an employee's supervisor. The information will help Segal compare and standardize similar roles where applicable, and develop updated and detailed job descriptions, which will be used in the market assessment phase of the study. Please watch for this announcement and do your best to complete the PDQ in the time frame requested. You can also find more information on our website, at <https://www.oberlin.edu/human-resources/total-compensation-study>.

In a moment when so many of us are exhausted from the volume of work and constant change demanded of us during the past couple of years, I recognize that the comprehensive nature of this study can feel daunting. At the same time, I know that this is the best way to strengthen Oberlin's approach to total compensation and to help us get to a place where we can all see the connection between our institutional values and our compensation.

Thank you for helping Oberlin pursue this thoughtful approach.

My best,



Carmen Twillie Ambar
President