

Frequently Asked Questions of CoE Academic Staff

Answers to these FAQ's are intended to provide general guidance, and to help you find sources that can provide detailed answers to situation specific questions. They have been written particularly for CoE academic staff. Additional FAQs written for all academic staff in the University can be found at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/FAQs.htm>.

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1 Governance and Service to the College and the University

1.1 What is CASI?

CASI is the acronym for Committee on Academic Staff Issues. The Academic Staff Assembly at its January 12, 1998 meeting passed Academic Staff Document #210, titled "School, College and Division Committees on Academic Staff Issues (CASI)". This document calls for each school, college, or division of the University of Wisconsin-Madison to establish a committee to advise the Dean or Director on issues pertaining to or affecting academic staff members in that unit. The CoE's CASI officially met for the first time on November 21, 2000. CASI is chaired by the CoE Dean, has five elected academic staff positions and two positions appointed by the Dean. The CASI bylaws provide a detailed description of CASI's mission, procedures, and structure (<http://www.engr.wisc.edu/staff/casi/bl.html>).

1.2 How can I get involved in academic staff/shared governance and the various governance committees? What opportunities are available?

Information about governance and participation opportunities is available at: <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/>.

1.3 What is the support for academic staff participation in governance?

Each September, the Chancellor sends a memorandum to deans, directors, and department chairs to ask them to make it possible for academic staff to participate in governance activities by serving on appropriate committees or governance bodies such as the Academic Staff Executive Committee (ASEC), the Academic Staff Assembly, and the Committees on Academic Staff Issues (CASIs). If you are interested in participating in governance activities, you should discuss your interest with your supervisor.

References:

- Latest memorandum from Chancellor Wiley: September 8, 2004 (<http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/doc/chancellors%20participation%20letter.htm>)
- Section 36.09 (4m) of the Wisconsin Statutes (as revised on August 17, 1985) authorizes shared governance participation by members of the academic staff stating “*The academic staff members of each institution, subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board, the president and the chancellor and faculty of the institution, shall be active participants in the immediate governance of and policy development for the institution. The academic staff members have primary responsibility for the formulation and review, and shall be represented in the development of all policies and procedures concerning academic staff members, including academic staff personnel matters.*”
- On September 6, 1985, the Board of Regents (Resolution 3359) directed each chancellor to implement academic staff governance participation.
- Academic Staff Articles of Organization and a Faculty Senate Resolution (March 2, 1987) encourage and support academic staff participation.
- Academic Staff Governance: A Brief History (http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/gov_com/history.html)

1.4 What is ASPRO? MASA? UFAS? Do I have to join?

ASPRO is the Academic Staff Public Representation Organization (<http://www.aspro.net/>), a non-profit, professional organization that represents the UW-System academic staff and their interests with the State Legislature, the Governor's office, the Board of Regents, and the general public. ASPRO is the official lobbying and public relations arm of the academic staff. It is not a union nor does it negotiate or bargain terms of employment.

The Madison Academic Staff Association (MASA) (<http://www.wisc.edu/masa>) is an organization of members of the academic staff of the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW-Madison). It aims to further the professional status of the Madison academic staff, share ideas on items of mutual interest relating to professional status, conditions of employment, and compensation, and to establish communications with other identifiable university groups having similar objectives. It is not a union nor does it negotiate or bargain terms of employment.

United Faculty and Academic Staff (UFAS) (<http://www.ufas.net>) is a labor union democratically organized to represent its members--faculty, academic staff, and postdocs at the UW-Madison and UW-Extension. UFAS is an independent affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, Local #223, AFL-CIO. It does not negotiate contracts, but does provide other member services, such as legal representation.

Academic staff are not required to join any of these organizations.

An ALPHABET SOUP DECODER RING, Version 0.2 is available at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/doc/alphasou.html>.

2 Performance Reviews

2.1 Are annual performance reviews required?

Academic staff are to be reviewed annually in a manner appropriate to their work setting and responsibilities. Absent a review document in an employee's personnel file, it shall be assumed that the employee's performance has been at least satisfactory. Once each year a staff member may request a written performance review from the supervisor regardless of the method of review used by the work unit as a whole. See ASPP 10, Performance Reviews for details: <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/ASPP/ASPP10.htm>.

2.2 Do academic staff have any say in the criteria and methods of performance reviews in their units?

The policy (ASPP Chapter 10) also requires academic staff participation "in establishing the criteria and defining the methods of academic staff performance review to be used in the unit".

2.3 What role do accomplishment forms (or activities/performance reports) play in renewing our yearly contracts?

Ask your supervisor or unit director or administrator. Performance review methods are determined at the department/center/unit level. In units where they are used, accomplishment

forms can provide documentation for consideration and discussion during performance reviews and help build the record of performance to be considered during merit reviews.

2.4 If my unit does not require a performance report, may I self-report?

The campus policy on academic staff performance reviews (ASPP Chapter 10) states “Academic staff may at any time document their professional and other work-related activities by preparing an activities and accomplishments report, updated curriculum vitae, position description, or other form of self-reporting. Upon request, these documents shall be placed in the staff member’s personnel file.”

2.5 Can participation in governance be considered a part of my job responsibilities and considered in my annual performance review?

At the discretion of the supervisor, it could.

The Articles of Organization of the Academic Staff on the UW-Madison campus were developed and ratified by the academic staff on February 16, 1987. The preamble states “Participation in academic staff governance should be considered among other job functions and responsibilities in performance evaluations for promotion, indefinite appointment, merit increase, and other job-related matters.” On March 2, 1987, the Faculty Senate adopted a supporting resolution.

ASPP Chapter 10, “Performance Reviews”, contains no reference to participation in governance activities. Unclassified Personnel Policies and Procedures, Chapter 8, “Performance Reviews,” is listed as “under construction” at <http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/polprocd/UPPP/upptblc.html>.

2.6 What information should be in my personnel file?

If they exist, the following should be INCLUDED in an employee’s personnel file:

- Letter of application and supporting documents
- Letters of reference; however, where letters of reference are provided under assurances of confidentiality, special treatment of such letters is required (see Academic Staff Policies and Procedures (ASPP), Chapter 11).
- Letters of offer, negotiation, and appointment
- Letters of acceptance
- All position description information, including Position Vacancy Listings
- Performance reviews and responses
- Letters of reappointment, promotion, and change in appointment status
- Notification of salary changes and title changes
- Documents relating to termination of appointment, including resignations, retirement, and emeritus status

3 Appointments, Promotions and Job Security

3.1 What is the process and timing for requesting a title change? When am I eligible for promotions?

The criteria and process for academic staff rate and/or title changes is addressed in the following documents.

- Official campus policy: <http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/polproced/UPPP/1001.doc>.
- Summarized informational flyers: <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/promo.html> and <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/doc/pdfs/promotio.pdf>.

You are eligible for promotion to the next prefix level within your title series when you meet the criteria for that prefix.

Information concerning unclassified titles and prefixes, their definitions/criteria, and assigned salary ranges (where applicable) is available in the Unclassified Title Guideline: <http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/polproced/UTG/utg.html>.

The College of Engineering Dean's Office accepts rate/title change requests at any time during the year. According to campus policy, the effective date for approved changes can be no earlier than the first of the month after the dean's office receives the request.

3.2 What are the options for increased job security?

Information about appointments that increase job security can be found at:

- Academic Staff Policies and Procedures (ASPP), Chapter 2, "Academic Staff Appointments," at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/ASPP/TOC.htm/>.
- Unclassified Personnel Policies and Procedures, Office of Human Resources, Chapter 9, "Job Security and Recognition," <http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/polproced/UPPP/uppptblc.html>.
- ASPP Questions and Answers at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/doc/asppfaq.html>.

The typically considered options for "increased job security" in CoE are as follows.

- Fixed-term, multiple-year appointment is a form of fixed-term renewable appointment made for more than one year. The length of the term is specified in writing. This type of extended appointment may be especially appropriate for individuals on multiple-year grants.
- Fixed-term rolling-horizon is a form of fixed-term appointment that extends daily for the term specified in writing. The term may be for one or more years. (ASPP 2.01.1.b).

3.3 What conditions affect academic staff job security?

Most academic staff are initially on one-year, fixed term, renewable appointments. These appointments are renewable:

- as long as the employee provides satisfactory service
- funds are available
- directions or needs of the program do not change.

Once an initial evaluation period has been successfully completed, the employment of an academic staff member may be ended only for reasons of:

- funding loss
- a budget or program decision that requires a program to be discontinued, curtailed, modified, or redirected
- unsatisfactory performance
- misconduct.

3.4 What is the distribution of academic staff appointments in the College of Engineering?

Information about appointments across campus can be found at:

<http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/pppc/2003JSWeb/Job%20Security%20Report.htm>.

This report was prepared for the 2002/2003 academic year.

For the CoE:

- 378: Number of academic staff
- 353: Number of academic staff with renewable appointments
- 4: Number of academic staff with indefinite appointments
- 25: Number of academic staff with terminal appointments
- 29% of the “non-terminal” appointments have some form of increased job security.
- 68% of the “non-terminal” appointments with 5 or more years of service have some form of increased job security.

The breakdown of multi-year vs. rolling-horizon appointments in CoE is not provided.

3.5 When are academic staff on fixed-term renewable appointments reviewed for increased job security?

ASPP 2.05 describes reviews of appointment status. Basically:

- any academic staff member can be considered for a more secure appointment with a request initiated by the academic staff member or by the member’s unit at any time, no matter how long the individual has been with the university; and
- academic staff members with five or more years of service are reviewed annually by the Dean for rolling-horizon or indefinite appointments when (1) they are an integral part of the unit’s continuing mission, (2) a funding source can be identified; and (3) the quality of their performance warrants it.

Upon request, academic staff members with five years or more of service whose appointments are for two or fewer years can get written reasons why they did not receive increased job security.

3.6 Who actually approves appointment changes that increase job security?

Your supervisor, department chair or center director, and the Dean.

3.7 What is the current CoE practice toward approving appointment changes to increase job security?

On March 29, 2005, Dean Percy announced that he will not approve any new multiple-year or rolling-horizon appointments due to the current budget uncertainties. If and when the budget and overall financial situation for the University and the College is known, he says he will reconsider such requests.

3.8 What difference does my appointment type make in terms of notice of non-renewal?

Minimum notice periods for non-renewal are described in ASPP 3.04. The minimum non-renewal notice for academic staff on one year fixed-term, renewable appointments depends upon

the years of UW-Madison academic staff service. The minimum notice ranges from 3 to 12 months.

For multiple-year appointments, minimum non-renewal notice extends to the current appointment end date.

Rolling-horizon appointments provide a much longer minimum non-renewal notice period because the period equals the length of the rolling-horizon. For example, someone on a three year rolling-horizon has a three year minimum non-renewal notice period.

3.9 What about the minimum notice periods for lay-offs due to funding loss or budget or program decisions?

ASPP 5.04 specifies the minimum notice periods for the various appointment types. For fixed term and probationary appointees, minimum layoff notice ranges from two to six months depending upon years of academic staff service and the layoff reason.

Staff on rolling-horizons (regardless of length) get a minimum notice of six months for funding loss and twelve months for budget or program decisions.

3.10 How can I get further information about layoff status and my rights under layoff?

Layoff is defined as the termination of an academic staff member's employment because of a funding loss or a budget or program decision either prior to the end of the current appointment or when proper notice of non-renewal under ASPP 3.04 cannot be given. See Academic Staff Policies and Procedures (ASPP), Chapter 5:
<http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/ASPP/ASPP5.htm>.

If you have additional questions, you may contact either Jeanne Hendricks, CoE Dean's Office/HR (3-1603 or jhendricks@engr.wisc.edu), or Ann Lamboley, Academic Personnel Office (3-2511 or alamboley@bascom.wisc.edu).

3.11 Are academic staff on fixed term renewable appointments supposed to get an annual reappointment letter?

Appointments for terms up to and including one year renew for the same term unless the academic staff member receives a written notice to the contrary. A letter of reappointment is not required. If the term of appointment is increased, a letter of reappointment is required. Appointments for terms longer than one year, including multiple-year appointments, do not require a letter of reappointment during the original term. To renew the appointment for more than one year requires a reappointment letter. If a reappointment letter or nonrenewal notice is not issued before the end of the original term, then the appointment becomes a one-year fixed-term renewable appointment. See ASPP 2.01.

4 Benefits and Compensation Plans

4.1 Who could I see to ask about questions regarding payroll and benefits?

You can contact the payroll and benefits contact for your unit. The current list of department and centers contacts can be found at:

<http://admin.engr.wisc.edu/PayServices/PS-Contacts/pay-contacts.cfm>.

You can also contact the campus Employee Benefits and Compensation Services Office:

<http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/ecbs/uwempl-services.html>.

4.2 What are sources of general information about compensation and benefits?

Two sources are:

- FAQ's, a glossary, seminars, etc. about compensation and benefits can be found at the Employee Benefits and Compensation Services web page <http://www.bussvc.wisc.edu/ecbs/uwempl-services.html>.
- CoE also has a web page with a wealth of information about payroll and benefits information/links at <http://admin.engr.wisc.edu/PayServices/>.

4.3 Why don't academic staff receive the annual salary increase that is budgeted in the grant from which they are funded?

Levels of budgeted compensation increases allowable in grants are often specified by the funding agency irrespective of a particular university's compensation policies. However, all grants are awarded contingent upon adherence to state legislation and UW policies, which provide for funding-neutral compensation structures and pay plans. As a result, the increases budgeted in the grant may be higher or lower than an academic staff member may be deemed eligible for from the UW-Madison. Although this may mean that the academic staff member gets a lower compensation increase than what was budgeted in the grant, it also may mean that there is some degree of insulation of the academic staff member from any negative changes in the research budget. For example, a funding agency's decision to reduce the amount of an award in a particular grant year does not result in a downward pay rate adjustment for academic staff paid on that grant.

4.4 How are faculty and staff pay plans determined for the UW System?

The Board of Regents approves a pay plan recommendation that is forwarded to the Governor's Office for approval and often, modification. The Regents proposal is not binding. The Governor's recommendation is forwarded to the legislature's Joint Committee on Employee Relations (JoCER) for final approval.

4.5 How are merit increases determined in CoE?

What follows is a "generic" description of the process. You should seek details from your unit.

The Dean receives detailed instructions and a target percent increase number from the UW Administration. When all of the salary changes have been finally decided, the actual per cent increase for all academic staff as a whole in the College must be no greater than the target per cent.

Dean gives another target percent increase number to the Chairs and some research center directors (who have their own UDDS). Included in the instructions to CoE chairs and directors is the opportunity for them to request additional merit funds for high performers or other special circumstance. To fund such requests, the Dean typically gives a slightly lower figure to provide him some flexibility. This “hold-back” may only be say 5 per cent of the target increase. So if the target were two per cent, then the Dean may hold-back 0.1 per cent, and communicate that the Chairs and research center directors should use 1.9 per cent as their target. The Dean aggregates all requests, and then uses his special allocation as he deems appropriate considering any special requests.

Chairs and some research center directors then solicit recommendations for increases for each academic staff member. These recommendations may be from a review committee, or from supervisors. The Chair/director may also make his own decision for some academic staff. There may be some intra-unit (or UDDS) trading between supervisors if some of the aggregate increase unit target per cent is not needed due to personnel leaving, etc. But in the end, the Chair and some research center directors must satisfy the target percent given to them by the Dean.

Essentially, the target percentages represent a zero-sum game for individual academic staff merit increases. Any real substantial increase in salary probably must occur through a base salary adjustment through some sort of job reclassification.

4.6 If the target percent increase were say three percent, should I expect to get a three percent increase?

No. A resolution passed by the Regents includes a guideline that solid performers should receive not less than one-third of the merit compensation plan. This does not imply or require an across-the-board increase for each individual who receives a “satisfactory” assessment. Rather, it reflects a policy that those individuals who have made positive, but not necessarily exceptional, contributions should not be excluded from pay plan increases. This will ensure that exceptional performers are adequately rewarded but not exclusively at the expense of the solid performers.

However, current Regent policy requires across-the-board increases when the pay plan increase is 2% or less.

4.7 For my own long-term career planning, what is the best way to get a salary increase?

You should focus on career development activities that result in promotions or job description changes.

4.8 Where can I find out about the status of current UW System Budget deliberations?

The Office of the Chancellor maintains a State Relations web page that contains current information about the budget deliberations along with other state relations issues. You can access that web page at <http://www.staterelations.wisc.edu>. The web page also provides information about Wisconsin politics, the Wisconsin legislature and pending legislation, about campus information/facts, and more.

5 Professional Development

5.1 How do I find out about professional development opportunities?

The web site <http://www.myprofdev.wisc.edu/> is designed to be a clearinghouse for all professional development opportunities on campus - from classes, seminars, and special events to informal gatherings. Information about professional development grants that provide 50% of the cost of a professional development proposal can be found there.

5.2 Since professional development grants require matching funds by my unit, how can I be assured that there are funds available to support the grant?

Your best bet for support is for professional development that will clearly help your productivity on the job. With that in mind, talk with your supervisor to see what support is possible.

6 Miscellaneous Topics

6.1 How can I get involved in a mentoring program for academic staff?

The campus offers a mentoring program to promote professional and personal development for mentees and mentors; to provide opportunities to share knowledge - and learn more - about UW-Madison; and to link mentees with mentors who can advise, coach, and guide them. No matter how long you have been at the university, you can be a mentee. Mentors and mentees are sought for the program. Mentors are matched with mentees based on the interests of the mentee. Details can be found at <http://wiscinfo.doit.wisc.edu/acstaff/mentor/>.

6.2 If I believe my work space is inadequate and that my performance is hampered as a result, what do I do?

Speak with your supervisor or unit administrator about your needs.

6.3 Where can I get information about childcare opportunities?

A good source of information is the Office of Campus Child Care. The Office's website is <http://www.housing.wisc.edu/partners/childcare/>.

6.4 Can academic staff serve on PhD prelim committees?

An Executive Committee can, without approval of the Graduate School, appoint an academic staff member to serve as a sixth member of a doctoral examination committee. Such an appointed committee member has the right to vote and sign the warrant like other members of the committee. Department Executive Committees may consider academic staff for membership on an examination committee if the academic staff member has a Ph.D. or other terminal degree and has research or practical experience relevant to the degree candidate's thesis or dissertation. For more details, see <http://www.wisc.edu/grad/guidelines/index.html> [click on "the guidelines (glossary index)".]

6.5 What are the intellectual property rights of an academic staff member?

Academic staff are afforded the same protections as faculty members. A complete guide is available through the UW Office of Research and Sponsored Programs

<http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/index.html>. A copy is available at <http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/chap1/redbook.pdf>. It was last updated in 1998.

Except as required by funding agreements or other University policies, the University does not claim ownership rights in the intellectual property generated during research by its faculty, staff, or students.

In general, federal law and regulations provide that the University has first right to retain title to any inventions conceived or made in whole or in part during federally funded research. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has designated the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation (WARF) as its patent management organization for this purpose. Federal law and regulations further provide a single policy document and uniform policies for virtually all federal grants and contracts. Computer programs which are patentable are covered by the federal law as are plants protectable under the Plant Variety Protection Act.

Expectations vary regarding ownership of intellectual property generated as a part of a research program sponsored by non-federal funding sources.

6.6 What programs exist for academic staff to use UW recreational facilities?

UW-Madison regular and affiliate faculty and staff who have paid their Recreation Membership Fee and who also possess a valid UW-Madison ID card (<http://www.union.wisc.edu/photoid>) may access all of the Recreational facilities. The purchase of a membership will enable faculty/staff and spouse/domestic partners to utilize all four Recreational Sports facilities - the Natatorium, SERF, Nielsen Tennis Stadium (additional court fees required), and the Camp Randall Sports Center. Previously, the Camp Randall Sports Center required an additional membership. Information about recreation facilities can be found at <http://www.recsports.wisc.edu/facilities/facilities.htm>.

UW-Madison faculty/staff may authorize payroll deduction for payment of fees.