

Faculty Senate Executive Committee
Statement on Cost of Living

We, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, applaud the efforts over the last several years of the DU Executive Administration and the Board of Trustees in instituting measures and reforming policy in order to reduce the salary gap of DU faculty and to bring them closer to those of peer institutions. We further express appreciation to intentional efforts instituted by the Provost's office to provide targeted salary increases to alleviate inequalities among individual faculty in relation to their department/unit peers. These measures have undoubtedly had a positive effect on faculty morale, while assisting DU efforts to attract and retain talented new faculty. Certainly, such initiatives have had a significant and meaningful impact on the quality of life of DU faculty. We likewise applaud the Executive Administration and the Board of Trustees for their ongoing commitment to distributing annual merit raises, as well as for the dedication of significant funds towards this vital compensation program.

Whereas, at the same time, the cost of living in the Denver metro area has continued to increase, with a combined change over the last four years alone at +10.065%¹, calculated to the Consumer Price Index. For many University of Denver faculty, this figure is more substantial than combined merit increases received over that same period, with some experiencing serious wage stagnancy as a result. Simply put, the salary increases created by the efforts described, as well as infrequent promotion increases, leave faculty even further behind those at our peer institutions, and especially so when cost of living is factored.

It is the position of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee that merit and promotion increases alone are insufficient to alleviate the downward pressure on salary and the spending power it provides under current inflationary pressures. Therefore, we respectfully assert our support for the establishment of an annual cost of living increase for all faculty, staff, and administration indexed to the Denver metro price index, and to be separate from and in addition to the current merit increase system. Additionally, we also request on behalf of faculty the distribution of a one-time, retroactive, across the board increase to equitably addresses the cost of living increases bore over the last several years. Furthermore, we urge the Board of Trustees and Executive Administration to consider the urgency of this issue and take corrective steps to address it in an equitable, timely, and transparent way. Thank you for your time and consideration on this critically important issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

Faculty Senate Executive Committee, University of Denver

¹ Figures obtained from Colorado.gov: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/dola/inflation-denver-aurora-lakewood-consumer-price-index>