

# UW-Madison: Faculty Salaries Advance In Rankings

Posted on Tuesday, Apr 27, 2021

**>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

CONTACT: John Lucas, [john.lucas@wisc.edu](mailto:john.lucas@wisc.edu)

MADISON – After years of trailing peer universities, UW-Madison faculty salaries advanced significantly as the result of strategic moves over the past several years.

In 2020-21, average salaries for full professors ranked 5th out of 12, up from 10th place the previous year among a longstanding peer group. Prior to this, average salaries for full professors had been in last place since 2004-05. Average pay for associate professors ranked 5th this year, up one spot from the previous year, and assistant professor average salaries jumped two spots to 6th place. In a broader comparison, UW-Madison average salaries for full professors now rank 17th out of 36 AAU public research universities.

The comparisons come from the Association of American University Professors (AAUP) Faculty Salary Survey for 2020-21.

“This is the culmination of hard work on many fronts,” says Provost Karl Scholz. “We’ve been emphasizing new revenue streams such as summer term and market-priced noncredit programs, along with expanded enrollment, all of which provided us with revenue needed for equity- and merit-based pay increases.

“The higher education market is highly competitive. To attract and retain talent, competitive compensation is essential. We are grateful that the many efforts we have collectively taken on our campus to strengthen our financial foundations have allowed us to invest in people.”

The change in rank follows a state-supported pay plan increase in fiscal year 2019-20, additional block grant funding from the state in fiscal year 2020, and the

campus decision to allocate \$9 million for equity-based faculty compensation in targeted departments in July 2019, which were awarded in the following fall. UW-Madison's gains underscore the importance of both regular pay increases and strategic investments.

All of these changes took place before the COVID pandemic created financial strain. Pandemic-related temporary pay reductions may or may not have been reported in the data for universities that took such measures, which makes the comparisons for this year less easy to interpret. UW-Madison data do not include pay reductions due to furlough.