

Statement on Market-Based Compensation Program

September 12, 2022

Chase M. Billingham

I would like to start by thanking President Muma, the senior leadership, and the HR staff for all of the work that they did last year on the Market-Based Compensation initiative. Thanks to their efforts, and an influx of money from the state, they made a major dent in the glaring faculty compensation issues affecting this university, which, as I explained repeatedly last year in the Senate, were having a major adverse effect on faculty morale. So, from me, and I am sure I speak for many colleagues, thank you.

But this work is not done, so I am going to continue to press this issue this year. One of the major concerns that the faculty raised last year was related to communication and the dissemination of information around this initiative. There was immense confusion regarding the university's targets. Senators sitting in budget meetings were told at some points that the target was the market median, and at other times that the target was 80% of the median.

But when the adjustments came down, we did not hit either of those targets. Even with a very generous increase—again, thank you for that—my salary rose from 70% of the median for my position to 78%, according to the university's own data, and I have been told that others did not climb even that high. So obviously there is still work to do, especially as those medians continue to rise, as well.

Currently, [the university market-based compensation "Frequently Asked Questions" web page](#) says the following: "The University has determined that we will target base pay, in aggregate, at the market median (also referred to as the 50th percentile of the market)." In order to accomplish this, "market adjustments will be made to move those who are below 80% of the market mid-point or median closer to 80%." To reach a situation in which *the aggregate* base pay balances at the median, while we simultaneously struggle to bring underpaid people up to 80% of the median, means, of course, that there must be many people at this university who are paid well above the respective median for their position. This is not a situation facing most of the teaching faculty that I represent here in the Senate.

We were told last year, and for years before that, that Market-Based Compensation would be a continuous program, and that each year salaries would be reevaluated. We were informed that we would receive a personalized Market-Based Compensation statement each year. However, we have not received updated statements this year, and [the website "Frequently Asked Questions" page](#) is now cagey about that issue, stating: "Human Resources is exploring options to make compensation data more readily available to employees and will communicate any changes to the campus as appropriate."

So I have the following questions: Is the Market-Based Compensation initiative continuing this year? Should faculty expect (t)JTIS2(I)BTMBTE 12 t