

Salary Data

On May 15, 2025, the Faculty Senate passed a resolution regarding salaries (see below) that asks university leadership to develop a plan to improve faculty salaries, with a deadline of January 31, 2027.

The Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee offers the following updated information about WKU salaries compared to WKU's benchmark institutions and other Kentucky regional universities.

WKU Benchmark Institutions (<https://www.wku.edu/institres/benchmark.php>)

IPEDS Full-Time Instructional Staff Salaries, Fall 2024

Average salary, equated to a 9-month contract, by AAUP category, unadjusted dollars

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/american.association.of.university.professors/viz/shared/8WS5FYQJ5>

Institution	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Instructor	Lecturer	No Rank
Appalachian State U	\$107,423	\$90,864	\$80,906	\$81,060	\$55,686	\$69,173
Ball State U	\$101,594	\$83,551	\$78,910	\$63,457	\$59,218	\$42,393
Bowling Green State -Main Campus	\$126,894	\$95,957	\$83,709	\$70,140	\$75,819	
Central Michigan U	\$115,062	\$95,318	\$92,542		\$63,205	\$65,747
East Carolina U	\$109,132	\$89,728	\$78,448	\$60,962		\$45,978
East Tennessee State U	\$92,036	\$83,826	\$71,993	\$63,682	\$50,096	\$69,076
Florida Atlantic U	\$128,545	\$102,400	\$86,036	\$67,336		\$98,546
Illinois State U	\$107,192	\$93,698	\$80,752		\$54,530	
Indiana State U	\$94,103	\$77,114	\$62,976	\$51,933	\$44,144	
James Madison U	\$115,481	\$99,353	\$84,621	\$74,687		
Middle Tennessee State U	\$111,756	\$91,192	\$81,164	\$58,860	\$55,143	\$52,500
Northern Illinois U	\$129,870	\$111,344	\$93,860	\$54,691		\$63,047
Ohio University-Main Campus	\$108,717	\$88,145	\$70,684		\$71,004	
Towson U	\$115,714	\$96,120	\$82,876	\$79,026	\$58,724	
U of North Carolina at Charlotte	\$137,471	\$105,181	\$95,098		\$69,999	

U of North Carolina at Greensboro	\$114,924	\$92,604	\$83,268	\$89,228	\$56,013	\$49,934
U of South Alabama	\$92,452	\$74,398	\$66,315	\$51,902		
U of Southern Mississippi	\$99,284	\$80,614	\$71,397	\$59,108	\$60,421	
Western Kentucky U	\$89,740	\$74,743	\$68,205	\$52,254		\$58,529

At rank, WKU compares as follows:

Professor: Last of 19 schools
Associate professor: 18th out of 19
Assistant professor: 17th out of 19
Instructor: 13th out of 15 reporting

Kentucky Public Regional Institutions

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/american.association.of.university.professors/viz/shared/FRJ789NW2>

Institution	Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor	Instructor	Lecturer	No Rank
Eastern Kentucky U	\$77,253	\$71,035	\$67,816	\$71,447	\$56,950	\$59,188
Morehead State U	\$85,268	\$73,936	\$68,944	\$52,598		
Murray State U	\$88,982	\$74,985	\$69,158	\$49,382		
Northern Kentucky U	\$102,622	\$82,324	\$86,331		\$59,976	
Western Kentucky U	\$89,740	\$74,743	\$68,205	\$52,254		\$58,529

At rank, WKU compares as follows:

Professor: 2nd out of 5 schools
Associate professor: 3rd out of 5
Assistant professor: 4th out of 5
Instructor: 3rd out of 4 reporting

Resolution passed May 15, 2025

Sponsors: Faculty Welfare Committee, Budget and Finance Committee, and Academic Quality Committee
Resolution: Regarding Faculty Salaries (April 2025)

Faculty salaries are in a poor and deteriorating state at Western Kentucky University. The data shows that faculty salaries at WKU are very low compared with benchmarks; faculty salaries are declining relative to the cost of living; and significant internal salary inequities exist.

These compensation problems have existed for many years and hamstringing the work of the faculty. The problems have worsened to the point that they inhibit WKU from achieving components of its core mission, its purpose, its vision, and the strategic goals elaborated in the “Climbing to Greater Heights” Strategic Plan.

These compensation problems impact the entire university and require immediate attention by university leadership, starting with the Office of the President. Improving the state of faculty salaries will require a new strategic approach.

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate requests the following be completed by Jan. 31, 2027:

- University leadership, under the guidance of the Office of the President and the Provost, **should** develop a new, comprehensive, ongoing faculty salary improvement plan, and provide data requested in a timely manner;
- University leadership **should** commit adequate permanent funding to support the plan;
- University leadership should include meaningful Faculty Senate representation in the development and implementation of the plan;
- The plan and progress toward plan goals should be shared publicly and quarterly;
- The Office of the President should report quarterly to the Faculty Senate on the state of faculty salaries, including progress toward plan goals.

To facilitate the process, the Faculty Senate will:

- Share data on faculty salaries each year with the faculty, university leadership, and other parties;
- Participate in developing and implementing a salary improvement plan;
- Facilitate discussion, advocacy, and an ongoing collaboration aimed at problem-solving.