

**Guidance for the SPH Faculty Salary Equity Review Committee**

Last modified 17 December 2021

Background: A standing SPH Faculty Salary Equity Review Committee (SERC) is required by the University of Minnesota Provost and is formed in accordance with the January 2020 [guidelines](#) from the Provost's Office. [Historical guidelines](#), some of which are more detailed than the most recent guidelines (in particular [this one](#) is helpful), are also available.

Charge for the SPH SERC: The SPH SERC is charged to: (1) review faculty salary data for equity on a regular schedule; (2) review a salary equity concern brought forward by an individual or group of faculty; (3) advise SPH Dean and Associate Deans on issues, policies, procedures, or practices related to salary equity. For both types of review, SERC shall examine equity across and within the following dimensions: faculty tracks (contract, tenure-track/tenured), faculty rank (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professor), race/ethnicity, and gender identification. SERC may also identify other dimensions where equity should be examined.

Oversight of the SPH SERC: SERC members are appointed by the Dean; the Dean shall confer with the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, the Chief of Staff (or designee), the Director of the Office of DEI, and Division Heads to identify potential members of the SERC. The Office of Faculty Affairs will oversee compliance of all of SERC's processes and documentation with Provost's Office guidance. SPH Human Resources will oversee compliance with UMN Office of Human Resources policies and practices. The Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, the Chief of Staff (or designee), and the Director of the SPH Office of DEI will work jointly, as *ex officio* non-voting members of SERC, to oversee the implementation of SERC processes in alignment with this guidance. SPH Human Resources will provide administrative data needed by SERC. SERC operations (distributing appointment letters, scheduling, minutes, and related responsibilities) will be managed by the Dean's Office.

Membership of the SPH SERC: The SERC shall normally have 5 to 9 members appointed by the Dean. The Dean shall strive to have representation across faculty ranks, faculty tracks, gender identity, race, and ethnicity, and academic divisions. The SERC will annually elect a chair (and a co-chair if desired) from within their membership; members may serve as chair multiple times. SERC members shall normally serve for a term of 3 years. Members may serve additional terms in later years but consecutive 3-year terms are capped at 2 terms. Reflecting the importance of this work, SERC members are expected to participate fully and thoughtfully in the committee's reviews, discussions, and writing of recommendations, and as such should be granted some relief from division-level service work while serving on SERC. The Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, the Chief of Staff (or designee), and the Director of the Office of DEI will be *ex officio*, non-voting members of the SERC, serving to oversee compliance with UMN policies, procedures, and practices (as described above) and as

information providers on salary and faculty performance expectations, SPH compensation policies, philosophies, and practices, other relevant SPH processes and practices, the experiences of and barriers experienced by historically excluded and under-represented faculty groups, and other information as needed.

Processes and practices for the SPH SERC:

Schedule of regular review: Every 3 years, the SPH SERC will review all SPH faculty salaries including all faculty (contract, tenure-track, and tenured, but not adjunct nor affiliate) with at least 50% effort in the SPH. With the approval of the Dean, this schedule of review can be altered, for a single SERC review or as a shift to a new standing cycle. The Office of Faculty Affairs and Human Resources will orient members to the committee's charge and duties at the beginning of each review.

Requesting an individual or group review: Individual faculty, or a group of faculty from the same Division, are encouraged to first bring their salary equity concerns to their division head. If the individual or group feels the division-level discussion and follow-through is not a satisfactory resolution, the individual or group may bring the concern to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, to the Chief of Staff (or designee), or to the Director of the Office of DEI; they do not need to wait for the next regular review. The Associate Dean, Chief of Staff (or designee), and/or Director of DEI will listen to the raised concerns, discuss, and provide follow-through as appropriate. If the follow-through is not a satisfactory resolution to the faculty bringing the request, the Dean will be advised of the faculty concerns and may then direct the SERC to review and advise on those concerns. The faculty member or group is also welcome to directly contact the SERC to request a review of their concerns.

A group of faculty that spans more than one division is encouraged to first bring their salary equity concerns directly to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, to the Chief of Staff (or designee), or to the Director of DEI at any time, who will listen to those concerns, discuss, and provide follow-through as appropriate. If the follow-through is not a satisfactory resolution to the faculty bringing the request, the Dean will be advised of the faculty group's concerns and may then direct the SERC to review and advise on those concerns. The faculty group is also welcome to directly contact the SERC to request a review of their concerns.

Principles to guide SERC reviews:

- (1) While salaries at UMN are technically public, they are still personal and sensitive information and should be treated accordingly. Members are free to discuss outside of the committee the overarching patterns they see in the salary data or the general issues that SERC is discussing. They should not discuss outside the committee salary details on any individual faculty or any group so small as to be feasibly identifiable.
- (2) UMN Office of Human Resources has some guidance on thinking about [compensation](#). The SPH has developed a '[compensation philosophy](#)' which should also be taken into account during SERC's review. Salary inequities begin at initial salary setting and are compounded at each stage of salary adjustment. Compensation goes beyond salary - start up packages (dollars, personnel, and equipment/supplies), augmentations, supplemental pay, etc. The ripple effects of retention offers may also create or exacerbate salary inequities.
- (3) Normally, the Dean, associate deans, and division heads are excluded from tabulations and analyses of salary data; however associate deans and division heads may themselves request an

equity review of their base salary. Similarly, salaries for faculty in phased retirement, or who have returned as contract faculty after retirement, are not included.

- (4) Faculty names will be masked until there is a reason, at SERC's discretion, to unmask individuals. SERC's recommendation regarding an individual's salary will be communicated back to the Dean; the SERC does not communicate their tentative or final recommendation directly to the faculty being reviewed or to anyone not on the committee.
- (5) The Provost's recommended "uniform method" for reviewing faculty salaries is to identify for each "target" faculty member (the person whose salary is being reviewed) one or several "comparator" faculty members who share attributes similar to the target faculty member. Additional [details and guidance](#) on this method have been provided by the Provost.
- (6) Prior SERC review documentation will be made available to the current SERC to inform their approach to the review.
- (7) Faculty salary data constitute a census, not a sample.

Managing conflicts of interest during SERC processes: Members of SERC are not excluded from having their own salaries reviewed, and as such there are inherent conflicts of interest (COI) that must be addressed. Members may also have a close relationship managed under the University's Managing Nepotism and Personal Relationships Policy. Members will be asked to disclose any such COI and sign a confidentiality agreement. Even though faculty salaries are public information, the SERC shall keep data blinded to faculty member name for as far as possible into their review. At the point in their review process that SERC is discussing recommendations for individual faculty, for each such faculty member being considered who is a SERC member, or with whom a SERC member has a close relationship managed under the University's Managing Nepotism and Personal Relationships Policy, the SERC will identify a process that effectively recuses that member from the conversations about that salary. For example, they may excuse the person from a meeting for the duration of the conversation, or they may identify 2-4 other SERC members who will have that conversation outside of meeting time and bring a recommendation back to the SERC. Upon consensus of SERC membership, the SERC may also adopt different or additional COI practices as they see fit.

Data used in the SERC review process: Administrative data to be provided to SERC include at a minimum: annual base salary, gender identification, track (contract, tenure-track, tenured), rank (assistant, associate, and full professor), years since terminal degree, years since hire, years in current rank, Division, and MD or other advanced professional degree status. Annual base salary excludes augmentations (e.g., for administrative roles and endowed chairs). SERC may confer with Faculty Affairs and with Human Resources on additional data requests. To provide more detailed context, the SERC may also request assistance from the Dean's Office with collecting more detailed information about individual faculty (e.g., a recent CV).

Documentation of SERC meetings: Salary equity is an extremely important issue and as such SERC processes should be as transparent as possible without violating confidential discussions. Meetings will not be recorded. Meeting minutes will be taken at a high level such that they can be made available to all SPH faculty without any confidentiality concerns. If SERC discusses any listings, tabulations, graphs, statistical modeling, etc. of faculty salary data, SERC meeting minutes will describe in broad terms what was discussed. The minutes will not directly include any listings, tabulations, graphs, model output, etc. that directly or indirectly identify particular faculty; tabulations, graphs, and model output that preclude identification of particular faculty may be, but do not have to

be, included in the minutes at SERC's discretion. SERC discussions of individual faculty, or of groups so small as to be feasibly identifiable, must be kept confidential. The Office of Faculty Affairs will be the repository for SERC meeting minutes. Meeting minutes will be posted within the SERC space of the SPH Faculty Affairs web pages and linked to from the Human Resources web pages. At their discretion, SERC may also maintain more detailed confidential minutes that could be shared with the Dean, Associate Deans, Division Heads, Human Resources, the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and any others that this SPH leadership team determines have a 'need to know.'

SERC deliverables after a review: At the end of either type of review mentioned in the SERC charge, SERC will provide documentation of their review to the Dean. This should include a listing of the current committee membership, a description of their methods of review and how recommendations were made, a summary and/or listing of their recommendations (consisting of: an individual should or should not be considered for an equity adjustment to salary, a suggested amount for the adjustment, and a brief rationale for the recommendation), and (if applicable) a description of any issues SERC feels need further discussion and/or potential action by SERC or by SPH leadership. In the spirit of transparency of SERC's process, SERC's review documentation (for the regularly scheduled reviews of all faculty only) should normally include both an 'open' portion (e.g., does not identify salary equity adjustment recommendations for specific, identified faculty) and a 'closed' portion (e.g., containing salary equity adjustment recommendations for specific, identified faculty). SERC's review documentation for a review requested by an individual or a group of faculty should normally be 'closed.' Closed and open portions are shared with the Dean who may distribute both to those with a 'need to know' such as the Provost's Office and SPH Associate Deans, Division Heads, Human Resources, the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and any others that this SPH leadership team determines have a 'need to know.' The 'open' portions will be posted within the SERC space in the SPH Faculty Affairs web pages and linked to from the Human Resources web pages.

SERC deliverables when advice or input is requested, outside of a review, on salary equity related issues, policies, procedures, or practices: The SERC is welcome to initiate discussion and provide a report around issues that they or other faculty feel need the SERC's consideration; the SERC does not need to wait for the Dean to bring an issue to, or initiate a discussion within, the SERC. No matter who initiates, the SERC will provide a summary of their discussion and conclusions to the Dean; there may be a 'closed' report and an 'open' report. Normally, closed and open portions are shared with the Dean who may distribute both to those with a 'need to know' such as the Provost's Office and SPH Associate Deans, Division Heads, Human Resources, the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and any others that this SPH leadership team determines have a 'need to know.' The 'open' portions will be posted within the SERC space in the SPH Faculty Affairs web pages and linked to from the Human Resources web pages.

Revising this guidance: This guidance may be revised at any time. SPH faculty should bring their suggested revisions to the SERC. The SERC and SPH leadership may at any time suggest revisions to this guidance. Suggested revisions should be brought to the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs who, jointly with the Chief of Staff (or designee) and the Director of the Office of DEI, will oversee the process of getting feedback (from SERC members, SPH Faculty Consultative Committee, and SPH leadership) and finalizing any changes.

Document history: Drafted by Associate Dean Lynn Eberly in February 2021, then shared with SPH Leadership (Dean, division heads, Chief of Staff, HR Assistant Director, DEI Director) for feedback in March 2021. Shared with SPH Faculty Consultative Committee Chair in April 2021. Updated by Associate Dean Lynn Eberly in August 2021 to more closely align with the language in the UMN Provost's guidance documents, then shared with SPH Faculty Consultative Committee for their feedback. Feedback from FCC received in September 2021 and integrated. Shared again with SPH leadership (Dean, Associate Deans, Division Heads, Chief of Staff, HR Assistant Director, DEI Director) in November 2021. Document last changed on 15 December 2021.