

Resolution presented for consideration at the April 15, 2026, Faculty Senate meeting by the Faculty Senate’s Non-Tenure Eligible Committee

WHEREAS, in recent years, annual salary increases have not kept pace with inflation. Furthermore, no raise pool was provided in FY2025-26, while health benefits cost-sharing has increased; and¹

WHEREAS, the impact has accumulated for Northwestern employees, with the lowest paid bearing the highest burden and experiencing difficulty covering basic necessities. Northwestern is also losing its competitive advantage as a preferred employer in the region. For example, entry-level compensation at local high schools has surpassed that of some full-time Northwestern faculty, and²

WHEREAS, compensation at Northwestern typically operates through an annual merit-raise (AMR) structure rather than automatic cost-of-living adjustment. In its current form, this AMR structure provides insufficient opportunities for Northwestern employees to adequately address a growing cost-of-living crisis; and

WHEREAS, Northwestern leadership has stated that addressing salaries is a priority for the coming fiscal year.

THEREFORE, the faculty believes that the merit pool structure is insufficient to achieve the institutional priority of addressing salaries in FY2026-27.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate calls on University leadership to take the following special measures in FY2026-27:

- Prioritize bringing the lowest salaries up to an acceptable level.
- Allocate funds for a cost-of-living adjustment

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the Faculty Senate wishes to collaborate with University leadership in reviewing and improving compensation policies and procedures to better address cost-of-living concerns in the future.

¹ Per the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, recent “inflation in Chicago has been higher than overall U.S. inflation and among the highest of the urban places for which the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports CPI data... primarily due to higher price increases for housing and transportation.”

“Why Has Inflation Been Higher in Chicago Than in the U.S. Overall Recently?,” *Chicago Fed Letter*, No. 508, July 2025, <http://chicagofed.org/publications/chicago-fed-letter/2025/508>.

² <https://www.teach.cps.edu/salary-calculator>