It is the policy of Western Carolina University, subject to availability of funds and consistent with State law and policy, to compensate its career banded employees at a level that promotes successful work behavior, emphasizes demonstrated competencies that are linked to organizational goals, reinforces high standards of performance, and maintains the labor market competitiveness necessary to recruit, retain and develop a competent and diverse work force.

Employees in the career banding program within Western Carolina University will receive fair and equitable treatment for career opportunity and compensation. Career Banding Salary Administration policy and guidelines will be applied consistently for all employees.

**Human Resources Responsibilities**

The career banding administrator for Western Carolina University is a Personnel Analyst II. This position also manages Western’s classification and compensation program. The Director of Human Resources and Director of Affirmative Action serve as backup and co-managers of the career banding initiative. The analyst oversees the program to ensure that communication, training, evaluation, accountability and equal opportunity components are in the plan.

HR will ensure that managers be trained in career banding salary administration prior to implementation within their respective areas. HR will also provide on-going technical support for managers making salary decisions.

Upon implementation within each occupational group, managers will make recommendations for salary decisions to HR. All salary recommendations are reviewed for final approval by HR. HR will work directly with the departmental supervisors in setting market rates and applying pay factors for individual employees.

Salary administration at Western will continue to be centralized in the HR office because WCU administers salary reserves at the institution level rather than at the division or department level. Equitable distribution of limited funding across the University will be monitored by the HR Director in discussion with the Chief Financial Officer and Chancellor. WCU is committed to identifying institutional funds for each occupational area as it is banded. To ensure equity in fund distribution, it is imperative that it is managed centrally at the institution level similar to the management of centralize reserves.

HR will conduct periodic self-assessments of career banding program operation including but not limited to the following:
Tracking dispute resolution decisions resulting from career banding salary decisions.
Determining if the career banding concept has been communicated to employees in areas where career banding has been implemented.
Determining if pay factors have been applied properly and consistently.
Determining if employees have been provided equitable opportunities for development and advancement.
Ensuring that Western does not engage in unlawful discrimination.

HR will report results of the career banding program self-assessments to the Office of State Personnel annually and more often if required by OSP. Detailed information will be released to OSP for monitoring purposes as requested.

Management Responsibilities

Management will communicate the career banding concept to all employees.

Management will establish career-development plans and provide employee coaching with a goal of enhancing each employee’s contribution to the department’s success at the highest level allowed by the strategic plan.

Management will evaluate an employee’s competencies upon entrance into any career banded position to determine competency level. Thereafter competencies will be evaluated semi-annually consistent with the current schedule for in-range salary adjustment recommendations.

On-going competency assessments and review of career-development plans are required and included as part of Western’s Performance Management Program. Failure of management to develop career-development plans as appropriate and perform annual competency assessments as part of the performance management plan may subject the supervisor to disciplinary action. Adherence to the career banding policy and procedures is mandatory for every supervisor of an SPA employee.

Management will apply pay factors correctly and equitably in recommending employee salaries. Salary approvals will comply with State Personnel Career Banding Salary Administration Policy. Pay factor evaluations will occur with each action as defined in policy: New Hire, Promotion, Reassignment, Demotion, Grade-Band Transfer.

Pay factors include:
- University business needs
- Minimum qualifications for class
- Duties and responsibilities
- Knowledge, skills, and competencies
- Related education and experience
- Training, certifications and licenses
Journey market rate guidelines/market reference rate guidelines and related market information
Market dynamics
Internal pay alignment (equity)
Current salary and total compensation

Pay factor evaluations will also occur with the following situations to determine if a Career Progression Adjustment may be warranted:
- Attainment and demonstrated use of competencies or skills within the same class
- Acquisition of additional or different duties within the same class
- Retention of employee who has outside job offer
- Recognition of low employee salaries in relation to average market rate or market reference rate

Management will provide documentation for each salary recommendation, describing the relevance of pay factors to the recommendation. A salary recommendation is a manager’s determination of the amount of pay that an employee will be granted after applying all pay factors in any situation. Final approval of a Career Progression Adjustment rests with HR.

**Employee Responsibilities**

Employees, in conjunction with managers, will establish work plans that are relevant to the mission and goals of Western.

Employees will attend meetings, information sessions, etc. that will provide explanation of the career banding program.

Employees will provide feedback on the career banding program when requested.

**Dispute Resolution Process**

A dispute resolution process within Western will allow employees with career status to have salary decisions reconsidered by a source beyond the initial decision-maker or evaluator. Salary decisions which are eligible for consideration in the dispute resolution process must be based on one of the following in conjunction with a promotion, reassignment, demotion, or career progression adjustment as defined in policy.

- Amount of salary adjustment is less than appropriate amount as determined through pay factors.
- No salary adjustment has been granted when application of pay factors would support an adjustment (if funds available).
- Competencies have been inappropriately evaluated.

The following Performance Pay Dispute Resolution Procedures for SPA Employees will apply equally to career banded employees and traditionally classified employees.
I. Purpose

These procedures are to be used for considering the complaints of SPA employees regarding their overall performance approval rating, the amount of any salary increase, or failure to receive a salary increase. For these purposes only, these procedures are to be utilized instead of the Grievance Policy and Procedure for SPA Employees. In accordance with North Carolina law, the decision of the Chancellor under these procedures is final.

II. Procedures

A. Discussion with Immediate Supervisor

1. An employee wishing to initiate a complaint must file the complaint in writing to his or her immediate supervisor within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of receipt of the action being disputed. If the complaint is not filed within the allowed time period, the matter is no longer grievable and the act, which was the subject of the potential complaint, shall be presumed valid and proper when considering any subsequent complaint or grievance. The immediate supervisor shall notify the departmental supervisor that a complaint has been filed.

2. The immediate supervisor shall discuss the complaint with the employee, as soon as practicable. The immediate supervisor may consult with higher level supervisors prior to and after the discussion and may call such supervisors into the discussion if the employee agrees to such. The employee may have a co-worker be present in the meeting to lend personal support to the employee.

3. As soon as practicable after the discussion with the employee, the immediate supervisor shall deliver a written decision to the employee.

B. Appeal to the Performance Review Committee

1. An employee who is not satisfied with the supervisor's decision may appeal the matter to the Performance Review Committee by filing a request in writing within five working days after receipt of the supervisor's decision. The request shall be filed with the Office of Human Resources. The request for appeal shall contain a written summary of the facts, which are said to support the complaint. If the employee so desires, he/she may ask the Director of Human Resources for help in preparing the request and the written summary of facts.

2. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Director of Human Resources shall form a Performance Review Committee. The committee will consist of five persons selected by the Director of Human Resources from the pool of twenty-five designees established at the beginning of each academic year pursuant to the Grievance Policy and Procedures for SPA Employees. The Director of Human Resources shall ensure that the committee
includes at least three non-supervisory SPA employees. No person will be selected to be a committee member if employed within the same department as the complaining employee. The Director of Human Resources shall preside as non-voting chair over the hearing.

3. The chair shall notify the employee in writing of the composition of the committee and the date, time, and location of the hearing. The chair shall also instruct the employee to identify his/her witnesses, if any, in a timely fashion and, in any event, no later than five working days before the hearing. The chair has the authority to limit the number of witnesses scheduled to attend the hearing if it is determined that the proposed witnesses will present unduly repetitive or unnecessarily cumulative evidence. The chair shall coordinate with the witnesses for them to appear at the hearing.

4. The employee may disqualify up to two of the committee members designated to serve on the hearing. Written notice of disqualification must be delivered to the chair in a timely fashion and, in any event, no later than five working days before the hearing. The Director of Human Resources shall choose the replacement member(s) from the pool of twenty-five.

5. Hearing Format:

a. The employee shall have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the decision at issue was unfair in that it was either not made in accordance with applicable policies, procedure or law; or that it was not the product of an exercise of reasonable professional judgment by the deciding supervisor.

b. Formal rules of evidence shall not apply; however, the chair has the authority to reject evidence, which is repetitive or has no relevance to the case. The employee shall be allowed to appear in person before the committee; however, the employee may choose not to appear and instead have the matter reviewed on the basis of the documentation provided. The employee or supervisor may not confront or cross-examine each other or other witnesses unless the chair requests that they do so. The employee and supervisor may not remain in the room throughout the proceedings unless the chair requires their presence. The hearing will be private. The employee may be accompanied by a co-worker for personal support. Neither side may be represented by an attorney at the hearing.

c. Presentation of evidence: The employee, if he/she attends, presents, through documentation or testimony, the basis for the complaint. The supervisor may then present documentation or testimony in response. Rebuttal or additional evidence may be allowed or requested by the chair. Committee members may ask questions of anyone presenting evidence during the hearing.

d. Following the presentation of evidence, the committee shall meet in closed session to consider the complaint and make a written recommendation, consistent with the evidence received, to the Chancellor. The recommendation shall be determined by majority vote.
and should be forwarded in writing as soon as practicable to the Chancellor. The
decision is not binding upon the Chancellor and is only advisory. The Chancellor shall
inform in writing the employee, the supervisor, the appropriate vice chancellor, and the
Director of Human Resources of his/her decision in a timely fashion. If the Chancellor
does not accept the recommendation of the committee, he shall state in writing his
reasons for such rejection. The Chancellor's decision is final and is not appealable.

An employee must document the basis for a salary reconsideration on the Career Banding
Dispute Form and must be submitted to HR within 30 days of the salary decision
notification. Resolution must be completed within 60 days after documentation is
submitted. All requests for salary reconsideration will be screened by the personnel
analyst to determine eligibility prior to referral to the Director of Human Resources.
Individual situations may dictate the appropriate process.

**Employee Advisory Committee**

An employee advisory committee, representative of Western through demographics,
organizational level, and occupational areas, will review implementation and operation of
the career banding program to ensure that employees are being treated fairly in
opportunities for career development and compensation levels. Results of such review
will be presented to the Chancellor’s executive council and HR Director.