

## MU faculty salaries rank below average

*MU ranked seventh for salaries among other Big 12 schools.*

By [Jared Grafman](#) May. 04, 2010

MU ranked seventh in faculty salaries and ninth for compensation of all ranks of professors, compared to other Big 12 schools in the past year, according to the American Association of University Professors report.

The AAUP released its 2009-2010 "Report on the Economic Status of the Profession," an annual report on faculty salaries for universities, earlier in April.

The information on MU's low salaries is not news to Provost Brian Foster or Betsy Rodriguez, UM system vice president of Human Resources.

"MU faculty salaries are well below their peers," Rodriguez said. "MU ranks near the bottom of the public AAU universities. I don't know why they're ranked seventh out of the Big 12 schools in the AAUP report, but there are various ways to reach the conclusions depending on what is included in the data."

According to the AAUP report, full professors at the University of Texas at Austin have salaries at approximately \$133,300, compared to full professors at MU, which have salaries reaching approximately \$111,000.

"We consider faculty salaries to be substantially low compared to the rest of the market," Rodriguez said. "I think the main problem is that historically the annual salary increases have been about half the increase of the cost of living. This has been over a 10 year period."

Low MU salaries pose an additional obstacle to hiring and retaining faculty members.

"It's a challenge," Foster said. "This isn't news that MU salaries aren't competitive. It's something we've known for a long time, and it has received a lot of publicity."

There have been several efforts by MU administration to raise faculty salaries, but they have yielded little success.

"A couple years ago we began a program called Compete Missouri to try and raise faculty salaries, but economic factors made the program move to the back burners," Foster said. "Since then, we've tried other means to raise MU faculty salaries and compensation."

The poor economy is one obstacle to the UM system's ability to raise faculty salaries.

"There are a variety reasons we haven't been able to keep up with the market, and clearly funding is one of those reasons," Rodriguez said.

Foster said MU tries to attract faculty members through various means.

"We are trying to hire and retain faculty members through development projects, reallocating resources and other methods," he said. "But in the end it's a pretty hard thing to accomplish: raising salaries."

The findings of the AAUP report are not surprising to MU or the UM system. MU's rank among other universities is not expected to vary greatly in upcoming years either.

This can affect a potential faculty member's decision to join or stay with the MU faculty.

"It's an issue for both retention and hiring faculty members," Foster said. "We don't want to offer salaries that create inversions and equities. What we can sell is the quality of the university and the quality of Columbia. Both are great places to live and work."