



Carl Vinson  
Institute of Government  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

# A Faculty Classification Plan & Compensation Strategy for Middle Georgia State University

Carl Vinson Institute of Government  
Strategic Operations & Planning Assistance (SOPA)

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## Objectives

Middle Georgia State University partnered with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia (Institute of Government) to develop a new compensation strategy for their academic and administrative faculty. On average, Middle Georgia State University faculty are compensated less than faculty at other public or master's institutions. For example, on average, under the current pay structure new professors at Middle Georgia State University are paid 74.1% of the median rate for new professors at public institutions across the United States. Assistant Professors at Middle Georgia State University are paid 87.2% of the median 10-month salary at regional public institutions surveyed. Full professors at Middle Georgia State University are paid 80.7% of the median pay for full professors at public institutions nation-wide. In order to address these pay gaps and the accompanying challenges with recruitment and retention, Middle Georgia State University partnered with the Institute of Government on this salary project. The objectives of the project were to:

1. Develop a new classification strategy for all academic and administrative faculty at Middle Georgia State University;
2. Collect wage data and develop a set of compensation tables by academic discipline compensation groupings for faculty and establish compensation levels for administrative faculty at Middle Georgia State University; and
3. Collaborate with administrators at Middle Georgia State University to ensure the successful implementation and maintenance of the faculty compensation strategy.

The process used to achieve these objectives consisted of several steps or phases.

The first phase involved collaborating with Middle Georgia State University administrators to review and discuss existing administrative/academic faculty classification and compensation practices. Next, the Institute of Government collected faculty data and disciplinary data to construct compensation groupings. Additionally, the Institute of Government collected comparable faculty compensation data using several sources, including a salary survey and data from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR). The Institute of Government then analyzed the comparable faculty compensation data and developed competitive pay levels for academic and administrative faculty. The Institute developed pay tables using the data from the salary survey and CUPA-HR. Finally, the Institute assigned pay levels using the pay tables and an adjustment for longevity in rank.

### *Academic Faculty Classification Plan*

The Institute of Government developed a new classification strategy for Middle Georgia State University's academic faculty. The Institute of Government identified ten unique academic faculty classifications<sup>1</sup> which are reflective of existing academic

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<sup>1</sup> Note, there are several deviations from the general faculty classification. For the School of Aviation there are seven categories: Lecturer – Bachelor's Degree or Lower; Lecturer – Master's Degree or Higher; Senior Lecturer – Bachelor's Degree or lower;

ranks and/or positions at Middle Georgia State University. Table I displays the academic faculty classifications.

**Table I: Middle Georgia State University Academic Faculty Classifications**

<b>Academic Faculty Classifications</b>
Lecturer – Master’s Degree
Lecturer – Doctoral Degree
Senior Lecturer – Master’s Degree
Senior Lecturer – Doctoral Degree
Assistant Professor – Master’s Degree
Assistant Professor – Doctoral Degree
Associate Professor – Master’s Degree
Associate Professor – Doctoral Degree
Professor – Terminal Degree, Non-Doctoral
Professor – Doctoral Degree

The Institute of Government identified six unique academic schools at Middle Georgia State University and thirty-three unique academic discipline compensation groupings within the schools. The academic faculty were organized for pay purposes based on their academic faculty classification, academic college, and academic discipline compensation grouping.

The rationale of organizing all of the academic faculty classifications into their respective schools plus their associated academic discipline compensation grouping was to allow Middle Georgia State University an opportunity to better recognize the disparities in salaries for different academic disciplines that are created by the external market value for a particular academic field. Table II displays all of the academic schools at Middle Georgia State University and their academic discipline compensation groupings.

***Administrative Faculty Strategy***

The Institute of Government utilized regional market data to derive compensation levels for administrative faculty (department heads, program directors, deans, and senior administrators). In addition, following discussions with university administrators, adjustments were made to compensation levels to account for organizational complexities, organizational restructurings, and equity throughout administrative positions. In all, the proposed compensation levels for administrative faculty take into account the external regional market as well as unique organizational and institutional factors at Middle Georgia State University.

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Senior Lecturer – Master’s Degree or Higher; Assistant Professor – Master’s Degree or Higher; Associate Professor – Master’s Degree or Higher; Professor – Terminal Degree. For the discipline of nursing (CIP 51.58) there are thirteen categories: Clinical Instructor – Any Degree; Assistant Professor – Master’s Degree; Assistant Professor – Master’s Degree & Nurse Practitioner; Assistant Professor – Doctorate; Assistant Professor – Doctorate & Nurse Practitioner; Associate Professor – Master’s Degree; Associate Professor – Master’s Degree & Nurse Practitioner; Associate Professor – Doctorate; Associate Professor – Doctorate & Nurse Practitioner; Professor – Master’s Degree; Professor – Master’s Degree & Nurse Practitioner; Professor – Doctorate; Professor – Doctorate & Nurse Practitioner.

## ***Salary Data***

The Institute of Government gathered salary data from several sources in order to assess the compensation paid by comparable employers. One key source of salary survey data was from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) *Faculty in Higher Education Annual Report 2021*. Further, the Institute of Government gathered data from peer institutions around the region to better understand the regional labor market for faculty and administrative positions. Table III displays the higher education institutions included in the peer comparison group of the Institute of Government's Salary Survey. Additional salary data was gathered from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For the CUPA-HR academic faculty salary survey, the Institute of Government paired each academic discipline compensation grouping with the appropriate Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) for their grouping. The CIP is a categorization of academic disciplines developed by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). It was last revised by the NCES in 2010. This action was necessary because CUPA-HR organizes their faculty salary survey data by CIP. In the salary survey instruments, the CIP codes were included to ensure that peer institutions provided appropriate salary data for specific faculty positions.

After pairing each of the academic discipline compensation groupings with their appropriate CIP, the Institute of Government collected and analyzed compensation data from the CUPA-HR Faculty in Higher Education Annual Report 2021 by five separate academic faculty classifications. The classifications were: Lecturer; Assistant Professor; New Assistant Professor; Associate Professor; and Professor. Table IV provides an example of the CUPA-HR salary data collected for the *Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences; and Related Disciplines* academic discipline compensation grouping. The same data was collected for all academic discipline compensation groupings and their relevant CIP(s).

Data was also collected through the Institute of Government's salary survey. The survey collected data on Assistant Professors and Instructors for each of the academic discipline compensation groupings as well as administrative faculty positions (e.g., deans, associate provosts, provost). Examples of data collected for academic discipline compensation groupings is included in Tables V-VIII. Additional data was collected from the of Labor Statistics for some disciplines.

**Table II: Academic Colleges & Academic Discipline Compensation Groupings**

<i>School</i>	<i>Academic Discipline Compensation Grouping (CIP Code)</i>
School of Arts & Letters	Communication, Media Studies; and Related Disciplines (9.01)
	English; and Related Disciplines (23)
	Fine Arts, Studio Arts; and Related Disciplines (50.07)
	History; and Related Disciplines (54)
	Music; and Related Disciplines (50.09)
	Romance Languages, Literatures, Linguistics; and Related Disciplines (16.09)
School of Aviation	Air Transportation; and Related Disciplines (49.01)
	Vehicle Maintenance, Repair Technologies/Technicians; and Related Disciplines (47.06)
School of Business	Accounting; and Related Disciplines (52.03)
	Business Administration, Management, Operations; and Related Disciplines (52.02)
	Business Economics, Managerial Economics; and Related Disciplines (52.06)
	Health Administrative Services, Medical Administrative Services; and Related Disciplines (51.07)
	Sports, Kinesiology, Physical Education, Fitness; and Related Disciplines (31.05)
School of Computing	Computer Sciences, Information Sciences; and Related Disciplines (11.)
	Management Information Systems, Management Information Services; and Related Disciplines (52.12)
	Mathematics, Statistics; and Related Disciplines (27)
School of Education & Behavioral Sciences	Criminal Justice, Corrections; and Related Disciplines (43.01)
	Education; and Related Disciplines (13)
	Mental Health Services, Social Health Services, Allied Professions; and Related Disciplines (51.15)
	Political Science, Government; and Related Disciplines (45.10)
	Psychology; and Related Disciplines (42)
	Public Administration; and Related Disciplines (44.04)
	Social Work; and Related Disciplines (44.07)
	Sociology; and Related Disciplines (45.11)

<i>School</i>	<i>Academic Discipline Compensation Grouping (CIP Code)</i>
School of Health & Natural Sciences	Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, Clinical Nursing; and Related Disciplines (51.38)
	Agricultural Sciences, Animal Sciences, Plant Sciences, Veterinary Sciences; and Related Disciplines (01)
	Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences; and Related Disciplines (26)
	Chemistry; and Related Disciplines (40.05)
	Mechanical Engineering; and Related Disciplines (14.19)
	Physics; and Related Disciplines (40.08)
	Allied Health & Medical Assisting Services; and Related Disciplines (51.08)
	Rehabilitation Professions, Therapeutic Professions; and Related Disciplines (51.23)
	Allied Health Diagnostic, Intervention, & Treatment Professions; and Related Disciplines (51.09)

**Table III: Salary Survey Respondents**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>State</b>
General Peer Programs	
Albany State	GA
Columbus State	GA
Dalton State	GA
Fort Valley State	GA
Georgia College	GA
West Georgia	GA
Valdosta State	GA
Aviation Programs	
Auburn University	AL
Middle Tennessee State University	TN
North Dakota State University	ND

**Table IV: Example CUPA-HR Data**

<i>Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences; and Related Disciplines (26)</i>	<b>Number of CUPA-HR Incumbents Public Institutions</b>	<b>Number of CUPA-HR Incumbents Masters Institutions</b>	<b>CUPA - HR Median Public Institution Salary</b>	<b>CUPA - HR Median Master's Institutions Salary</b>	<b>CUPA - HR Average Public Institution Salary</b>	<b>CUPA - HR Average Master's Institutions Salary</b>
Lecturer	87	7	\$60,839	\$60,900	\$62,287	\$58,809
New Assistant Professor	174	57	\$70,000	\$61,000	\$72,963	\$61,054
Assistant Professor	645	277	\$67,714	\$61,054	\$69,275	\$62,152
Associate Professor	904	302	\$76,521	\$69,813	\$78,571	\$70,864
Professor	3,954	1,026	\$93,752	\$85,412	\$101,183	\$86,785

**Table V: Salary Survey Data**

<i>Biological Sciences, Biomedical Sciences; and Related Disciplines (26)</i>	<b>Number of Incumbents</b>	<b>Median Value for Minimum 10-month Salary</b>	<b>Median Value for Maximum 10-month Salary</b>	<b>Median Value for Average Incumbent Salary</b>	<b>Median Length of Service</b>
Instructor	17	\$46,627	\$53,295	\$48,863	6.0
Assistant Professor	18	\$54,478	\$60,375	\$52,795	2.2

**Table VI: Salary Survey Data**

<i>Communication, Media Studies; and Related Disciplines (9.01)</i>	<b>Number of Incumbents</b>	<b>Median Value for Minimum 10-month Salary</b>	<b>Median Value for Maximum 10-month Salary</b>	<b>Median Value for Average Incumbent Salary</b>	<b>Median Length of Service</b>
Instructor	14	\$47,000	\$52,003	\$49,949	6.0
Assistant Professor	19	\$53,225	\$57,869	\$55,069	2.0

**Table VII: Salary Survey Data**

<i>Psychology; and Related Disciplines (42)</i>	Number of Incumbents	Median Value for Minimum 10-month Salary	Median Value for Maximum 10-month Salary	Median Value for Average Incumbent Salary	Median Length of Service
Assistant Professor	14	\$54,000	\$58,140	\$56,904	4.5

**Table VIII: Salary Survey Data**

<i>Political Science, Government; and Related Disciplines (45.10)</i>	Number of Incumbents	Median Value for Minimum 10-month Salary	Median Value for Maximum 10-month Salary	Median Value for Average Incumbent Salary	Median Length of Service
Instructor	9	\$48,548	\$52,878	\$50,890	4.3
Assistant Professor	12	\$56,730	\$61,834	\$55,960	3.5

The Institute of Government consulted with administrators to understand the desired market position for Middle Georgia State University’s academic faculty. The general target was to be at the median of the regional academic labor market for similar institutions. Target compensation levels were determined by first using data from the Institute of Government salary survey and then utilizing the collected national CUPA-HR data. Notably, for some academic compensation groupings there were not sufficient observations in the Institute’s salary survey to justify using regional data. In those cases, the strategy was to compare the regional market position of other academic groupings in a particular school to national CUPA-HR for public and master’s institution data and then use that as a benchmark to adjust data using the CUPA-HR data for the particular academic classification grouping. For administrative faculty the Institute of Government’s recommendations were driven primarily by examining compensation levels from the responding institutions from the regional academic labor market.

### ***Compensation Strategy***

The Institute of Government developed pay tables with new minimum salaries for each identified academic faculty classification (by academic discipline compensation grouping) by utilizing the salary data from the Institute of Governments Salary Survey and salary data from the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) in addition to reviewing Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data. The Institute of Government then prepared pay tables for each of the academic discipline compensation groupings, see Table IX for an example of the data included in the pay tables (the complete pay tables are included in the appendix of the report). Each pay table includes 10 compensation categories listed in Table 1.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The academic discipline groupings for the School of Aviation (Air Transportation; and Related Disciplines (49.01) and Vehicle Maintenance, Repair Technologies/Technicians; and Related Disciplines (47.06)) only contain seven compensation categories. The academic compensation grouping for Registered Nursing,



**Table IX: Select Academic Discipline Compensation Groupings Minimum 10-Month Salary**

<i>Academic Discipline Compensation Grouping (CIP Code)</i>	<b>Communication, Media Studies; and Related Disciplines (9.01)</b>	<b>Political Science, Government; and Related Disciplines (45.10)</b>	<b>Mechanical Engineering; and Related Disciplines (14.19)</b>
Lecturer Master's or Lower	\$ 39,400.00	\$ 39,364.00	\$ 49,982.00
Lecturer Doctorate	\$ 43,340.00	\$ 43,300.40	\$ 54,980.20
Senior Lecturer with Master's	\$ 45,310.00	\$ 45,268.60	\$ 57,479.30
Senior Lecturer with Doctorate	\$ 49,250.00	\$ 49,205.00	\$ 62,477.50
Assistant Professor Master's	\$ 49,250.00	\$ 49,205.00	\$ 62,477.50
Assistant Professor Doctorate	\$ 53,190.00	\$ 53,141.40	\$ 67,475.70
Associate Professor Master's	\$ 59,100.00	\$ 59,046.00	\$ 74,973.00
Associate Professor Doctorate	\$ 63,828.00	\$ 63,769.68	\$ 80,970.84
Professor Terminal Degree	\$ 70,920.00	\$ 70,855.20	\$ 89,967.60
Professor Doctorate	\$ 76,593.60	\$ 76,523.62	\$ 97,165.01

The pay tables follow a pattern between compensation categories. Starting with a Lecturer with a master’s degree position as our baseline:

- The minimum for a Lecturer with a doctoral degree would be a 10% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a master’s degree.
- The minimum for a Senior Lecturer with a master’s degree would be a 15% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a master’s degree.
- The minimum for a Senior Lecturer with a doctorate would be an 25% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a master’s degree.
- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a Master’s degree would be a 25% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a master’s degree.
- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a Doctorate would be a 35% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a master’s degree.

For advancement from a Lecturer position to a Senior Lecturer, there is a 15% premium from the minimum for a Lecturer to the minimum for a Senior Lecturer. When a person is advanced from a Lecturer to a Senior Lecturer, they would receive a pay increase of either \$1,500 or be placed at the minimum for a Senior Lecturer, whichever is greater. It is important to recognize that the pay increase will likely be less than 15% since a Lecturer would have likely received some pay increase over their time of service as a Lecturer.

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Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, Clinical Nursing; and Related Disciplines (51.38) has 13 compensation categories as described in footnote 1.

For advancement in faculty rank, the minimum for an Associate Professor is a 20% premium compared to the minimum for an Assistant Professor. In practical terms, the increase for a given faculty member would be less than 20%. They would have likely had some pay increases from their initial starting salary as an Assistant Professor, so when they are promoted to an Associate Professor, they would either receive a \$3,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for the Associate Professor, whichever is greater.

For advancement in rank to the full Professor level, the minimum for a full Professor with a doctorate would be a 20% premium compared to the minimum for an Associate Professor with a doctorate. When promoted to full Professor, they would receive either a \$5,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for Professor, whichever is greater.

### **Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, Clinical Nursing; and Related Disciplines (51.38)**

For the nursing compensation grouping, the baseline position is an Assistant Professor with a master's degree.

- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master's degree is a 15% premium above the minimum for a clinical Instructor.
- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master's degree and nurse practitioner status is a 5% premium above the minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master's degree.
- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a doctoral degree is a 10% premium above the minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master's degree.
- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a doctoral degree and nurse practitioner status is a 15% premium above the minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master's degree.

An Assistant Professor with a master's degree who advances to the rank of Associate Professor with a master's degree would see a 20% difference between the minimum of an Assistant Professor with a master's degree and the minimum of an Associate Professor with a master's degree. In practical terms, the increase for a given faculty member would be less than 20%. They would have likely had some pay increases from their initial starting salary as an Assistant Professor, so when they are promoted to an Associate Professor, they would either receive a \$3,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for the Associate Professor, whichever is greater. For promotion to full professor, the faculty member would either receive a \$5,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for Professor, whichever is greater.

### **School of Aviation Compensation Groupings**

The baseline for the School of Aviation is the Lecturer with a bachelor's degree.

- The minimum for a Lecturer with a master's degree or higher would receive a 10% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a bachelor's degree.
- The minimum for a Senior Lecturer with a bachelor's degree would receive a 15% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a bachelor's degree.
- The minimum for a Senior Lecturer with a master's degree or higher would receive a 20% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a bachelor's degree.

- The minimum for an Assistant Professor with a master’s degree or greater would be a 25% premium compared to the minimum for a Lecturer with a bachelor’s degree.

For advancement in rank, the minimum for an Associate Professor is a 20% premium compared to the minimum for an Assistant Professor. In practical terms, the increase for a given faculty member would be less than 20%. They would have likely had some pay increases from their initial starting salary as an Assistant Professor, so when they are promoted to an Associate Professor, they would either receive a \$3,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for the Associate Professor, whichever is greater. For promotion to full Professor, the faculty member would either receive a \$5,000 pay increase or be placed at the minimum for Professor, whichever is greater.

**Administrative Faculty**

Administrative faculty salaries are adjusted to 12-month rates for their compensation group with a review of market compensation levels. Notably, this study recommends that the administration review the administrative salaries to ensure that they are adjusted to capture issues of equity, organizational complexity, and any organizational restructuring which might occur.

**Length of Service at Current Rank**

Each faculty member was assigned to the appropriate faculty compensation category based on their rank and degree and their pay was set to the minimum for the compensation grouping at that level. Then, each faculty member’s salary was additionally evaluated based on their time in their current rank. This length of service was then used to adjust salaries to mitigate against salary compression for faculty who have been in their current rank for longer periods of time. The adjustment percentages are listed in Table X. As an example, a faculty member who has a new minimum salary for their position of \$60,100.65 and 6 years of service would be eligible for a longevity add-on or length of service adjustment of \$961.61 ( $60,100.65 * 1.6\%$ ), for an adjusted salary target of \$61,062.26.

**Table X: Length of Service Adjustments**

<b>Length of Service in Years</b>	<b>Salary Adjustment</b>
0-2.99	0%
3-6.99	1.6%
7-13.99	3.9%
14 or more	7.5%

\*Length of service was calculated based on time in rank as of 8/1/2022.

**Target Salary**

Each faculty member then received a target salary based on the following calculation. This was done by summing the minimum for their pay category and compensation grouping with their length of service adjustment. That was then compared to their current

pay. If their current pay was less than the calculated target, then their proposed target salary would be the sum of the minimum and their length of service adjustment. If a faculty member's current salary was greater than the sum of the minimum and the length of service adjustment then the new target salary was the sum of their current salary and the length of service adjustment. This was calculated for all faculty and administrative faculty.

### ***Total Cost of Implementation***

The Institute of Government estimated the cost to fully implement the new compensation strategy (new minimum salaries and longevity adjustments) for Middle Georgia State University. The estimated cost of implementation was based on raising the salary for academic faculty whose current contract salary is below the new minimum salary for their proposed classification up to the minimum for their discipline group together with a longevity adjustment to minimize salary compression. For those faculty whose current salary is already above the proposed minimum, they will be given a longevity adjustment to their current salary. For administrative faculty, the Institute of Government has identified target compensation levels and recommends that first faculty be assigned their minimum salary for their academic compensation group and then adjusted for longevity. The implementation plan covers academic faculty and administrative faculty at Middle Georgia State University. The estimated total cost to fully implement the proposed compensation strategy is \$1,849,222.52.

### ***Implementation Strategy***

Implementation of revised faculty pay structures often requires a multi-year implementation strategy. In this case, after consultation with administrators from Middle Georgia State University, the Institute of Government has recommended a phased implementation strategy to increase faculty salaries to the proposed levels for academic faculty and administrative faculty over more than one fiscal year.

### ***Outcomes***

In conclusion, the developed compensation strategy will produce several beneficial results for Middle Georgia State University. These include:

1. New classification strategy for academic and administrative faculty that improves market-based equity.
2. Updated salary tables that enhance the competitive position of the institution to improve its ability to attract and retain quality faculty.
3. An achievable implementation strategy.