

# MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

December 21, 2016

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Deans, Directors, and Department Chairs

**FROM:** June Pierce Youatt



**SUBJECT:** Research Associates at MSU

Over the past several months, a cross-University team representing Academic Human Resources, the Office of Human Resources, and the Office of the General Counsel worked to prepare our campus for implementation of changes to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations scheduled to take effect on December 1<sup>st</sup>. As you now know, a federal judge has issued a temporary injunction to halt these changes, leaving uncertainty about whether the new regulations will move forward as planned.

During the FLSA change planning process, we gained many insights about our Research Associates (i.e. post docs). What we have always known about Research Associates is the significant contributions they make to the research enterprise at Michigan State University. Today, MSU employs 475 Research Associates and we are proud of the commitments we make to their development and success as they grow as independent scholars.

While the changes to the FLSA remain on hold indefinitely, our planning process shed light on the compensation of Research Associates at MSU. I publicly set forth an expectation that the salaries of Research Associates be raised in an effort to maintain a strong position in the market, which is essential to our ability to recruit and retain the most talented Research Associates. I write today to confirm and reinforce that expectation. We all understand as academic leaders that our institutional and unit success depends on having an outstanding faculty. In many disciplines, our ability to recruit and retain world-class faculty is closely linked to our ability to recruit and retain outstanding Research Associates. If we are to deliver distinctive and high-value impact in everything we do, we must continue to invest in our Research Associates and, in turn, offer a salary that is commensurate with the contributions they make to MSU.

Currently, MSU's minimum salary for Research Associates is \$39,010 (AN) / \$31,918 (AY). Going forward, I am raising the minimum salary for all Research Associates to \$42,500 (AN) / \$34,772 (AY). Additionally, we intend to raise all Research Associate salaries to \$47,484 by July 2018. All new grant proposals going forward shall use this salary as a minimum for Research Associates. This increase to the minimum salary recognizes the evolving landscape of the Research Associate market. I ask that you evaluate your programs against this new salary minimum and initiate salary increases accordingly over the next 6 months (either through the reappointment process or utilizing the out-of-cycle salary increase process).

Terry Curry's team in Academic Human Resources is available to assist if you have questions about this memo.



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