VII. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A. *What represents an internal inequity between two or more positions?*

An inequity may exist when similarly situated employees are not paid comparable rates. For purposes of pay equity, "similarly situated" refers to career employees who have comparable qualifications, levels of responsibility, salary history, performance, and length of time within the same salary grade. Generally, the scope of comparison for Professional and Support Staff (PSS) will be other employees within the same department (layoff unit.) The scope of comparison for Managers and Senior Professionals (MSP) will generally be other employees within the same Vice Chancellor area.

An inequity may also exist when the salaries of employees at different levels in the organization are out of alignment. When salaries are unreasonably compacted or inverted, this may be viewed as an inequity. When salaries are not in alignment, as described below, an equity increase may be approved to restore alignment.

Organizational alignment occurs when:

- Pay differences exist between supervisors and the employees they supervise
- Pay differences exist between employees in different grades
- Pay differences exist between employees in the same grade who have different levels of responsibility, qualifications and performance over time
- Policy-covered employees are paid equitably in comparison to rates paid to related bargaining unit employees

B. *How do you compensate an employee who is assigned higher-level functions that do not warrant reclassification to a higher salary grade?*

The assignment of higher-level functions (not increased workload) may be compensated with an equity increase. Significant factors for comparing the level of work include the following:

- Nature, variety and difficulty of work
- Supervision received
- Supervision exercised
- Guidelines used in the performance of duties
- Innovative requirements
- Person-to-person work relationships
- Purpose and scope of recommendations, decisions, commitments and conclusions

A change in assignment must be documented with an updated job description.

C. *How can you compensate an employee who has acquired new skills?*

Salary adjustments may be warranted when the employee acquires new skills and knowledge (beyond normal job growth) that allow them to provide a higher level of expertise in the delivery of assigned functions. Skills and knowledge requirements already documented on the job description serve as a base-line requirement for hire and therefore, will not qualify for an equity increase.

D. *What can be done when salaries are no longer competitive with the external market?*

External market movement may create conditions under which an equity increase may be granted to keep salaries at competitive rates. The "external" market relates to rates paid to similar positions outside of UCSD. The market rate is determined through a variety of sources including a valid salary survey, and/or the salary history or salaries of the qualified pool of applicants who have applied for recent job vacancies.

E. Can I make a counter-offer to retain an employee who has received an external salary offer?

Ideally, UCSD policies and management practices will ensure a proactive approach to maintaining market-competitive salaries. However, occasionally, managers must act if they wish to retain a key individual who receives a bona fide job offer. Managers may request a copy of the written job offer before responding. In such situations, equity increases may be approved as a retention strategy. When evaluating the appropriate level of counter-offer, the following factors should be considered:

- Is the competing offer for a position at the same approximate level of responsibility?
- How the total compensation package (salary, lump sum incentives, benefits, perquisites, professional development opportunities, advancement potential, quality of work-life, etc.) compares?
- What impact would a counter-offer have on internal equity?
- In the event a counter-offer throws salaries out of alignment, are there funds available to restore internal equity? In the event funds are not available to restore internal equity, is retention of the individual so critical to department operations that it overrides whatever morale issues may develop as a result of the misalignment?

Although counter-offers are generally appropriate when offers are being considered external to UCSD, this policy also allows the existing department to make counter-offers when an employee is offered a salary increase to accept a position in another department at UCSD.