



July 17, 2023

Dear President Schatzel,

As representatives of the University of Louisville Staff, we, the Staff Senate, are writing to urgently address the deep and unprecedented level of concerns that have arisen from the implementation of the University of Louisville Compensation Study. Through extensive feedback from our colleagues and constituents, we have identified several critical themes that need immediate attention due to their profoundly negative impact on staff morale.

The following themes have been consistently communicated to us by our constituents:

1. **Confusion and Long-Term Implications of the Dual Titling System:** The dual titling system has caused confusion among Staff. They are uncertain about how their workday-approved titles will be expressed or archived and how long these supervisor approved titles will be recorded. This lack of clarity raises concerns, particularly for employees who may require title verification for future employment. When we advertise for new employees, what title is the job advertised as?
2. **Perception of Job Title and/or Salary Range Demotion:** Staff members feel demoted when assigned lower job titles and/or lower salary ranges - specifically lower maximum salary within their new pay grade – despite HR's assertion that the study focuses solely on job evaluation. This discrepancy between perceived job worth and assigned titles/pay grades has had a detrimental effect on Staff morale.
3. **Misleading Communication Regarding Compensation Ranges:** The communication surrounding the compensation study's reference to "80% of median in a range" has been misleading, leading Staff members to believe it represents 80% of the way between the minimum and median of a pay range. This actually means they will be brought to the minimum of their range, which is 80% of the median.
4. **Timing of Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):** Applying the COLA before the compensation study adjustments means that those who received an adjustment did not benefit from the COLA increase for this year, resulting in dissatisfaction and a sense of unfairness among Staff members.



5. **Inadequate Communication:** The HR Talks sessions have been criticized for not allowing enough time to address Staff questions and concerns, leading to unanswered queries and frustration. Additionally, the lack of a comprehensive and readily available FAQ resource has contributed to the overall dissatisfaction with communication efforts. In many cases workers first and second line supervisors do not appear to have more information about their worker's job descriptions and classifications. A listening session with limited voluntary signup is an inadequate way to communicate important job information to employees. This information should have been made available beforehand and easily and broadly available to Staff. What are the next steps of this implementation? Current communication has not been clear on the future of the compensation study implementation.
6. **Insufficient Details in Job Title Structure and Career Ladders:** The current lack of detail in the job title structure and career ladders has heightened staff anxiety and frustration. Staff members are eager to understand their position within the ladder, potential progression opportunities, and pathways for advancement. Delayed communication and information exacerbate these concerns.
7. **Lack of Consideration for Individual Experience and Value:** The compensation study's exclusive focus on job evaluation without due consideration for individual experience, education, and the value staff members bring to their roles has resulted in a perception of undervaluation. This neglect has had a detrimental effect on Staff morale and motivation. One group of frustrated staff we have heard from for many years have been people who have significant years of successful experience at the UofL, but who remain significantly below commonly accepted levels of progression in their pay range. We believe it is rational and common in educational settings for years of service to be acknowledged through advancement of someone's pay range. Those employees who have 6+ years of service but who have not advanced to the mid-point of their salary range and employees who have a 12+ years of service who are far from the maximum pay in their salary range represent a significant population of concern for the compensation study. In many cases, the new salary ranges are only serving to confirm the level of underpay for many longstanding employees. This was exacerbated by the freezing of in range adjustments and re-classifications for at least two years during the study only to have no action taken for this group of employees.
8. **Outdated Job Descriptions and Workload Imbalance:** Job descriptions that do not accurately reflect the additional duties employees have assumed over the years due to budget and staffing cuts have resulted in a perceived lack of proper consideration of



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employee role. Many employees have assumed additional duties beyond those in the job description, as departments have lost positions and employees and assumed more work. The “more with less” work ethic that has permeated since budget cuts began has left many doing work they believe wasn’t fully considered in this study. These are the people who are seeing new employees being brought in at similar pay rates as it has taken them years to achieve. People who have seen the cumulative impact of inflation negating the sporadic and minimal cost of living adjustments they have received. The lack of action resulting from the compensation study has largely served to only increase the feelings of anxiety, anger, lack of trust and frustration with this population of our employees.

We implore the administration to address these concerns promptly, as they are significantly impacting staff morale. The negative consequences extend beyond individual employees, affecting the overall well-being and productivity of our university community. Communication of the importance of Staff value and an assurance that further communication and evaluation of the results of this compensation study are our recommended first step in moving forwards.

We stand ready to collaborate with the university administration in finding solutions that prioritize fair and equitable treatment of staff members. It is our shared goal to create an inclusive and supportive working environment that fosters employee growth and satisfaction.

Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. We look forward to your swift action and open dialogue to address the concerns raised by our Staff members.

Respectfully submitted,

The Staff Senate