

## CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

January 28, 2025

TO: Thomas Jeitschko PhD  
Interim Provost

FROM: Jamie Alan, PharmD, PhD  
Chair, University Committee on Faculty Affairs

Bree Holtz, PhD  
Vice Chair University Committee on Faculty Affairs  
Chair, Budget Subcommittee

SUBJECT: Faculty Raise Memo AY 25-26

### Summary

As a world-class institution of higher learning, it is crucial that we maintain our commitment to attracting and retaining exceptional educators and scholars. **The University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA) recommends a 7% raise for the 2025-26 academic year. This number is comprised of a general pool merit raise (4%), and the equity and excellence raise (3%).** A raise for faculty is a strategic investment that will positively impact the university's reputation, quality of education, and our long-term sustainability. Below are several key justifications for this request.

### Faculty Excellence

Michigan State University, alongside its renowned faculty, continues to shape the future as a boldly public, globally engaged institution. Our faculty serves as the foundation of MSU's mission: advancing education, fostering impactful outreach, driving groundbreaking research, and leading diverse scholarly endeavors across disciplines. Over the past year, faculty contributions have been integral to achieving milestones that reflect MSU's commitment to excellence, innovation, and service to the public good.

### Teaching

MSU faculty supports an ever-growing student body – we're adaptive, ensuring a high-quality education for a diverse student population. Enrollment is up 8.54% (from 37,988 in 2023 to 41,234 in 2024) for undergraduates, with a total enrollment of 52,089. Additionally, there are 1,914 new degree-seeking graduate students at the master's and doctoral levels. New graduate professional enrollment totals 735 students. Total graduate enrollment, including graduate professional students, is 10,855 students. Furthermore, in 2024 by MSU received 62,138 applications for the fall class, exceeding last year's 58,879 by 5.5%, therefore we believe we can continue to expect robust enrollment numbers.

While the number of tenure stream faculty has increased by 0.91% (1873 to 1890) and the number of fixed-term faculty increased by 1.23% (1,215 to 1,230) between 2023 and 2024, these increases are not proportional to the increase in student enrollment. Faculty are assuming additional responsibilities to educate our talented students.

Furthermore, faculty are key to supporting the President's critical student success initiatives. New programs to assist and encourage first generation college students and transfer students are supported not only by advisors and professional staff, but by faculty whose efforts are central to expanding experiential learning opportunities.

### Research

Impressively, in 2024 there was a 13.33% increase in research funding (\$759.2 million to \$850.2 million). As our faculty numbers have not significantly increased, we can infer that faculty have both an increase in research funding, along with an increase in students to educate. Our national rankings were stable in 2024, again highlighting the successful efforts of our faculty.

## ***Rankings***

Academic rankings reflect institutional prestige, driven in large part by faculty excellence. Our national rankings were stable in 2024, again highlighting the successful efforts of our faculty. We maintained our strong presence in the U.S. News & World Report rankings at 63<sup>rd</sup> while moving from 45<sup>th</sup> to 43<sup>rd</sup> overall in the *Washington Monthly* rankings and rising from 21<sup>st</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> among public institutions. We also rank 60 in the recent Wall Street Journal rankings, which is the third highest among the 16 public institutions currently in the Big Ten. These accomplishments underscore the profound contributions of our faculty to MSU's mission, external perception, and broader societal impact.

### **Faculty Retention and Recruitment**

Supporting the presidential priority of becoming a next-generation organization, competitive salaries play a crucial role in ensuring faculty excellence and retention, directly aligning with MSU's strategic goal to ensure student success. Faculty are integral to fostering mentorship, advancing research, and enhancing the academic climate, all of which are critical for institutional continuity and student achievement.

As MSU's domestic student body becomes increasingly diverse—students of color now make up 27.8% of the class—faculty diversity is equally vital to promoting student success. Research consistently demonstrates that a diverse faculty contributes to improved educational outcomes by offering varied perspectives, mentorship opportunities, and relatable role models for underrepresented students. Faculty of color, who comprise 32.4% of the tenure-stream faculty according to the 2023 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion report, play a significant role in advancing equity, inclusion, and excellence at MSU.

Investing in competitive faculty salaries not only supports the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty but also ensures that MSU remains a welcoming and supportive environment where both students and faculty can thrive. Strengthening these connections reinforces our commitment to fostering a next-generation organization where student and faculty success go hand in hand.

### **Salary Comparison to the BIG TEN**

As we navigate the evolving landscape of higher education, we are mindful of the competitive nature of faculty compensation within the expanding Big Ten, which now includes prestigious institutions like UCLA and the University of Washington. In the most recent AAUP faculty salary survey, Michigan State University ranks 7th for professors, 9th for associate professors, and 16th for assistant professors among the 16 public Big Ten institutions. Our weighted average salary places us 12th in the conference.

It is important to note that comparisons across institutions can be challenging due to variations in faculty composition, which can impact direct comparisons. This underscores the need for strategic investment in faculty compensation to maintain and enhance our competitiveness as a leading research university within this dynamic and growing consortium.

By offering a competitive raise, we would ensure that our institution remains attractive to potential faculty candidates. Maintaining a competitive salary structure is essential for attracting the best and brightest minds in higher education.

A commitment to investing in faculty is an investment in the future of the university. Faculty are at the heart of our research, student engagement, and academic reputation. By offering a pay raise, we not only strengthen the morale and stability of our current faculty, but we also signal to prospective faculty members that this institution values their contributions and is committed to fostering an environment of excellence. This investment will ensure that we continue to offer a world-class education, retain exceptional talent, and maintain our reputation as a leading institution of higher learning.

### **Recommendation for the 2025-2026 Faculty Raise**

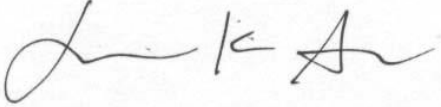
Based on all the information provided, including the exemplary work of the faculty over the past year, the need to recruit and retain tenure-stream faculty, and the importance of addressing wage equity and salary alignment with peers, the University Committee on Faculty Affairs (UCFA) recommends a 7% merit raise pool (general 4% plus E&E 3%).

The E&E raise underscores MSU's commitment to equity and excellence, addressing critical issues such as racial/ethnic and gender pay equity, as well as wage compression. These efforts are vital to fostering a supportive environment for faculty, strengthening the university's foundation of excellence, and ensuring alignment with its strategic goals.

Investing in competitive and equitable salaries is essential for retaining and attracting the exceptional faculty who advance MSU's mission of education, research, and community engagement. Such investments also reinforce the university's standing as a leading institution in higher education and demonstrate a steadfast commitment to valuing faculty contributions and supporting their professional growth.

We deeply appreciate the continued collaboration with Interim Provost Jeitschko and the Provost's Office to uphold MSU's tradition of academic excellence. Together, we can advance the university's goals and strengthen its future by prioritizing strategic investments in faculty success.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jamie K. Alan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Jamie K. Alan PharmD, PhD

Approved by UCFA 01/12/2025

Feedback considered and approved by UCFA 01/28/25

Cc: Teresa Mastin, PhD  
Kara Yermak, MHRLR