Unofficial Guide to Understanding Your Salary
(Disclaimer: Not an official policy statement from Swarthmore College
Written for Discussion Purposes)

Year 2001  Non-exempt*
Grades     Hiring Minimum    Full Market Rate
  8        5.36                7.02
  9        6.24                7.80
 10       6.99                8.74
 11       7.74                9.67
 12       8.53              10.66
 13       9.32              11.65
 14       9.98              12.48
 15      10.73              13.42
 16      11.86              14.82
 17      12.98              16.22
 18      14.06              17.58
 19      17.47              21.84
 20      19.97              24.96
Office Support Grades
  1        10.73              13.42
  2        11.86              14.82
  3        12.98              16.22
  4        15.48              19.34
Trades Grades
  71       12.98              16.22
  72       14.06              17.58
  73       15.48              19.34
  74       17.47              21.84
*http://www.swarthmore.edu/Admin/human_resources/NonRanges.html

What should I be paid?
1. Find out from HR your grade—the number on the left on the chart. Examples: (Generally, Environmental Technician, Grade 12; Cashier in the dining hall, Grade 8; Patrol/Communications Officer, Grade 14, Gardener II or Media Services Technician, Grade 15; Secretary, Office Support 1; Administrative Assistant, Office Support 2; AA2, Office Support Grade 3).

2. The College will hire new staff at the minimum for the position's grade or at some higher rate depending upon experience, training and current market conditions.

How should my salary increase?
1. If you have “performed satisfactorily” you should receive a percent increase each year. This percentage varies from year to year, but it is usually based upon increases in the cost of living (the consumer price index, CPI) for the preceding year.
2. What is Full Market Rate? (FMR) This complicated-sounding term is just the average for each salary grade in the competing labor markets. The College does salary surveys each year to determine what other employers who might hire our staff pay for specific positions in each range. The comparison groups vary with the job. Hourly staff positions are likely to be compared to local industries and not-for-profit institutions, while salaried staff positions are usually compared to the jobs at same Colleges as used for faculty. FMR has also been explained as the most you are likely to get if you leave Swarthmore for a similar position.

3. In the past, College administrators have said that an employee should expect to reach the FMR after mastering the essential functions of the job with good performance, usually after 3 to 5 years in one position. Basically, if you have received satisfactory evaluations in the same job for five years you should be making the at least hourly wage in the right hand column. This column does not represent the maximum you can earn in your job category.

4. Are there increases for years of service after five years? In the past, the FMR was shown as the mid-point in a salary scale displayed first in quartiles, then as minimum, mid-point and maximum. The columns to the right of FMR have since been eliminated, and increases beyond FMR have been treated as exceptional. Some administrators have described such increases as limited to exceptional performance. In practice, they are often used to follow the market for those positions whose outside salaries are higher than the average for the grade (e.g., computer professionals vs. librarians on the same pay grade). The College does not, in fact, have any uniform policy concerning what should happen to a person's salary after the first three to five years.

The problem:
1. Swarthmore College is not paying some people at their full market rate even after five or more years of service. Some people are paid at Full Market Rate, some are paid more than FRM, and some are paid less that FMR. There are no standard increases for years of service across all job categories. In some cases, the scale for a particular grade has increased more rapidly than the funds available for individual raises, and individuals actually move backwards on their own pay scales. The College has targeted significant amounts of extra money towards solving some of the worst such cases involving whole grade levels, but many less dramatic instances occur each year. More recently, FMR has been described as the average for a grade; some positions within the grade will be above FMR and some below. This argument seems to undercut the very idea of grade levels. Consider these examples:
   • A dining hall cashier has been at the College for 20 years and is earning above full market value. (An employee who has served the college well for so long certainly deserves to be paid over their Full Market Rate as FMR represents an industry average—NOT the high end of the scale.)
   • An electrician has been employed for 14 years and is not yet at FMR.
   • An ES employee after nine years is not at FMR.
   • An administrative assistant is paid at FMR after six years employment but the next year drops below FMR.
   • After twenty years of excellent service a salaried employee is not at FMR.
Note that, unlike faculty, few staff positions have any provision for promotion within the same basic job description. Many staff will spend their entire careers at the College on one grade level.

2. The College administration itself has different interpretations of the meaning of FMR. Is it an average salary for an average worker in any position on a given grade level or the average salary for the grade level, with individual positions following the external market?

3. Unlike faculty salary pools, which are segmented according to longevity (to guarantee 102% of total compensation at each level -- assistant professor, associate professor, and professor) staff salary scales are set for the average in the industry. Swarthmore employees tend to stay longer than their counterparts in the comparison pools. There needs to be a provision for staff longevity similar to that for faculty distinctions and for the College's expectation that our staff perform above the average in the wider market.

4. The staff salaries (including the president, senior staff, non-exempt and exempt) come from one pool, which we share. Who determines how the salary funds are shared in our pool? Once the Board has approved the pools, the President and the Senior Staff make those determinations with some input from the Budget Committee and department heads. How many hourly employees are represented in any of these groups? **Zero!**

**How do I help solve these problems?**

1. We have to increase the pool of funds for staff salaries. More money needs to be allocated from Continuing New Programs to our salary pool. Encourage your SAC representatives, budget committee representatives, and senior staff to make this issue a **priority** and to get more staff representatives in places where these decisions are made.

2. Find out your own salary and your relation to FMR. Let your SAC representative know if you are not being paid at your FMR. Show the salary chart to your supervisor and ask to be paid at FMR. Ask SAC representatives and other committee representatives to work for a policy establishing consistency across all job categories that salaries should be above FMR after five or more years of satisfactory service. (If your department has not done annual performance reviews, you may assume that your performance has been satisfactory or you should have been terminated!)

3. **Support and join groups on campus working to achieve salary equity.** Use every opportunity to learn more about how wage and salary administration works at the College. Share your experiences with others, so that we can learn from each other and speak with a common voice.