

**KSU'S STANDING IN  
THE 2003 NATIONAL REPORTS  
ON UNIVERSITY FACULTY SALARIES**

**Prepared  
by the**

**Center for Institutional Effectiveness  
Kennesaw State University**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each fall, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP, [www.aaup.org](http://www.aaup.org)) and the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA, [www.cupahr.org](http://www.cupahr.org)) conduct faculty salary surveys among the nation's colleges and universities and publish reports of their findings during the following year. The latest AAUP and CUPA salary surveys for the 2002-2003 academic year were published recently in 2003. The following analysis of KSU's standing relative to the results of these national surveys of faculty salaries was prepared by the staff of KSU's Center for Institutional Effectiveness and is based upon data reported and available from these widely respected national surveys.

A number of highlights concerning KSU's faculty salaries were spotlighted in this report. The key observations made about KSU's faculty salaries in relation to the national survey results are as follows:

1. **KSU's average faculty salaries at each rank were virtually equivalent to the national averages for all public comprehensive masters universities (Category IIA);**
2. **Only about a third of comprehensive masters institutions in the nation had higher average faculty salaries than KSU's;**
3. **Faculty salary averages at KSU were somewhat higher than the averages at the other public comprehensive masters universities in Georgia;**
4. **KSU's average faculty salaries were substantially lower than those at Georgia's public research universities, reflecting categorical differences that existed at the national level between Category I and IIA institutions;**
5. **Notable salary differences existed among discipline groups of faculty at the national level and at KSU, with faculty from the business and computing fields having substantially higher salaries than faculty in most other academic disciplines;**
6. **In keeping with national salary patterns among academic disciplines, KSU's average faculty salaries were highest for the College of Business and lowest for the School of the Arts;**
7. **Because of the great gulf in average salaries between the business and computing faculty on the one hand and all other faculty on the other hand, the average faculty salaries for KSU as a whole could be misleading since they were not true reflections of the typical salaries received by most KSU faculty in each rank;**

- 8. Despite institutional interest in comparing departmental salary averages at KSU, too few faculty salaries are available at each rank within each department for sound statistical calculations or valid comparisons of the means.**

**Overall, faculty salaries at KSU appear to have been well positioned and strong relative to the national averages for institutions of comparable type in 2002-2003. KSU's faculty salaries also appear to have been consistent with national salary patterns that exist among the different academic disciplines. Caution is advised when comparing and interpreting average faculty salaries.**

## CONTEXTUAL NOTES

Average faculty salaries at the college and university level are typically calculated and reported for the 9-month academic year within each of the four standard faculty ranks for an institution's faculty as a whole. The four commonly used faculty ranks reflect substantially different levels of academic and professional achievement and seniority that are correlated with salary levels. From highest to lowest, these ranks are Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, and Instructor.

In addition, average faculty salaries are often highest at the comprehensive doctoral/research universities and lowest at the two-year community colleges. Differences also exist between the public and private colleges. Consequently, average faculty salaries are commonly reported within comparable categories (such as public comprehensive masters institutions for KSU).

Average faculty salaries also vary substantially among different academic programs and disciplines, reflecting market conditions that impact salaries differently for various professions in society at large. The average salaries of faculty in medicine, law, and engineering are routinely much greater than the average salaries for faculty in the liberal arts, for example. Likewise, in institutions like KSU, the salaries of faculty in the business and computing fields are typically much higher than those of faculty in the arts and sciences. Consequently, institutions with proportionately greater numbers of faculty in professional programs like KSU are likely to have higher average faculty salaries than institutions with proportionately greater numbers of faculty in liberal arts programs.

An "average" salary (i.e., the arithmetic mean) is a good, valid, and defensible indicator of the typical salary received by most faculty when the number of salaries comprising the average (sample size) is large and when the distribution of those salaries is normal. When that is not the case, an average salary can easily become suspect, misleading, or meaningless. An average is especially vulnerable to error and distortion when sample sizes are small or when the distribution of salaries is skewed, bimodal, or irregular in some other way.

The highlights that follow were derived from data in the annual national reports of faculty salaries for 2002-2003 that were published in 2003 by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA). These national salary surveys request institutions to provide data on all instructional faculty members, including their academic year salaries, faculty ranks, and discipline codes. Faculty employed on a fiscal basis (12-month) have their salaries converted to a 9-month equivalent before average salaries for the academic year are calculated and reported.

## INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR KSU

Eight key observations concerning KSU's standing in the 2003 national reports on faculty salaries are presented below.

**Highlight #1.** KSU's average faculty salaries by rank continued to be virtually equivalent to the national averages for public comprehensive masters institutions (Category IIA) in the 2002-2003 academic year.

### AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003

Comparison Group	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
Kennesaw State (Category IIA)	\$74,800	\$59,400	\$47,600	\$39,900
National Public Comprehensive Masters (Category IIA)	\$74,500	\$59,100	\$49,100	\$36,400

- A review of this comparison in past years' issues of the KSU Fact Book (see <http://ir.kennesaw.edu/fb>) will reveal that KSU's average faculty salaries by rank have consistently kept pace with the national averages in KSU's institutional category.
- Even though KSU's average faculty salaries were very close to the national means, the national distribution of faculty salaries was skewed. Consequently, KSU's averages at each rank were typically between the 60<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> percentile of the national sample. In other words, only about one-third of the comprehensive masters institutions (Category IIA) had higher average salaries than KSU.
- Increases in the average salaries by rank from year to year are not only affected by the size of annual salary increases received, but also by a variety of other factors including market conditions affecting new hires, the employment of distinguished/endowed chairs, promotions in rank, retirements, resignations, etc.

**Highlight #2.** KSU's average faculty salaries by rank continued to be roughly 5-10% higher than the averages at comparable public comprehensive masters institutions (Category IIA) in Georgia with the exception of Georgia Southern, where average salaries came very close to KSU's in nearly all ranks.

**AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003**

Comparison Group	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
Kennesaw State	\$74,800	\$59,400	\$47,600	\$39,900
GA Southern	74,200	57,400	47,600	34,300
Augusta	71,400	53,900	44,200	38,300
West GA	70,700	55,700	45,800	34,700
Columbus	70,100	52,600	42,800	38,400
Valdosta	68,600	53,600	46,400	36,600
Southern Poly	67,300	58,000	50,100	44,700
GA College	65,000	54,400	46,500	40,500

- Although all of these public universities in Georgia qualify for the same institutional category (IIA) in the national surveys, they are all not completely comparable. Unlike the others, Southern Poly, for example, specializes in engineering technology programs, and its average salaries are reflective of the market conditions for technology specialists, particularly in the lower ranks. Similarly, Georgia College probably has proportionately more faculty in the arts and sciences than in the higher paid professional disciplines since its mission emphasizes education in the liberal arts.
- Salary differences among these institutions appear to vary less at the junior ranks than at the senior ranks. Institutions with higher proportions of experienced and distinguished faculty and little turnover in the senior ranks, especially in the business and computing fields, are likely to have higher average salaries for full professors. Faculty employed in the junior ranks typically have less variability in experience and years of service and are more affected by common market conditions affecting the salaries of recent hires.

**Highlight #3.** The national averages of faculty salaries by rank at the public comprehensive doctoral institutions (Category I) continued to be substantially higher than the averages for most ranks at the public comprehensive masters institutions (Category IIA), especially for full professors.

**NATIONAL AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003**

Comparison Group	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
Public Comprehensive Doctoral (Category I)	\$92,400	\$64,900	\$55,000	\$37,600
Public Comprehensive Masters (Category IIA)	\$74,500	\$59,100	\$49,100	\$36,400
Category I Avg Compared to Category IIA Avg	24% Higher	10% Higher	12% Higher	3% Higher

- Salary premiums are often paid by the research and "flagship" universities included in Category I institutions, especially when nationally recognized researchers and scholars are employed. Consequently, average salaries are higher in Category I than in other institutional categories. Such premiums are especially pronounced in the senior ranks, particularly when distinguished and eminent endowed chairs are employed.
- Instructors are typically masters-level faculty who are hired at Category I and Category IIA institutions to perform similar undergraduate teaching duties primarily. The salary premiums paid by Category I institutions for faculty research skills and credentials do not generally apply to faculty at the rank of Instructor. Consequently, there is a relatively small difference between the national averages for Instructors at Category I and Category IIA institutions.

**Highlight #4.** Following national salary patterns, Georgia State University's and the University of Georgia's (Category I) average faculty salaries were substantially higher than KSU's (Category IIA) at most ranks, especially at the full professor level.

**AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003**

Comparison Group	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
Georgia State (Category I)	\$111,600	\$68,800	\$57,200	\$37,500
UGA (Category I)	\$ 90,800	\$64,500	\$55,300	\$45,200
KSU (Category IIA)	\$ 74,800	\$59,600	\$47,600	\$39,900
GSU to KSU	49% Higher	15% Higher	20% Higher	6% Lower
UGA to KSU	21% Higher	8% Higher	16% Higher	13% Higher

- UGA's average faculty salaries were very close to the national averages for Category I institutions; GSU's were somewhat higher, especially for full professors.
- Clearly, the substantial differences in mission between these research universities and KSU are reflected in sizable differences between their average faculty salaries and KSU's in keeping with national patterns.
- Georgia State's higher position relative to UGA may be attributable in part to a greater proportion of faculty employed in professional programs where faculty salaries are higher than in the arts and sciences. That difference would not totally account for the gulf in average salaries at the full professor level, however.



**Highlight #5.** In the business and computing fields at public comprehensive masters institutions in the nation, average faculty salaries were typically in the 80<sup>s</sup> for Professors, 70<sup>s</sup> for Associate Professors, 60<sup>s</sup> for Assistant Professors, and 40<sup>s</sup> for Instructors. The national averages for most other disciplines were typically in the 60<sup>s</sup> for Professors, 50<sup>s</sup> for Associate Professors, 40<sup>s</sup> for Assistant Professors, and 30<sup>s</sup> for Instructors. The lowest averages were in the arts and humanities.

**NATIONAL AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003  
(Public Comprehensive Masters Institutions)**

<b>Discipline Group</b>	<b>Faculty Ranks</b>			
	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Associate</b>	<b>Assistant</b>	<b>Instructor</b>
<b><u>Business Fields</u></b>				
Finance	\$86,400	\$76,400	\$71,300	\$42,700
Accounting	84,300	73,900	67,100	41,700
Marketing	83,100	72,500	65,500	40,600
Management	80,400	69,800	62,800	42,600
Economics	76,200	62,700	54,900	38,800
<b><u>Computing Fields</u></b>				
Information Systems	82,300	73,400	68,200	45,200
Computer Science	79,400	68,600	61,000	42,100
<b><u>Sciences</u></b>				
Physics	71,600	55,200	46,700	35,700
Chemistry	70,900	53,900	45,400	33,400
Mathematics	70,400	55,800	46,700	34,600
Biology	70,000	53,900	45,300	33,700
<b><u>Education</u></b>				
Special Education	71,000	56,000	48,600	37,400
Teacher Education	67,300	55,300	46,200	36,700
<b><u>Health-Related</u></b>				
Nursing	68,000	56,800	47,400	41,300
Social Work	68,200	55,300	45,900	38,000
HPE/Fitness	67,100	55,500	46,900	36,800

**NATIONAL AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003 (CONTINUED)**  
**(Public Comprehensive Masters Institutions)**

Discipline Group	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
<b><u>Social Sciences</u></b>				
Public Administration	\$75,700	\$57,700	\$48,500	N.A.
Philosophy	72,800	53,500	45,200	32,000
Geography	70,900	53,800	45,500	34,300
Anthropology	70,700	56,000	44,900	32,600
Political Science	69,900	53,500	43,600	37,200
Criminal Justice	69,300	54,600	46,500	36,100
Sociology	69,300	54,000	44,600	34,700
Psychology	69,200	53,900	45,100	35,700
History	69,000	52,900	42,800	34,800
<b><u>Humanities</u></b>				
Communications	66,500	54,500	44,400	35,100
English	66,200	51,800	43,200	31,800
Foreign Language	65,600	53,100	43,200	32,100
<b><u>Arts</u></b>				
Theater	67,100	51,900	43,200	34,500
Art	66,600	53,100	43,800	34,700
Music	64,300	51,600	42,800	35,200

- Among these disciplines (which are all represented on KSU's faculty), some differences existed between the lowest average salaries in the arts and humanities and the higher average salaries in the sciences and helping professions. However, those differences were relatively modest compared to the jump in average salaries that existed between the sciences and the professional programs in the business and computing fields. That was true for faculty salaries at KSU, as well as throughout the nation.

**Highlight #6.** KSU's average salaries were highest for the College of Business and lowest for the School of the Arts, consistent with national salary patterns among academic disciplines at public comprehensive masters institutions.

**AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003**

KSU College/ School	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
Business	\$90,300	\$77,600	\$62,800	\$47,500
Science & Mathematics	73,300	60,800	49,600	44,100
Health & Human Services	67,100	53,100	44,600	38,600
Education	66,800	56,500	45,300	40,500
Humanities & Social Sciences	63,400	50,200	44,100	35,500
Arts	58,700	53,200	42,600	35,000

- The salary differences noted previously in the national averages by discipline were reflected in these average faculty salaries by college at KSU.
- The distribution of faculty salaries in the College of Science & Mathematics was bimodal. Salaries for a fourth of the faculty who were in the computing fields were typically in the 80s, while the salaries for the remaining three-fourths of the faculty were much lower. When the faculty salaries in the computing fields were excluded from the averages for that college, the resulting means were much closer to the national averages for the sciences and to the averages of all other colleges (except Business) as noted below:

College of Science & Math Excluding the Computing Fields	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Associate</u>	<u>Assistant</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
	\$68,000	\$53,400	\$44,400	\$35,800

**Highlight #7.** KSU's average salaries were not true reflections of the typical compensation received by many faculty at each rank. To the contrary, three-fourths of the KSU faculty were in academic disciplines where the national averages of salaries were substantially below the KSU averages for each rank. The other one-fourth of the KSU faculty were in business or computing fields where the national averages of salaries were substantially above the KSU average for each rank. Consequently, the KSU averages fell between these two distinct subgroups of national and KSU faculty salaries and represented neither group very accurately. In statistical terms, the bimodal nature of the distribution of KSU's faculty salaries made the arithmetic mean rather useless and misleading as a descriptor of typical faculty salaries at each rank.

**AVERAGE 9-MONTH SALARIES IN 2002-2003**

Faculty Subgroups	Faculty Ranks			
	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor
KSU Averages for All Fields Combined	\$74,800	\$59,400	\$47,600	\$39,900
Business & Computing Fields at KSU	\$89,600	\$75,800	\$66,700	\$51,600
All Other Fields at KSU	\$65,100	\$54,800	\$43,900	\$37,200
Business/Computing Compared to All Other Fields	38% Higher	38% Higher	52% Higher	39% Higher

- KSU has an exceptionally large and nationally recognized AACSB-accredited College of Business that compares favorably with the business schools at Georgia's research universities. KSU's programs in Computer Science, Information Systems, and the Yamacraw initiative are also exceptionally large and notable. Average faculty salaries have had to meet or exceed national averages for public comprehensive masters institutions in these disciplines for KSU to be competitive in these endeavors.
- KSU's faculty salaries have also been competitive in other fields as well. However, the national averages for those other fields fall substantially below the national averages for the business and computing fields.

**Highlight #8. Average salaries for the KSU faculty could be calculated at each rank within each of KSU's 27 instructional departments. However, most of those averages would be statistically unstable, unrepresentative, and/or indefensible because the sample sizes involved are so small and below acceptable standards. Consequently, a departmental matrix of average faculty salaries was not produced for the text of this report. Under these circumstances, the most appropriate analysis would be a case-by-case examination of the individual's salary in the context of the common factors affecting salary levels, such as highest degrees, work experience, employment histories, meritorious accomplishments, market conditions for specializations, administrative responsibilities, endowed chair holder statuses, merit increase histories, etc.**

- Statisticians generally avoid calculating an average when the number of cases involved is less than 10 since the arithmetic mean can be so greatly distorted by a single "outlier" or exceptional case.
- KSU's departmental matrix for reporting salaries at each rank contained 108 cells for salary averages (27 departments x 4 ranks = 108 cells). For 2002-2003, only 6 of the 108 cells had 10 or more faculty salaries. Thus, almost all (94%) of the cells had too few cases for a defensible average to be calculated. Furthermore, two-thirds of the cells had fewer than 5 cases making those prospective averages especially suspect and vulnerable to distortion; calculating "average" from a single case is rather meaningless. In contrast, the national averages reported above for the different disciplines were typically calculated from hundreds of cases and are much less vulnerable to sampling error.
- A good actual example of just how distorted and misleading an average can be when it is calculated from a small sample of cases can be seen for assistant professors in one of KSU's departments. Three of the four assistant professors in that department had very similar academic year salaries in the mid-40<sup>s</sup>; the fourth assistant professor was an exceptional case paid in the mid-60<sup>s</sup> as an endowed distinguished chair holder. When the "outlier" salary of the highly accomplished distinguished chair holder was averaged with the other three similar salaries of junior assistant professors, the resulting average was substantially higher than the typical assistant professor's salary in that department and in the entire college. The distorted average for assistant professors in that department was nearly the same as the average for the three associate professors in the department. Had there been 9 typical assistant professor salaries instead of 3 to average with the one outlier, the distortion of the average for the 10 assistant professors would have been much less than it was when only four salaries were averaged. Ideally, outliers would be removed from such statistical calculations before an average is calculated because the situation of an outlier is not comparable to the others in the average. In this case, the higher salary of the distinguished chair was quite justified in a case-by-case salary analysis of the assistant professors in the department. Use of the average salary could have been very misleading.

## CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

**Overall, faculty salaries at KSU appeared to be well positioned and strong relative to the national averages for institutions of comparable type. KSU's faculty salaries also appeared to be consistent with national salary patterns and averages that existed among the different academic disciplines. However, the bimodal nature of the distribution of faculty salaries which exists at KSU and elsewhere in the nation requires us to approach the interpretation and comparison of average faculty salaries cautiously and carefully in order to avoid false or misleading conclusions about the institution's or an individual's standing.**