

Ozarka College
Board of Trustees
Finance Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 1, 2024
President's Conference Room – Administration Building
2:00 p.m.

Item No.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of Minutes from May 3, 2023
3. Discussion Items
 - Faculty Salary Schedule and Increases
 - Dental Premium Increase
 - COLA
 - 2024 – 2025 Operating Budget
4. Adjournment

Ozarka College
Board of Trustees
Finance Committee Meeting
Discussion Item – Faculty Salary Schedule and Increases

Rationale:

The Faculty Salary Schedule has not been reviewed or adjusted in 15 years. The entry levels of the old schedule were well below what has been implemented for educators in the K-12 system due to the LEARNS Act. In addition, according to the ACC 2024 Salary Survey the average pay for 9-month faculty across the state was \$48,485. Ozarka's average was the third lowest in the state at \$43,663.

The Faculty Salary Schedule has been updated as follows:

Degree Held	Previous Faculty Salary Schedule	Revised Faculty Salary Schedule
Bachelors	\$34,000	\$40,000
Masters	\$36,000	\$44,000
Earned Doctorate	\$40,000	\$48,000
Steps for Teacher Experience 1 – 20 years	\$300 per year	\$400 per year
Steps for Teacher Experience 21+ years	\$300 per year	\$0 – capped at 20 years

The revised Faculty Salary Schedule will be effective for new faculty hired for the 2024-2025 academic year. In addition, all returning general ed faculty will be receive increases consistent with the new entry level and steps.

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Discussion Item – Dental Premium Increase

Rationale:

Employee dental insurance is one of the benefits offered to all Ozarka College employees. The College currently pays the premium for each employee who elects to participate. Family coverage may be obtained, and the employee is responsible for paying the additional costs. Currently 95% of all employees participate in the dental benefit by enrolling in either single or family coverage.

The dental insurance premiums have not increased since 2009. Due to rising costs, premium increases will be necessary to keep our self-insured plan adequately funded.

The premium for single coverage will increase \$4 per month for single coverage.

Absorbing this increase will help with the retention of current employees and ensure that Ozarka College's benefit package is competitive or superior to other employers in the area.

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Discussion Item – 2025 COLA

Rationale:

Act 599 of 2017 created the Higher Education Uniform Classification and Compensation Act and amended by Act 763 of 2020. Under this Act, the administration and management of the Uniform Classification and Compensation System moved from the Department of Finance and Administration - Office of Personnel Management (DFA - OPM) to the Arkansas Division of Higher Education (ADHE). As part of that responsibility, the Director of the ADHE can provide written approval to institutions of higher education to provide a COLA of up to two percent (2%).

Any COLA greater than two percent (2%) must be approved by the Director of ADHE after review by the Legislative Council or, if the General Assembly is in session, the Joint Budget Committee.

To help retain staff, a two percent (2%) cost of living for all eligible employees was included in the proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2025.

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Discussion Item – 2025 Operating Budget

Rationale:

The 2025 Operating Budget has been completed and is presented for your review.