

UW System: Seeks 3% annual increases in 2019-21 pay plan

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MADISON, Wis. – University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross will recommend the Board of Regents take decisive action to approve a pay plan that would provide UW System employees a three percent pay plan increase for each of the two fiscal years starting July 1.

“As labor markets tighten, salaries rise, and inflation increases, reinvesting in UW faculty and staff with modest wage increases will ensure we are not falling behind and losing out on talent we need in Wisconsin,” Cross said. “Attraction, retention, and recognition of high-quality faculty and staff are critical investment opportunities for future student success.”

In five of the last eight fiscal years, UW System employees have received no pay plan increases, with increases averaging less than one percent between June 2011 and July 2019. Notably, these pay plan increases have trailed inflation and benchmark competitors during this period.

“Many of our employees are already paid considerably below higher education market rates,” Cross said. “We must meet competitive pressures and fairly compensate our hard-working employees.”

Faculty salaries, in particular, continue to lag behind their peers. The plan also cites higher health insurance costs for employees.

The proposal, coming after six years of tuition freezes, calls for full state funding of

the general wage increase. Typically, the state provides about 70 percent of the UW System pay increase with the rest being funded by tuition.

“A fully funded increase will protect our educational investments that students rely upon,” said Cross. “That is why we are requesting full funding, so that we preserve the investments we have in student classrooms.”

It will be considered by the Board of Regents on December 6 and, if approved, sent to the Administrator of the Division of Personnel Management who will submit a proposal on UW System employee pay to the Legislature’s Joint Committee on Employee Relations. The UW-Madison pay plan request will be the same as the UW System request.

The recommended pay plan increases would be delivered to all University of Wisconsin System employees.