



Office of the Chancellor

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TO: NMSU faculty, college administrators, and deans

FROM: Chancellor Dan Arvizu and Interim Provost Dorothy Campbell *DC*

SUBJECT: Faculty salary increases for FY23

As you have probably heard, NMSU received funding from the Legislature for significant salary increases this year. One portion amounting to 3 percent of salaries of filled positions was applied, per statute, across-the-board April 1. The Legislature also provided an additional 4 percent pool and gave higher education institutions the flexibility to apply this portion in a manner determined by each institution to best meet the interests of their institution and their community.

Earlier we developed a plan for staff compensation that factored in the impact of bringing all staff up to at least a \$15 minimum wage, established appropriate new ranges above that level, identified new range mid-points based on a comprehensive market study of staff salaries, made adjustments for compression created by these structural changes, and included an element of merit pay based on performance.

To develop a plan for the faculty salary increase program this year, the Provost and I, along with other senior members of the administration, have engaged in consultation with many stakeholders, including Faculty Senate leadership, other faculty, Deans, and college administrators. The feedback supported many different approaches to use of the 4 percent pool. We heard some important perspectives, including:

- The salaries for NMSU faculty are low in comparison to other R2 institutions and to the R1 institutions who we will join in the coming years. This salary gap puts pressure on our faculty and on morale.
- We have made efforts to introduce performance into decision-making, and faculty want to be recognized for what they contribute to NMSU.
- Each college faces different internal and external environments.

We are at the point where we have to decide on the approach we will take for faculty salaries. While we do not have to assign specific salary increases to individuals until July 1, we need to report our general approach to the State at the end of this month. Therefore, after consultation and deliberation, we have decided on the following program for faculty eligible for the salary increases.

- Each college will be asked to develop a plan where 3 percent of the 4 percent pool will be applied across the board.
- The remaining 1 percent of the pool will be used for individual adjustments based on a combination of merit and market factors appropriate to the college.
- The Provost will review and approve these plans.

No plan will be perfect. We feel this plan considers the different factors we should consider in developing a faculty salary plan. It dedicates a majority of the pool to across-the-board increases reflecting concerns about general salary levels and inflation, with a small portion for individualized elements that allow us to take a step toward incorporating merit and specific market concerns into faculty salary planning.

There remains work to do to make this process better in coming years.

- We need to refine our process for evaluating faculty performance to inform future merit increases, and we need the Faculty Senate to engage with us on this process.
- We need a plan to identify long-term goals for faculty salaries and a plan to build the resources to get there. Many of the elements are coming into place, such as initiatives to strengthen the financial resources needed to support these goals. We will soon announce planning activities that will consider NMSU's financial needs and future comprehensively, and we will depend on faculty involvement in that process.
- Faculty-led committees have been looking at market salaries and internal equity in a sustained and serious way, and we will soon receive new results of their work which we will need to understand and factor into our future plans.

We are regularly humbled and amazed by the dedication of the NMSU faculty to improving the lives of people through life-changing teaching, world-class research, and high-impact service to communities. We understand how important it is to support those who support so many, and we are very pleased to work on this together with you.