**Senate Salary and Benefits Committee 2023 Recommendations**

In recognition of Santa Fe’s standing as a top college in the nation, the college should remain committed to improving the competitiveness of the rates of compensation for all faculty and staff and embracing a pathway for promotion and career advancement for all employees.

We respectfully request the college leadership consider each of the recommendations below, and then meet with the Senate and Salary and Benefits Committee (S&B) at the first S&B meeting of fall term to discuss the college leadership's plans (timelines, milestones, plan of action, etc.) for addressing each of these recommendations as well as the rationale for delaying or deciding against any particular recommendation.

This feedback will help lend transparency to the budget process as well as guide the deliberations of S&B over the next academic year. We strongly believe that better transparency is one way to promote the culture of excellence that is Santa Fe College. The college body should be updated about budget issues on a regular basis to avoid shocks, establish and maintain high morale, and maximize participation in shared governance.

Items are grouped in two types of recommendations: planning and policy items and funding action items. The action items are further divided into priority A and B. Priority level A represents the items that are of utmost priority and we ask that the college make every effort to complete these items to the full extent feasible. Remaining action items are in Priority B. All action items are ranked in order of importance. Please note that some later requests may be a small monetary investment, and so should still be considered as part of the process, even or especially if some higher priority items need to be delayed.

Progress on these recommendations is one measure of how Santa Fe College meets its stated mission and values, particularly that of community leadership, integrity, and ethical and sustainable use of resources. Our faculty and staff are our best resource; investing in SF employees will better allow creativity and innovation to flourish so that we can implement our strategic plan.

 **Planning and Policy:**

1. Vet any changes to the salary schedule with Senate before taking to the Board of Trustees for approval.
2. Maintain continuing contract or annual contract leading to continuing contract as the primary method of full-time employment for faculty.
3. Publish the process for ongoing review and/or reclassifications of current positions. Make the process transparent so that any employee can request a friendly review without repercussion.
4. Publish current job descriptions so they are searchable by all employees. Make clear any distinctions between different levels of the same job title, and the requirements for each role. Re-evaluate positions in the same paygrade that have different starting salaries to ensure fairness.
5. Plan transparently with staff for office workload shifts when positions are unfilled, grants are added, employees are absent for extended periods, or other reasons an office area may be understaffed. Consider providing stipends to office employees that take on additional duties, especially if those additional duties are beyond the regular scope of their job or cause the employee to have to shift other responsibilities.
6. Plan proactively for retirements and known upcoming changes in contract. This will also allow for better training of new employees.
7. Update and publish an SF College policy concerning what positions are appropriate to hire through Spherion, and for how long. Provide a transparent mechanism for areas to request review of FT or PT Spherion positions without repercussion, and receive feedback about those requests in a timely manner. Consider creating an automatic review for any Spherion positions held by a Spherion employee for more than three years.
8. Publish the policy to explain how part-time employees will be compensated in emergency closures.
9. Determine whether employees that currently receive the FICA alternative could choose to receive FICA benefits (using different job positions/titles, like adjunct instructor and part time instructor) and identify costs to move some or all employees to FICA benefits.
10. Make the following changes to our internal leave policy: 1) make job protected leave without pay available to employees immediately upon hire; 2) allow spouses that share leave requirements under FMLA to take additional job-protected leave, up to 12 weeks for each individual; 3) remove the requirement to use all sick days while on FMLA. Support upcoming changes to college rule 3.20 and 3.20 Procedure that reference the FMLA updates approved by Senate in 2022.

**Funding Priority A:**

1. Preserve the commitment to maintaining and improving salary and benefits:
	1. Maintain at least 80% of budget devoted to salary & benefits, independent of funds used to pay TempForce (now Spherion);
2. Provide a cost of living salary adjustment for inflation equal to or greater than the CPI all items index published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for all college employees (full-time and part-time). This amount was 6.5% for the 12 months ending in December 2022. This is not a raise. COLA ensures that salaries retain their current value moving forward instead of losing value. While advocating strongly for all salaries to retain their current buying power, S&B recognizes that inflation has been unusually high lately. If the college is unable to adjust all salaries by the CPI percentage rate, then we recommend that the college consider one of these options: calculating a flat amount that can be applied to all salaries or applying a rolling three year average of the CPI and committing to applying this approach as much as feasible for at least the next three years. To determine the amount for a flat rate, because technical professional paygrade PT3 has the most employees, S&B recommends using that salary and the CPI of 6.5% to calculate a flat rate of $2654. This is then the COLA amount to be applied to all faculty and staff salaries as the college COLA adjustment. For salary tables, this amount should be added to the base rate for the initial lane so that the table is kept current and avoids compression;
3. Continue coverage of employee health care at 100% of insurance cost for this upcoming year; seek ways to provide some insurance benefits for part time employees. Dependent coverage continues to be a concern. Explore the possibility of setting a benefits allowance package that would provide funds beyond what is needed to completely cover health insurance and allow employees the option of applying the allowance in the way that works for them. As much as possible, the current ad hoc committee should inform Senate of options being explored before spring term ends, and continue to provide updates and opportunity for discussion during summer before decisions are made.
4. Finish implementation and/or updates needed to maintain the relevancy of the recent salary studies:
	1. Implement the phase three faculty salary study recommendations (attached) so that the study maintains its relevance and smaller updates are needed moving forward;
	2. Adjust salaries in all categories affected by the prior market study in the manner suggested by the Career Service Council Salary & Benefits Committee, so that salaries remain competitive. Once the faculty salary study is completed, salaries affected by both studies should be updated yearly in similar ways. Explore moving all salaries to a step structure to allow better consistency for salary improvement across all employee categories.
5. Maximize full-time positions across the college; increase the ratio of full-time faculty: part-time faculty by adding full-time faculty lines; determine a plan for how to add/fill non-faculty college employee positions as needed and how to prioritize which positions/lines to fill first across the college.

**Funding Priority B:**

1. Continue discussions with IT to improve the current salary schedule and salary matrix for IT; support IT administration’s internal review of market value for salaries within the department and use the information discovered to reset the salary ranges for IT employees to become market competitive; explore adding additional levels for management positions to recognize employee growth and excellence; explore moving all salaries to a step structure to allow better consistency for salary improvement across all employee categories.
2. Expand the educational additive to apply to A&P employees as well: Each A&P employee is eligible for one educational additive. Employees earn this additive if they have an additional degree in field beyond that which is required for credentialing, or a masters or higher in in the fields of education, educational technology, instructional design, or similar degrees that support the methodology, pedagogy, and /or technology of teaching.
3. Explore providing increased rates to adjuncts based on years of experience (three lanes, similar to FT faculty), and/or increased rates based on professional development credits earned at the college. These suggested lane rates would also apply to FT faculty teaching as adjuncts in the summer.
4. Plan proactively for retirements and known upcoming changes in contract:
	1. If an employee set to retire gives notice by May 1, the college will plan ahead so that the individual can request, if they choose, to use vacation leave prior to their retirement date and/or be paid for as much remaining vacation leave allowed under law. Funds will be set aside so that while the person is on vacation, a new employee can be hired to fill that role. This will also allow for better training of new employees;
	2. Return to prior practice that when a chair returns to faculty they return to the salary they would have earned with all applicable raises had they remained faculty, which now includes a raise when faculty move between lanes. Explicitly state that a faculty who has earned continuing contract continues to accrue years towards becoming a full professor if they take on any chair or director positions that include supervising or training faculty;
	3. Plan for employees on a 12 month contract choosing to return to a 9 month contract so that there is no break in contract, salary, or benefits. In this case, if the employee gives notice by May 1, the college will plan ahead so that the employee can use vacation leave to stay on the 12 month contract until the 9 month contract begins again, and then be paid out any remaining vacation time allowed under rule. If the employee does not have enough vacation leave, allow use of sick leave. The new hire for the role will still begin July 1 (or earlier).
5. Continue paying all employees, including part-time, if the college must close unexpectedly.
6. Follow guidance provided by Career Service Council Salary & Benefits Committee on planning for upcoming minimum wage increases.
7. Provide improved conditions for adjuncts beyond a rate increase, such as providing sick leave (see Valencia’s model) when an adjunct faculty needs to get a sub for classes.
8. Provide disability insurance for employees who do not receive social security until social security benefits can be applied.
9. Explore providing smaller stipends for certificates earned and developing a chart similar to Miami Dade (attached), with a limit of the sum of one educational additive.
10. Make part-time employees, including Spherion, eligible for the general annual increase while ensuring that all areas can fund these positions accordingly.
11. Develop a leave cash-out program, similar to UF, which would allow a certain number of vacation hours to be paid out at the end of the calendar year as long as employees retain a certain number of vacation hours after the disbursement.  Have the college set aside a predetermined amount, and have employees request vacation pay out on a first-come, first-served basis until funds run out. The following year, continue as first-come, first served, with the caveat that those who did not receive a cash out last year get priority. Initial recommendation: allow cash out of up to 16 hours, as long as the employee has a total of 60 hours available by August 1. Set aside $50,000 and require requests to be filed by September 1.
12. Expand Procedure 7.13P, part A1c, to include dependents and spouses of part-time employees, who are not employed as student employees, to the fullest extent feasible. Change the title of section A to read “College Employees, Spouses, and Dependents.” Update Rule 7.13 section B to include dependents and spouses of part-time employees. (This was first requested in 2021.)
13. Protect and improve retirement pay through continued advocacy at the state level:
	* Support of the current standards of basing retirement pay on an employee’s top five years of state employment, keep the DROP interest rate at its current level, restore and maintain the historical tradition of a FRS 3% annual increase in retirement pay, keep the insurance subsidy to help retirees cover the rising insurance premiums;
	* Support the idea that the state fund the two retirement plans offered to employees equally: increase the employer contribution to FRS Investment Plan & CCORP so that the total percentage contributed equals the average total contribution of the 2002-2011 period without increasing employee contributions;
	* Investigate how college contributions to CCORP and FRS may involve some waste or misdirected funds, and examine the idea of whether CCORP is still needed now that there is an FRS investment plan;
	* Explore having the college pay for the pay-in costs for Veteran faculty and staff using the pension FRS and their active-duty time in the military (maybe as legislative action);
	* Explore requesting an exemption so that retired faculty can teach one course per term the first year they are retired to stay connected with the craft of teaching.