No one from the previous year’s committee wanted to serve as a chair of the committee, so Devon Hanahan and Bill Olejniczak agreed to serve as co-chairs. The committee met 8 times during the academic year. Only Devon and Bill (and ex-officio member Deanna Caveny-Noecker) were returning members so the first meetings were largely taken up by new members asking many questions that inevitably come with this committee concerning unfamiliar terminology, such as CUPA-HR and salary peer-groups, the annual merit process that is used by the administration to determine faculty salaries, and the annual deadlines for when the College submits salary data to the state and to various organizations to which the college subscribes. The steep learning curve that this committee requires of its new members has prompted the committee to agree to develop a handy one-page form (which will be available on-line) with basic compensation terminology for new members (This will be a central task for the 2013-14 committee).

The committee determined early on that it would move in a substantially new direction from previous compensation committees. At the same time, it naturally had to conduct unfinished and on-going committee work from 2011-12 as well as to review new items submitted over the course of the year for the committee’s consideration. The following is a summary of the highlights of the achievements of the committee of 2012-13.

• In early September the committee formulated a timely resolution (in line with the recommendations of the 2011-12 compensation committee) that was sent to the Provost about faculty raises planned to go into effect in late 2012. It stated:

  “The Faculty Compensation Committee proposes the following guidelines for handling the 1½% raise for the 2012-13 school year: Given that this is not a substantial raise, we recommend that half the amount be distributed to schools and departments based on their proportion of differential between their compensation data and the 2011-2012 CUPA-HR data, and that half the amount be distributed based on the schools and departments’ proportion of the salary pool.”

  This message was read but its recommendations were not followed by the President.

• Early in the fall Devon Hanahan (in conjunction with Deanna Caveny-Noecker) continued her valuable work from the previous year in drawing up a systematic adjunct faculty salary questionnaire (survey) that was revised and improved and then sent out to relevant institutions. Responses have been coming in and this will be a continuing item for the 2013-14 committee, which will share its results with the Faculty Welfare Committee.
In September Bill Olejniczak asked the committee to rethink its customary task, suggesting that the committee move away from its traditional role of a collecting and reporting body on faculty salaries to an active body that would work with the administration to systematically improve salaries over an agreed-upon period of time. The committee would continue to focus on the long-standing college-approved peer group of institutions and would continue to use current faculty salary data. But it would devise salary targets corresponding to faculty rank, and it would set a time-frame for those specified targets to be met. The committee would take on a new role as the central faculty committee that would regularly report on the progress of the college.

For this to happen it was quickly realized that the expertise of the Office of Institutional Research would be needed. The head of this office, Jim Posey, was invited to an early meeting, and he enthusiastically offered his services to the committee. Over the course of the next several meetings Jim became the “data anchor” of the committee. Without his assistance, the committee would not have been able to complete its goal of creating specific salary targets.

Zeff Bjerken brought forward another initiative in the form of a substantive letter written by several chairs in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. This letter raised important questions about fairness and equity in current college practices concerning the determination of chair compensation. Particular concerns are inequities caused by department size, rank of department chair, and lack of administrative guarantee of a 1/9 increase in base salary at the end of a 60-month term as chair.

In light of these important initiatives all brought forward in the fall, Cyndi May asked the committee to have a special meeting whereby it would vote on which of the items on the committee’s plate would receive top priority for the remainder of the year. The concern was to avoid spreading committee energies too thin as well as to offer the college one major completed task from the committee. At the October meeting, after substantial discussion, the committee voted to make the new approach to faculty salaries its top priority for the remainder of the year. The important tasks of adjunct faculty salaries and chair compensation were moved down the priority list. Nevertheless, the adjunct faculty compensation survey was indeed sent out to relevant institutions. In addition, the committee succeeded in sending out a comprehensive questionnaire about chair compensation to relevant institutions (this survey was revised in the fall and sent out in the spring term with the approval of Academic Affairs, spearheaded by Deanna Caveny-Noecker. Responses began to arrive late in the spring term and it is expected that next year’s committee will follow up on this initiative).

At this point, Jim Posey’s salary data became the main item of business. Jim added an essential feature: cost-of-living data for a more nuanced comparative framework. His graphs also indicated the precise percentages and dollar amounts that would be needed for the college to catch up to its peers (the College of Charleston for many years has consistently ranked in the bottom half of the peer group of 20 institutions). From a procedural and institutional standpoint, the committee also decided to enlist faculty support for its initiative at the Faculty Senate.
At a key meeting in February the committee determined to bring forward a resolution with appropriate salary data and graphs in time for the March Faculty Senate meeting. This was necessary in order for the committee to be able to bring forward its resolution and salary data to the April Board of Trustees meeting, so that the Board would have in its possession this data to include in its deliberations about next year’s annual college budget. Deanna Caveny-Noecker and Jim Posey coordinated in working with the committee in putting together the final revisions in the salary data for presentation to the Senate. Devon and Bill brought a slightly modified resolution to the Faculty Senate and it was passed unanimously (the resolution and salary data is attached). The College has now committed to meeting the mean salaries of the CUPA-HR peer institutionally at each discipline for all College of Charleston faculty ranks (instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, professor). The deadline to meet or exceed these targets is September, 2018. The actual dollar amounts necessary for each rank are in the data (the administration has included median salaries of the CUPA-HR peer institutions as well).

Equally important, the committee is now the central agent for assessing the progress of the College in its report to the Senate every April.

The March compensation committee meeting was devoted to going over the complex procedural groundwork for getting this resolution and salary data onto the agenda of the April Board of Trustees meeting. The committee met the Board’s agenda deadlines with Deanna Caveny-Noecker taking the lead. Faculty Speaker, Lynn Cherry, agreed to make the actual presentation to the Board (the committee has no formal standing on the Board so it was not allowed to make a presentation). The committee also discussed the first responses coming in from the chair compensation survey. The committee expects to do follow-up surveys through the spring and into next year in order to get a greater return rate. One last item concerned the request of the Faculty Welfare Committee to add an adjunct faculty as a permanent new member to the compensation committee. This request was approved (the Faculty Welfare committee subsequently removed this request from the April Senate agenda so no action was taken).

At the final meeting of the year Devon Hanahan was elected chair and Zeff Bjerken was elected secretary. The new committee members were introduced and apprised of the progress made by this year’s committee and preliminary plans for next year were also outlined.