A Study of Instructional Faculty Salaries at USF, SUS and National Peers

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Executive Summary

This study investigates 10-year trends in instructional faculty salaries by sex and rank for USF, five SUS Peers (UF, FSU, FIU, UCF, FAU) and eight National Peers (North Carolina State, Alabama-Birmingham, Illinois-Chicago, California-Irvine, SUNY-Stony Brook, SUNY-Buffalo, Cincinnati, Rutgers).

Methods

Historical instructional faculty salary data were gathered from the IPEDS Data Center (IPEDS, 2010) and submitted to analysis using SAS 9.2.

Findings and Discussion

If this study tells us one thing, it is that faculy salaries are extremely important to higher education research institutions, because they exhibited relatively consistent increases at comparatively steep slopes for all but instructors (Figure 1, Figure 2), even in these economic hard times. Average annual increases ranged from around 5% for full professors to about 4% for instructors through associate professors. This suggests that perhaps 40-50% of the average annual 10-year increase in tutition and fees (Micceri, 2010), may be attributed to faculty salary cost increases.

Figure 2 shows that National Peer full professor salaries are quite a bit above SUS salaries, while their associate perfessor salaries are slighly above those of SUS institutions. For assistant professors, the gap above the SUS is quite small and for instructors, there appears to be little, if any gap. This suggests that institutions put greater emphasis on salary compensation for higher ranking individuals than for less well compensated lower ranking people. This fact is further supported by the average annual increase of circa 5% for full professors depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 1 indicates that the gap between male and female salaries has remained comparatively stable over this 10-year period, except for USF full professors, where males have increased their advantage over females from 2006 through 2009.

Note that two primary reasons for the salary advantages male faculty exhibit over female faculty are: (1) males tend to work in disciplines characterized by higher compensation than females, and (2) males tend to be more senior than females, particularly at the full professor rank, where the greatest gap occurs.

Conclusions

Consistent salary increases during hard economic times suggests that faculty compensation is a primary concern of higher education institutions. The fact that the faculty receiving the greatest incomes (full professors) exhibited the greatest average annual salary increases over the past 10 years raises questions regarding the justice of the higher education's compensation system. The fact that perhaps half of the recent average annual 10.8% increases in tuition and fees may be attributed to faculty salary increases raises questions regading discrimination favoring the affluent in higher education.

Introduction and Background

This study investigates 10-year trends in faculty salaries by sex and rank for USF, five SUS Peers (UF, FSU, FIU, UCF, FAU) and eight National Peers (North Carolina State, Alabama-Birmingham, Illinois-Chicago, California-Irvine, SUNY-Stony Brook, SUNY-Buffalo, Cincinnati, Rutgers).

Methods

Historical instructional faculty salary data were gathered from the IPEDS Data Center (IPEDS, 2010) and submitted to analysis using SAS 9.2. Academic Years (AY) investigated ran from 1999 through 2009. Data were not available for AY 2000; otherwise, complete data for all institutions were obtained.

Limitations

Global institutional comparisons of salaries can be misleading because salaries are so dependent on the discipline mix at an institution. Schools with greater proportions of professors in more lucrative disciplines such as Business, Engineering and the Health Sciences will necessarily appear to have higher salaries than those emphasizing lower salaried disciplines such as languages, humanities and the arts. However, for this set of Research Institutions, discipline mixes should be comparatively consistent, thereby reducing this effect. The mix of ranks is also important due primarily to the 40% salary advantage exhibited by full professors over associate professors (Micceri, 2009); therefore, in this study each rank is treated separately.

Another important factor when comparing salaries between sexes is that females tend to be less senior than males and also usually work in less well-compensated disciplines.

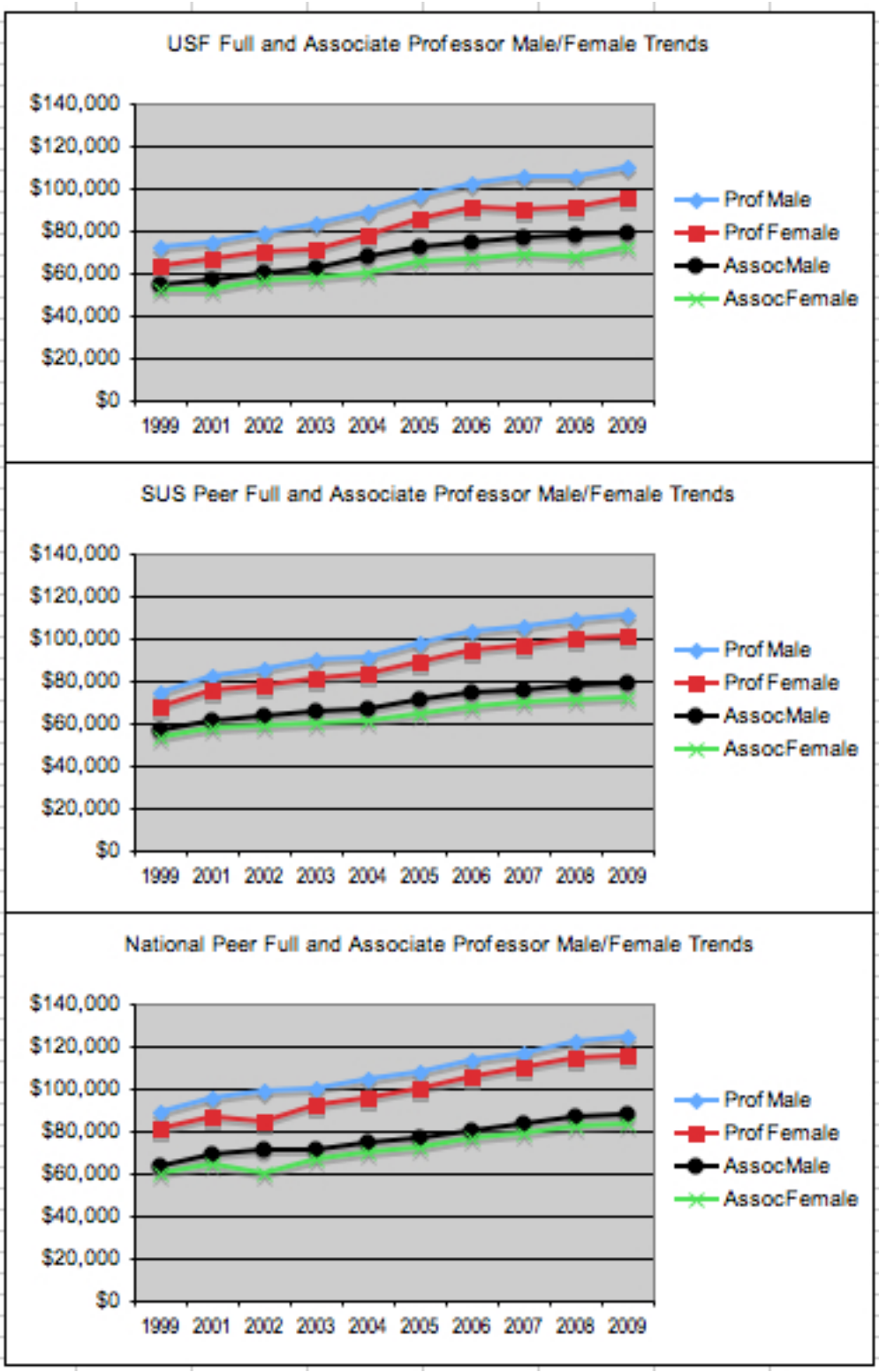
Results and Discussion

This inquiry's primary concern involves trend analyses. Ten year trends as depicted in Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3, show by rank, group and sex that perhaps as much as half of the past 10 years' 10.8% average annual increase in tuition and fees reported by Micceri (2010), may be attributed to faculty salary increases.

The trends in Figure 1 indicate:

- That full professor's consistently exhibit a steeper growth slope than associate professors for all three groups of institutions (USF, SUS, National Peers).
- That the gap between full professors and associate professors increased between 1999 and 2009 for all three groups.
- That male and female associate professors exhibit a smaller gap than full professors.
- That the gap between both male and female full and associate professors remained comparatively stable everywhere except at USF, where full professor males increased their advantage over females from 2006 to 2009.
- Because all charts use the same y-axis, it is clear that National Peer full professors have a salary advantage over USF and the other SUS institutions.

Figure 1


USF Full and Associate Professor Male/Female Trends
$140,000
$120,000
$100,000
$80,000
$60,000
$40,000
$20,000
$0
1999 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
Prof Male
Prof Female
AssocMale
AssocFemale
SUS Peer Full and Associate Professor Male/Female Trends
$140,000
$120,000
$100,000
$80,000
$60,000
$40,000
$20,000
$0
1999 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
Prof Male
Prof Female
AssocMale
AssocFemale
National Peer Full and Associate Professor Male/Female Trends
$140,000
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$60,000
$40,000
$20,000
$0
1999 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009
Prof Male
Prof Female
AssocMale
AssocFemale

Figure 2 displays mean annual salaries by rank for men and women combined, for USF, SUS Peers and National Peers. As one can see, the steepest upward trend occurs for full professors, all of whom have an average growth around 5% or more, with assistant and associate professors also experiencing an upward trend, although not quite as steep. Instructor salaries were comparatively flat through 2004, but they experienced an upward trend from 2005 through 2008. However, this appeared to flatten, or even decrease in 2009. This last effect may reflect a somewhat different distribution of disciplines, a somewhat different group of Instructors, or perhaps salary decreases in some cases.

Figure 2

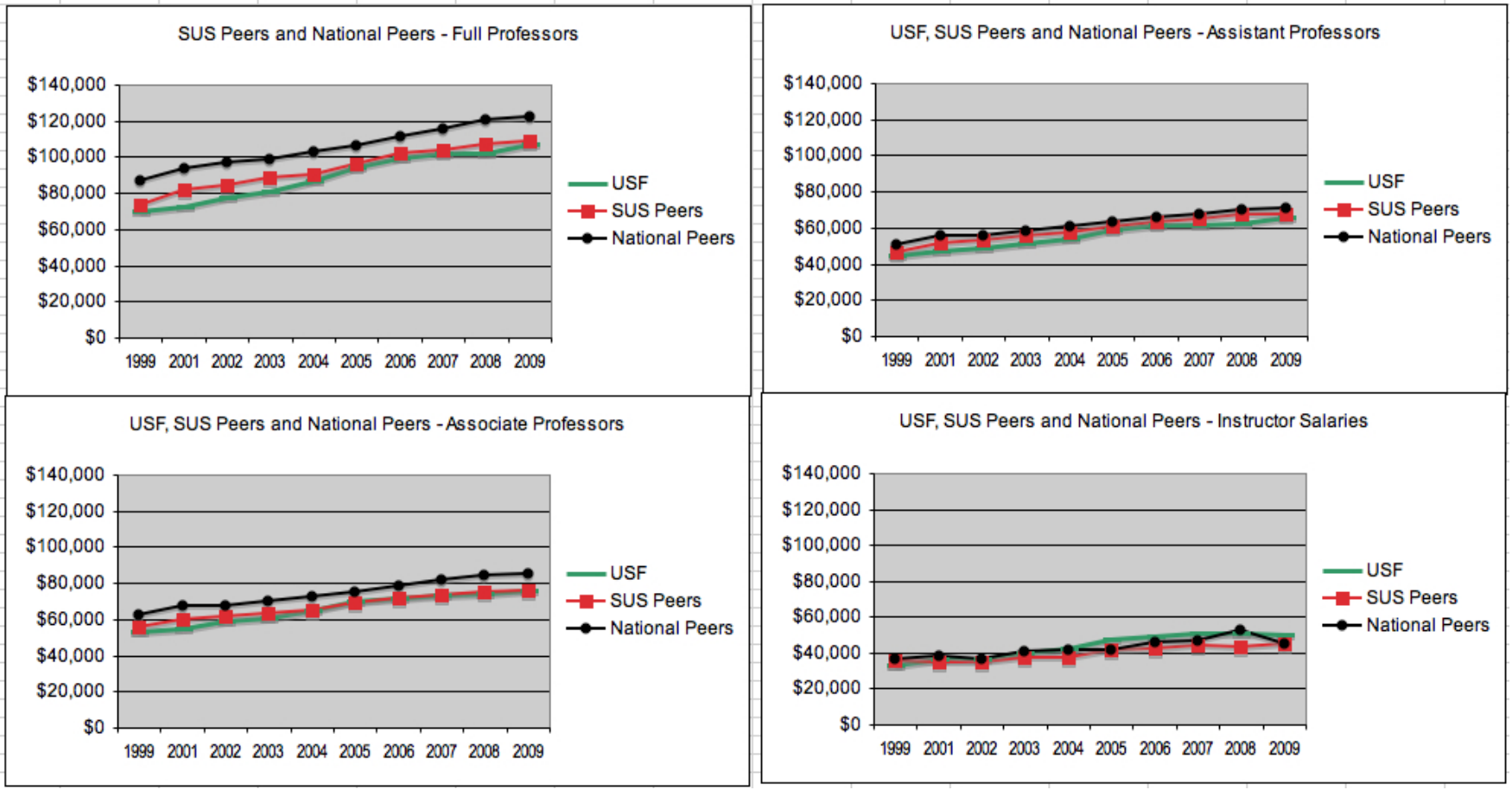
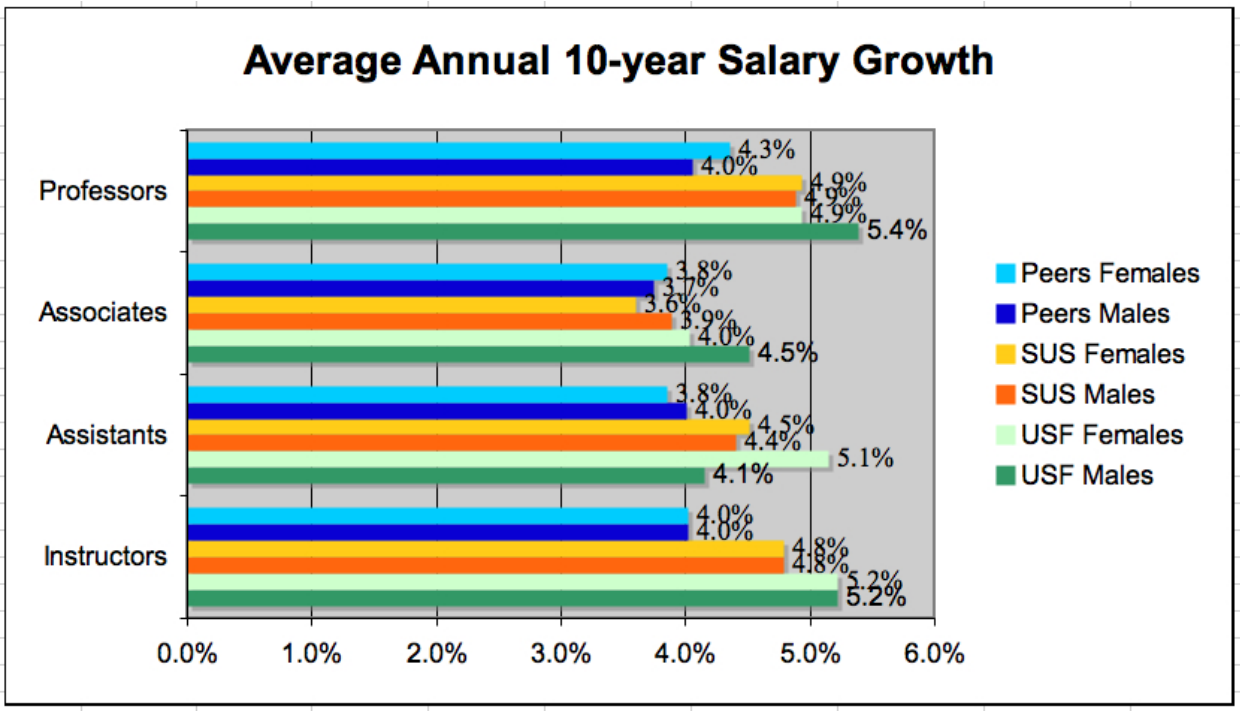


Figure 3 shows the 10-year average annual growth rates by sex, faculty rank and group. Generally, female salary growth was nearly identical to that of males, with a few exceptions. Among USF assistant professors, females showed 5.1% while males were at 4.1%. Among USF full and associate professors males showed about a 0.5% greater growth than females (roughly 10%). Only among National Peer full professors was another difference as greater as 0.3%, where females had a 4.3% average annual growth rate compared with 4.0% for males.

Figure 3



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