

1. Web Site

The address of the committee's Web site is www.sunyla.org/ppc

The site was updated with some recent reports. The counter on the 2002 Salary Survey page was at 238 on June 6, 2006. The page for the 2006 Survey was updated, and a counter was added.

2. Exit Surveys

So far, four Exit Surveys have been received for 2006. A reminder about the Exit Survey was sent out on sunyla-l on May 1st.

Surveys Received by Year

	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05
Surveys Received	8	4	3	5	7	6	5	15	7

A summary of Exit Surveys covering 1995-2005 is available at the committee's Web site.

Delegates are strongly urged to continue to encourage separating librarians to complete the Exit Survey. It is available on the committee's Web site both as an online form and as a pdf that can be printed out and mailed in. The form may be submitted anonymously in either format.

3. Salary Survey

The 2006 SUNYLA Salary Survey is complete and the report is being distributed to those institutions that participated: 53 schools submitted surveys out of 61 for a response rate of 87%. In 2002, 58 schools submitted surveys for a response rate of 95%. The sample of full-timers in 2006 is 15% smaller than the 2002 sample.

A special outreach was made to the three institutions that did not participate in 2002. Two of those schools participated in the 2006 survey; the third has a long history of not participating.

There were problems with collecting data from all but one of the University Centers: there was no problem with Buffalo. Binghamton refused to participate, citing concerns of privacy and legal propriety, and there was a communication breakdown between me and the Albany and Stony Brook delegates. Fortunately, Anna Radkowski-Lee of SUNY Albany was able to complete their survey. Please see item four below for information on the future of the Survey.

Major findings:

A. The 2006 Survey reports on 698 professional staff: 576 full-time and 122 part-time. The 2002 Survey reported on 792: 674 full-time and 118 part-time.

B. The average subject earns \$59,014 per year and has 13 years of experience. In 2002, the average subject earned \$51,871 per year and had 12 years of experience.

C. The overall mean salary of librarians in SUNY with a Master's degree in Library and/or Information Science increased \$6,335 from \$52,189 in 2002 to \$58,524 in 2006. In 2002, it increased \$6,526 from the 1998 average of \$45,663.

D. 91% of survey subjects are described as "White." 68% of subjects are described as female. In 2002, 90% of subjects were described as "White," and 67% were female.

E. The average salary for a female is \$57,546, \$4,623 less than the average salary for a male: \$62,169. In 2002, the average salary for a female was \$50,776, \$3,325 less than the average salary for a male: \$54,101. The 1998 Survey reported a difference of \$3,298.

F. From 1992 to 2006, the salaries of the highest paid increased 75% while the salaries of the lowest paid increased 22%, approximately 1.5% per year or less than the rate of inflation.

There is a pattern of salary inequity between white and non-white librarians, but I did not have time to explore this issue to the depth it deserves. I hope to in the future.

Our overwhelming whiteness cannot match the demographics of SUNY's students. Is SUNYLA willing to encourage diversity? This issue should be a whole discussion.

Finding "E" is a clear trend.

Finding "F" deserves in-depth analysis.

The 2006 survey report has two special appendices: salary information on both librarians and classroom faculty by cohort from SUNY HR and a one-page Summary of Previous Salary Surveys (1992-2006), including information on the widening gender gap in salaries. If I'm really ambitious this year I'll put together a special comparison of previous survey reports.

Finally, results from the Library Staff Turnover Questionnaire are presented with the 2006 survey report. This year, the LSTQ had two new questions (on hourly wage rates of part-time librarians and what part-time jobs full-time librarians may have) which were added after the SUNYLA membership so requested.

Data from the Survey was used to answer two requests from SUNY librarians for salary averages.

4. The Future of the SUNYLA Salary Survey

I believe SUNYLA needs to have a discussion sometime about the future of the survey.

Stony Brook's HR office "ha[d] serious concerns about filling out a survey that lists individual positions." Their director suggests "that SUNYLA revamp the survey so that it captures aggregates of rank instead of individuals a la ALA and ARL." This suggestion is similar to one made by Binghamton's director:

Some serious concerns emerged in my discussions about your salary survey with my Binghamton colleagues. There are numerous objections to the level of granularity required for its completion. . . . There would be no problem if the request was for salary ranges by rank accompanied by aggregated gender and ethnicity numbers. . . . Other library associations such as ARL, ALA and ACRL conduct surveys that solicit responses by category, not the named individual.

It would be a grave mistake to abandon collecting data; data will be vital to any decision or policy argument we would like to make in the future. As chair of the Personnel Policies and Ad Hoc Equity Committees, I completely disagree with the position that SUNYLA should solicit aggregated data rather than data on individuals. First, an average of aggregates is less accurate than an average of a whole sample, and aggregates do not represent the real range of high and low salaries our current survey does. Second, the survey captures a lot more than just salary levels; for example, it is a major demographic census on sex, ethnicity, years of experience, rank, promotions, appointment status, union membership, contract year, and educational attainment. Third, certain information about individual employees MUST be disclosed according to the New York State Freedom of Information Law, including name, office address, job title and salary. State agencies MUST disclose this information when asked.

The New York State Department of State's Committee on Open Government "is responsible for overseeing and advising with regard to the Freedom of Information, Open Meetings and Personal Privacy Protection Laws." As chair, I have written to Executive Director Robert J. Freeman seeking their advice on the legality of the survey. My letter is attached, and I will report back to the Council when I receive the Committee's response.

5. Resignation

I would like 2006 to be my final year as chair of the Personnel Policies Committee. I have been chair since January 2002 and have run the Salary Survey twice. I would like to complete my service in early 2007 after I finish updating the summary of Exit Surveys.

I offer my assistance next time you run the Salary Survey. I am interested in doing the statistical analysis and in (co-)writing the final report. Please don't make me do the data collection again.

Report Respectfully Submitted by:
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May 30, 2006

Robert J. Freeman,
Executive Director
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Albany, NY 12231

Dear Mr Freeman,

I write to you as chair of the Personnel Policies Committee of the State University of New York Librarians Association (SUNYLA). SUNYLA is a non-profit organization of SUNY librarians and affiliated members. We are not an official agency of New York state.

My committee conducts a salary survey of the staff of the state's public academic libraries, i.e., the libraries of both SUNY institutions and the state's community colleges. The survey is conducted approximately every four years, so its results are available before the renegotiation of our contract. An analysis of the survey data is published and widely shared. Survey data are not used for any commercial or fund-raising purpose.

SUNYLA has conducted a salary survey of this sort for at least the last twenty years. Historically, academic librarians have been compensated at levels lower than other faculty. Also, the survey has consistently documented a disparity between the salaries of male and female librarians and between the salaries of white and non-white librarians. For your reference, I have included copies of the 2002 SUNYLA Salary Survey form, the survey instructions, the 2002 Library Staff Turnover Questionnaire, and the completed 2002 report. I do not need these items returned.

I have finished the data collection phase of the 2006 survey, and I am currently analyzing the data. This year, a SUNY library director refused to participate in the survey. He wrote:

Some serious concerns emerged in my discussions about your salary survey with my Binghamton colleagues. There are numerous objections to the level of granularity required for its completion. For example, these questions cannot be answered without consulting individual personnel records and there is concern that it may prove illegal for us to extract personnel data from these files and "publish" it. There would be no problem if the request was for salary ranges by rank accompanied by aggregated gender and ethnicity numbers. However, spelling out by individual name one's gender, ethnicity, experience, rank and title, salary, degrees, etc. appears to be quite inappropriate and open to legal challenge by the individual. Other library associations such as ARL, ALA and ACRL conduct surveys that solicit responses by category, not the named individual. Therefore, Binghamton cannot participate in this survey.

The survey form is mailed or e-mailed to “delegates,” members of SUNYLA who voluntarily represent their campus. Typically, the survey is completed either by the delegate, the library director or his or her designate, or Human Resources staff. Delegates also receive a copy of the last survey their institution submitted as an aid to completing the current one.

I have reviewed the material available on the Web site of the Committee on Open Government, and I have the following six questions. I hope you can help us with specific answers.

1. Is it illegal for SUNYLA to request the information listed below? (To clarify: I’m not asking if an institution is required to provide this information; I’m asking if SUNYLA is allowed to ask.)

- a) name
- b) sex
- c) ethnicity
- d) previous full-time experience
- e) previous part-time experience
- f) year appointed
- g) starting rank
- h) current rank
- i) appointment status
- j) bargaining unit
- k) full time equivalency
- l) contract year
- m) current salary
- n) job title
- o) educational degrees held
- p) vacation leave

2. Is it illegal for a delegate to complete and return the survey? For example, is it legal for a delegate to write down information about a co-worker’s race and to submit that information to SUNYLA, or is such an act an illegal invasion of the co-worker’s privacy?

3. Is it illegal for a delegate to complete and return those portions of the survey that, by common sense, require no consultation whatsoever of employee records, for example, sex and race?

4. Is it illegal for a director or a state institution to punish a delegate who completes the survey on his or her own time using publicly available information?

5. Is it illegal for a library director, Human Resources officer or other college administrator to complete and return the survey?

6. As regards the Freedom of Information Law, if asked, what information listed below must an institution furnish?

- a) sex
- b) ethnicity
- c) previous full-time experience
- d) previous part-time experience
- e) year appointed
- f) starting rank
- g) current rank
- h) appointment status
- i) bargaining unit
- j) full time equivalency
- k) contract year
- l) vacation leave

According to the Freedom of Information Law, “Each agency shall maintain: . . . (b) a record setting forth the name, public office address, title and salary of every officer or employee of the agency . . .” (F.O.I.L. § 87.3). And according to your Advisory Opinion 7643 [Letter to Ms Winifred Veitch of April 9, 1993], it seems name, current salary, and job title must be disclosed: “As such, a payroll record that identifies all officers or employees by name, public office address, title and salary must be prepared to comply with the Freedom of Information Law. Moreover, I believe that the payroll record described above must be disclosed. . . .”

Also, according to your Advisory Opinion 9736 [Letter to Ms Joyce M. Nunge of October 22, 1996], it seems “educational degrees held” must be disclosed: “Additionally, in a recent decision rendered by the Appellate Division, Third Department, it was held that disclosure of ‘an individual's educational background’ would not result in an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [Ruberti & Ferlazzo v. Division of State Police, 641 A.D.2d [sic] 411, 415 (1996)].”

Finally, may I forward a copy of your response to the library director who refused to participate in the survey, and may I distribute copies of your response to the members of SUNYLA and include it in my next regular committee report in August?

If I may assist you in any manner, please let me know. I may be reached by mail at the address above, by telephone at (315) 792-7318, and by e-mail at fosterr@sunyit.edu.

I apologize for the length and detail of my letter. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Ron Foster