Economic Status Report
2011-2012

The central focus of the Committee on Faculty Workload and Economic Status this year was responding to the Administration’s request that we agree to suspend the faculty salary plan (FSP) covering fiscal years 2011-2014. We concluded this process in early April by signing a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Administration (the complete MOU is included as Addendum A). The MOU affirms an agreement to suspend the FSP for FY13 and FY14 with the understanding that faculty raises in FY13-FY15 will be 2% plus equity and promotion adjustments, subject to revision based on economic conditions. The MOU commits the Administration to work with the Economic Status Committee to develop a multi-year framework for determining faculty salaries that is consistent with the continuing principles from FSP 2011-2014, to be implemented in FY16.

At the November faculty meeting, our committee summarized the most recent Northeast Nine comparison group data for faculty salaries and institutional resources. At the end of fiscal year 2010, the average of Wheaton faculty salaries had fallen to 8.9% below the weighted mean of the Northeast Nine schools (a percentage salary shortfall equal to that in 1993-1994 prior to implementation of the first Wheaton FSP). At the end of FY10, Wheaton’s total financial resources were 22.9% below the comparison group mean (compared to a 31.9% resource shortfall when Wheaton’s first FSP was initiated).

The Administration provided our committee with updated comparative salary data this May (see Addendum B). For the second consecutive fiscal year, the mean Wheaton faculty salary is 8.9% below the weighted mean for the Northeast Nine schools. The Northeast Nine resource comparison for FY11 is incomplete at this time (numbers for “Current Gifts” have yet to be reported by the Council for Aid to Education). Available resources data is included as Addendum C and we will make the complete resources data available when we have it.

In the fall, our committee was asked to recommend a faculty member to serve on a newly formed College Fiduciary Committee charged to supervise, monitor and evaluate the management of Wheaton’s retirement plan. At the committee’s request, John Gildea agreed to serve in this capacity. Our committee met with Brian Douglas and John Gildea this spring for an update on the work of the Fiduciary Committee. The Fiduciary Committee is planning campus-wide informational sessions for next fall.

One of the committee’s goals for next year is to address workload concerns raised by faculty colleagues.

Respectfully submitted,

Jani Benoit
Deyonne Bryant
Matt Evans
Brenda Wyss, Chair
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Between Wheaton College Faculty and Wheaton College Administration

WHEREAS, the faculty is central to the delivery of Wheaton’s unique, transformative educational experience.

WHEREAS, attracting and retaining a diverse, highly qualified and highly motivated faculty is imperative for the long-term viability and success of the institution.

WHEREAS, the economic downturn has placed significant financial stress on Wheaton, necessitating expense reductions across the college and creating very challenging fiscal conditions for the college going forward.

WHEREAS, faculty salaries have recently fallen in real terms and relative to the Northeast Nine, our current comparison group.

WHEREAS, austerity measures taken by the college have resulted in reductions in the faculty personnel budget of more than $1M, which will result in academic work and service being absorbed by a smaller faculty.

Now, therefore, it is hereby agreed by and between the faculty and administration as follows:

The faculty members of Wheaton College agree to suspend the current faculty salary plan for the remaining two years of its term, FY13 and FY14. The faculty further accepts three years of 2% annual faculty raises plus funds to cover faculty equity adjustments as articulated in the current five year projections, subject to revision based on economic conditions. In return, Wheaton College’s Administration commits to work with the Committee on Faculty Workload and Economic Status to develop a multi-year framework for determining faculty salaries that will be implemented in FY16 and that follows the continuing principles (from FSP 2011-2014) below. The ways in which the operational guidelines will enact these principles will be determined.

- The faculty salary plan is intended to provide a clear and constructive framework in which the faculty and the administration are collaboratively advancing the mission and strategic priorities of the college and in which the faculty feel a direct connection to the financial well-being of the college in terms of both responsibilities and financial benefits.

- Faculty salaries continue to be a primary institutional priority and are to be treated as such throughout the budget process in accordance with the faculty salary plan rather than be treated as a remainder variable toward the end of the budget process.
A multi-year faculty salary plan, typically extending over three or four years, provides an important longer term policy perspective, while at the same time the plan is subject to annual approval by the President. The plan is intended to undergo formal review on a periodic basis. This helps to ensure, through collaboration between the administration and the faculty, that modifications and refinements are formally considered if necessary and as appropriate.

We, the undersigned, have read and commit to this MOU.