Guidance for Academic Leaders at KUSM-W

Productivity and Compensation for Research-Focused Faculty Members at KUSM-W

Engagement in scholarship and research by faculty, medical students and residents is a requirement for accreditation of educational programs. While research-focused faculty members have been involved in KUSM-W programs for decades, current growth of the medical school and evolving residency requirements presents the opportunity to better address the recruitment, development and retention of research-focused faculty. This document provides guidance to KUSM-W leaders in regards to performance based models for research-focused faculty members based on the KUSM-W mission.

As scholarship and research increase at KUSM-W, departments must create research productivity models that are consistent with those in use for clinicians. These models should take into account all efforts contributing to the department accomplishing its mission and achieving its goals. This includes building research infrastructure and capacity, educating and supervising novice and developing researchers, advocacy and administrative work, and other activities. In developing productivity for research faculty, priorities may differ from those of other faculty members in order to focus on research-oriented aspect of mission and goals. For research-focused faculty, productivity is generally measured as: 1) publication of manuscripts in moderate to high impact journals; 2) support of research/scholarship through extramural funding.

This document provides guidance to KUSM-W department chairs and institute directors regarding expectations for research productivity and compensation strategies for research-oriented faculty members. No single model is likely to meet the needs of every department as each has different needs for trainee education, faculty and trainee scholarship, and contributions to the region and state.

Guidance for Departmental Chairs and Institute Directors at KUSM-W

1) Candidates for faculty should be discussed with the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Professional Development to ensure each faculty member has the most appropriate appointment for personal development. In addition, those who will engage in research activities should be discussed with the Associate Dean for Research prior to finalizing position descriptions or making any verbal or written offers of appointment.

2) Each department will establish its own matrix for defining “adequate” research productivity. These matrices should be equitable and transparent.

3) A research focused faculty member is usually engaged in her/his own research, as a leader or member of a research team. In such instances, productivity expectations should generally include obtaining external funds to support the research (including a proportion of his/her salary). Each department/institute should determine at what percent effort, any faculty member should support his/her research with external funding. While no absolute percent effort has been established at KUMC for which external funding is expected, nonetheless general consensus is 20% or greater. The percentage may be adjusted based on productivity expectations (i.e. an increased percent of effort
should result in an increase in external grant support). Note that these percentages should be decided within each department.

a. In the event that performance does not meet productivity expectations, department leadership may choose to reduce an individual’s compensation for the following year.

b. Incentives are preferred to threats of salary reductions to achieve the desired performance. For example: if a faculty member is expected to bring in an agreed percentage of his/her salary through extramural funding and exceeds this amount, the faculty member and department should share the additional funding based on a pre-arranged formula. These additional funds could be used by the research faculty member for salary (bonus), to offset research expenses, or enhance research resources, including additional personnel.

c. If the individual faculty member has primary responsibility to develop and maintain his/her own research program, with little or no expectation to contribute to the other missions of the department (outside education pertinent to the research), the department may provide a small percent of effort but the individual’s productivity remains based on ability to support and grow an active/successful research program. (see the KUMC Research Faculty Guidelines July 1, 2010, at end of this document).

4) Research-focused faculty members may have additional or primary roles in promoting the research enterprise through collaboration and education. Such faculty members may have a primary responsibility to conduct research in collaboration with clinicians, support clinician research (or research important for the clinical department), or to educate faculty members, trainees, and staff in research. Performance in this research-support role should be recognized and defined by explicit productivity measures, without the expectation that this effort be supported by external funds. It is important that the departmental matrix clearly define how productivity goals are met for such individuals. This should be explicit prior to appointment and/or during yearly evaluations with the Departmental Chairperson.
Research Faculty Guidelines

July 1, 2010

Communicating a rational salary compensation plan for tenure-track SOM faculty who are engaged in research or other income-generating activities is an important feature of effective governance within the School. Transparent policies aid in achieving individual faculty member, department, and school goals and clarify performance expectations. They also facilitate long-range planning by academic units. A well-rationalized compensation plan avoids conflicts related to the relative responsibilities of various parties to provide appropriate support for faculty commensurate with their efforts in a variety of academic areas (teaching, research and service). Based upon these principles, the following have been agreed upon as specific guidelines for salary compensation for all tenure-track SOM faculty members who derive portions of their salaries from sources other than State General Use Funds or clinical income.

1. The total salary for a faculty member at the time of initial academic appointment in the KU School of Medicine shall be established only after consultation between the Executive Dean, the Chair of the department to which the primary appointment is to be made and, if applicable, the Center/Institute Director. A Financial Worksheet shall be prepared and approved prior to any offer of employment to the faculty candidate.

2. Both the short-term and long-term salary commitments to be provided by various parties (departments, centers and other sources) shall be agreed upon and stipulated in writing prior to an offer of employment.

3. Unless otherwise prohibited by an external funding agency, faculty effort on newly submitted grant applications shall be fully compensated. Effort shall be appropriate for work scope, and the full amount of salary requested must be used for funding of the faculty member’s salary.

   • Proportional reductions in faculty effort and salary support from those stipulated on an initial grant application will, at the discretion of the PI and with approval by the Chair and Senior Associate Dean for Research, be made at the time of award to reflect any budgetary reductions stipulated by the funding agency. New institutional cost sharing should not result from these adjustments.

4. Each basic science department in the KU School of Medicine has in recent history funded a significant portion of its faculty salary pool from research grants and other outside sources of income. Each department shall strive to fund 35% of its aggregate salary pool from outside sources. Chairs of departments that fall significantly below the goal shall annually submit to the Executive Dean a plan for reaching this target.

   • Release salary funds, if any, will remain in the department and will be used to reward particularly productive faculty members and enhance the research and education programs of the department.
• Salaries of new assistant professors who are in the first three years of their appointment at KU-SOM and competing for their first major external grant award will not be used in calculating the department aggregate salary target, unless they receive NIH-level funding during this period.

5. A competitive level of institutional support to the School of Medicine departments is required to achieve a sustainable salary incentive program. Therefore, it is expected that departmental funding from institutional sources will be reviewed annually with the goal of providing financial support that meets the needs of the department.

6. Recommendations regarding total salary compensation shall be made annually to the Executive Dean by the Chair based on faculty performance review. Factors determining these recommendations shall include exceptional productivity in teaching, research and service.

• Both merit-based increases and decreases in salary compensation can be considered on an annual basis and shall be based on productivity and changes in the overall duties and responsibilities of a faculty member and availability of funds.

• Faculty member contributions to the objectives of a Center/Institute can be significant. In these instances, chairs shall seek recommendations from Center/Institute Directors before making salary recommendations to the Executive Dean. If the Chair and Center/Institute Director cannot agree upon a joint recommendation, the Senior Associate Dean for Research will facilitate a resolution.

7. While it is recognized that total salary compensation can vary from one fiscal year to another, total compensation will be sustained throughout the fiscal year. A plan shall be formulated to provide bridging support for the research activity of a faculty member who has lost external funding.

• A new policy will be developed that will provide details of the processes and procedures that will be followed in responding to bridging requests for faculty research programs (faculty salary and research program support). This will include the basis for prioritizing requests and determining the recommended amount and duration of support that will provide faculty members with a reasonable opportunity to obtain extramural funding.