

OPU/SEIU COMPENSATION STUDY

preliminary findings &
recommendations
report for

Oregon Public Universities

SUBMITTED BY

trüpp

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Executive Summary

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Oregon Public Universities (OPU), through the University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE), engaged Trupp HR (dba Trüpp) to provide compensation consulting services in preparation for the 2026 collective bargaining negotiations between the OPU and the SEIU Local 503 (SEIU). The purpose of the project was to assess the competitiveness of OPU's **base pay, benefits, and total compensation** using reliable market data, and to provide documentation to support transparency and ongoing pay analysis.

Trüpp worked with an inter-institutional project team to identify appropriate comparator institutions and survey sources, analyze benchmark positions, and evaluate OPU's overall market position.

All jobs were compared against three separate market segments to support negotiations:

- **College Market:** Local colleges within Oregon and Washington.
- **Public Administration:** Government and municipal organizations within the State of Oregon.
- **All Industry:** All organizations, public and private, within the State of Oregon.

KEY FINDINGS

Base Pay

Overall, OPU salaries are generally aligned with market, ranging from 2% above to 4% below on average.

- **Leading:** Information Technology roles lead the market across all market segments (between 6-26% above)
- **Lagging:** Education, Science & Professional roles lag the market most notably, generally 3–9% below.
- **Aligned:** Clerical, Trades, and Healthcare (within ~5% of the market)

- Mixed: Finance, Business & Contracts roles lead the market by 7-8% for College and Public Administration but is aligned with the All Industry sector.

Benefits

OPU's benefits program is a significant strength and materially enhances overall competitiveness.

- OPU leads the market on employer-paid health, dental, and vision premiums.
- Paid time off offerings are generally aligned, with total standard paid days off slightly leading.
- Retirement benefits are strong (leading), with PERS participation and employer pickup of employee contributions (leading practice).

When evaluated on a level-set basis, OPU's benefit costs exceed market benchmarks by:

- 17% compared to Oregon public-sector employers
- 36% compared to all Oregon organizations
- 40% when compared to all Oregon and Washington organizations
- 47% compared to private-sector employers in Oregon

Total Compensation

OPU leads the market in total compensation across all market segments. In aggregate, across all benchmark jobs combined, OPU leads by 10–22%, depending upon the market segment.

At the individual job level, eight benchmark jobs fall 5% or more below the market for total compensation in one or two segments; however, no job falls below market for total compensation across all three comparison segments.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BARGAINING AND PLANNING

Taken together, the findings indicate that OPU's total compensation program is competitive and, in almost every instance, leading, driven primarily by strong benefits and retirement offerings. While base pay is generally aligned, pay gaps in specific jobs and job categories may warrant focused attention. These results provide a clear, objective framework to support informed bargaining discussions and longer-term compensation strategy decisions.

Project Background

Oregon Public Universities (OPU), through the University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE), engaged Trupp HR (dba Trüpp) to provide compensation consulting services in preparation for the 2026 collective bargaining negotiations between the OPU and the SEIU Local 503 (SEIU).

According to the information provided by OPU in the proposal phase, the goal of this project was for Trüpp to work with an inter-institutional team of university professionals and SEIU representatives to provide the following services:

- Identify relevant comparator institutions and appropriate survey sources.
- Provide market pricing and competitive market assessments for each benchmark position, including base pay, benefits, and other personnel expenses.
 - Aligned with the State of Oregon’s designated geographic regions of Standard, Portland Metro, and Nonurban Counties if possible
- Provide project documentation, including:
 - Job and salary analysis
 - Original employee survey tools or documents used to complete work and findings, and a listing of all research documentation used
 - Information compiled when determining market and OPU’s position in the market
- Provide documents such as data models, manuals, and other like tools to assist in conducting on-going pay analysis and maintenance.

Base Pay Market Data

METHODOLOGY

Survey benchmarks (59) were provided by OPU to be compared against the market.

Trüpp met with the OPU project team to gather project background information and provided recommendations for data sources for both benefits and salary market comparisons.

Compensation survey sources included reliable published pay data sources of ERI and CUPA-HR to ensure precision in job-level matches. BLS (which was used in the prior study) data was replaced with CUPA-HR to improve match accuracy.

Market data analysis focused on the 10th and 90th percentiles of base salary using published survey sources. November 2025 OPU/SEIU midpoint pay levels were compared to the 50th percentile (P50) of the market.

Market sectors include Colleges, Public Administration (Government), and All Industry.

Effective dates of the market data varied but all market data was aged to a common effective date of November 1, 2025, and an annual rate of 3.75%, to ensure “apples-to-apples” comparison with the OPU salary ranges effective November 1, 2025.

ERI Source Detail

“ERI” refers to Economic Research Institution – Salary Assessor market data. The following data cuts were selected to compare to OPU salaries. Oregon Statewide was the geography used to compare to the pay structure.

NAME	INDUSTRY/DESCRIPTION	GEOGRAPHY
Colleges/Universities	Colleges/Universities	Oregon Statewide
Public Administration	Public Administration/ Government	Oregon Statewide
All Industry	All Industries including public and private sector organizations	Oregon Statewide

CUPA-HR Source Detail

CUPA HR stands for College and University Professional Association for Human Resources. The CUPA HR Staff and Professional surveys were used to compare to OPU data. This survey is published in February each year. The market data used in the survey analysis was effective as of November 1, 2024, and was aged to November 1, 2025, at an annual rate of 3.75% according to average market movement recommended by CUPA.

Trüpp identified a relevant group of comparator organizations within the CUPA dataset. Organizations were selected to ensure reasonable geographic comparisons to OPU. The organizations selected included all institutions within the states of **Oregon and Washington** that participated in the relevant CUPA datasets with the exception of the 7 OPU institutions. Washington was included in the analysis to ensure that there were sufficient organizations to provide robust market data within similar geographic markets.

In total, CUPA includes 96 institutions in the selected geography; however, a total of 27 institutions participated in the most recently submitted data set (2024-2025) used for analysis. These institutions included the following:

- Central Oregon Community College (Bend, OR)
- Central Washington University (Ellensburg, WA)
- Eastern Washington University (Cheney, WA)
- Seattle Pacific University (Seattle, WA)
- Seattle University (Seattle, WA)
- Southwestern Oregon Community College (Coos Bay, OR)

- George Fox University (Newberg, OR)
- Gonzaga University (Spokane, WA)
- Lane Community College (Eugene, OR)
- Lewis and Clark College (Portland, OR)
- Linn-Benton Community College (Albany, OR)
- Northwest University (Kirkland, WA)
WA)
- Pacific Lutheran University (Tacoma, WA)
- Pacific University (Forest Grove, OR)
- Portland Community College (Portland, OR)
- Reed College (Portland, OR)
- Saint Martin's University (Lacey, WA)
- The Seattle School of Theology and Psychology (Seattle, WA)
- University of Portland (Portland, OR)
- University of Washington - Tacoma (Tacoma, WA)
- University of Washington (Seattle, WA)
- University of Washington Bothell Campus (Bothell, WA)
- Washington State University (Pullman, WA)
- Western Seminary (Portland, OR)
- Whitman College (Walla Walla, WA)
- Whitworth University (Spokane, WA)
- Willamette University (Salem, OR)

BASE PAY SUMMARY FINDINGS

Overall, OPU Salaries are generally in line with market, on average between 2% above market to approximately 4% below. The category of jobs that is lagging the market by the most are jobs in the Education, Science & Professional group. Information Technology is leading the market in all comparisons.

JOB CATEGORIES	OPU vs COLLEGE (CUPA + ERI)	OPU vs PUBLIC ADMIN (ERI)	OPU vs ALL INDUSTRIES (ERI)
ALL	102%	103%	96%
Clerical & Support Services	98%	98%	94%
Education, Science & Professional	95%	97%	91%
Facilities & Trades	99%	103%	96%
Finance, Business & Contracts	107%	108%	99%
Healthcare	99%	100%	97%
Information Technology	126%	118%	106%

A summary of the market data by job can be found in Appendix A. Detailed job-level findings can be found in Appendix C.

Compensation Table Guide

INDUSTRY CUTS

- Colleges/Universities (ERI and CUPA-HR)
- Public Administration (Government) (ERI Only)
- All Industry (ERI only)

Benefits Market Data

METHODOLOGY

Benefit survey sources included the 2025 Milliman Benefits Survey as the primary reference, supplemented with publicly available data from 23 major local public employers. This dual-source approach ensures both broad comparability and localized relevance.

The benefits analysis focused on the following areas:

- Medical benefits
- Retirement benefits
- Health & life benefits
- Paid time off

Milliman benefits information was effective as of January 1, 2025, published in June of 2025. Other comparator benefit information is effective as of November 1, 2025.

Twenty-three (23) local public employers were selected for benefit detail comparison.

Organizations were selected based upon major local public employers near each university.

Organizations used for comparison included:

- Benton County Government
- Central School District 13J (Monmouth)
- City of Ashland*
- City of Corvallis
- City of Eugene
- City of Klamath Falls
- City of La Grande
- City of Portland
- City of Wilsonville
- Clackamas County
- Corvallis School District 509J
- Eugene School District 4J
- Jackson County Government
- Klamath County Government
- Klamath Falls City Schools
- Lane Community College (LCC)
- Lane County Government
- Mt. Hood Community College (MHCC)
- Multnomah County Government
- Polk County (Monmouth)
- Portland Community College (PCC)
- Portland Public Schools (PPS)
- State of Oregon (SEIU only)
- Jackson County Government

* At the time of research, City of Ashland had not yet finalized negotiations for their applicable CBA.

BENEFIT COMPARISONS - COST

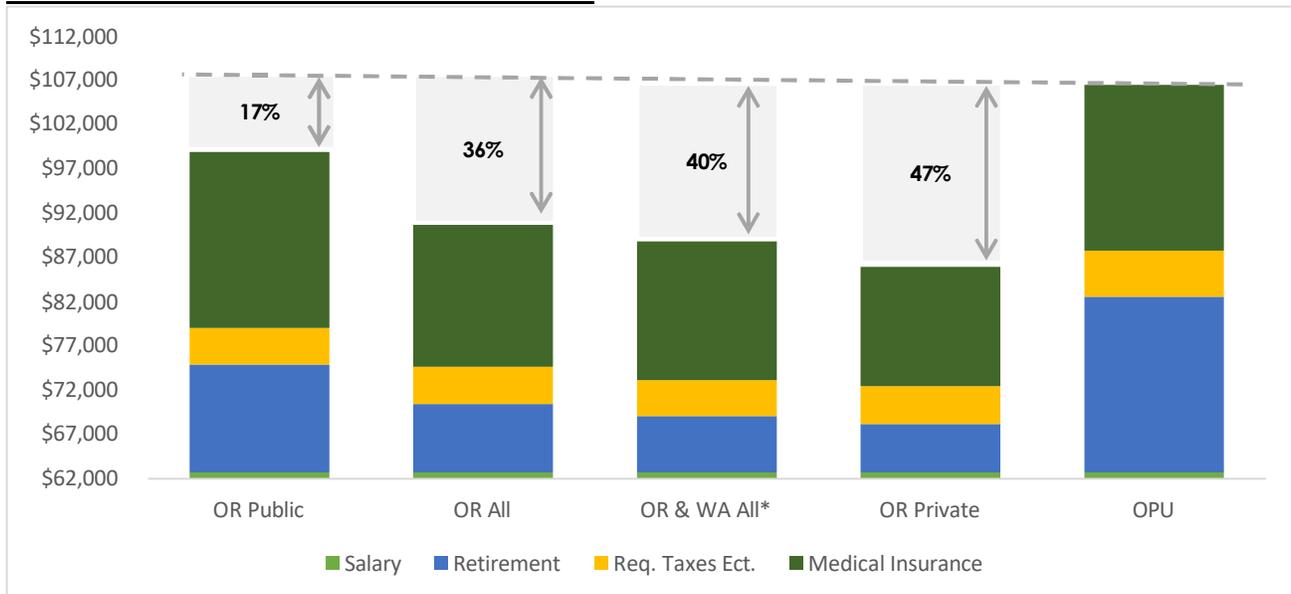
Cost Comparisons

To evaluate OPU benefit costs relative to the market, Trüpp conducted a level-set comparison using a consistent annual salary of **\$62,710** (average annual of OPU/SEIU employees in 2025). This approach ensures an equitable comparison, as the relative value of benefits is typically greater at lower salary levels and diminishes at higher ones.

Based upon the information below collected from Milliman, **OPU's Benefit Costs lead the market by 17% or more:**

- Leads by 17% when compared to public Oregon organizations
- Leads by 36% when compared to all Oregon organizations
- Leads by 40% when compared to all Oregon and Washington organizations Leads by 47% when compared to private Oregon organizations

OPU BENEFIT COST VERSUS MARKET



Controlled Application of Benefits Data

To illustrate the impact of benefits, we held base salary constant for comparison purposes. Using a hypothetical OPU employee earning \$62,710, and assuming the same salary in each market, total compensation would:

- Lead by 8% compared to public Oregon organizations
- Lead by 17% compared to all Oregon organizations
- Lead by 20% compared to Oregon and Washington organizations
- Lead by 24% compared to private Oregon organizations

This example isolates the impact of benefits alone by controlling for salary.

Job-specific total compensation comparisons, using actual market pay data and OPU job data, are provided in the final section of the report and within Appendix B and C.

BENEFIT COMPARISONS – PLAN DETAILS

Health & Life Plans

Overall, **OPU leads** this market with regard to employer share of health premiums, picking up a greater portion of the medical premiums than either the comparators or the Milliman NW organizations (all industries).

Life Insurance Offerings by **OPU lag** market comparators.

BENEFIT	OPU	COMPARATORS	MILLIMAN NW	OPU POSITION
Medical	ER 95-97%	ER Average 90-93% Varies by Level	ER Average 81-90% Varies by Level	LEADING
Dental	ER 95-97%	ER Average 82-84% Varies by Level	ER Average 75-87% Varies by Level	LEADING
Vision	ER 95-97%	ER Average 83% Varies by Level	ER Average 67-81% Varies by Level	LEADING
Life	\$10,000	\$20k – 2x Salary	\$50,000	LAGGING

Paid Time Off

Based on a review of comparator organizations and Milliman benefit offerings, **OPU is aligned** with most metrics related to paid time off.

BENEFIT	OPU	COMPARATORS	MILLIMAN NW	OPU POSITION
VACATION (across tenure stages)	12-27 Days/Yr	13-25 Days/Yr	10-25 Days/Yr	ALIGNED within 1 Day/Yr
SICK	12 Days/Yr	12-18 Days/Yr Average: 13 Days/Yr	12 Days/Yr	ALIGNED within 1 Day/Yr
HOLIDAY	10 Days/Yr ¹	11 Days/Yr	10 Days/Yr	ALIGNED within 1 Day/Yr
PERSONAL	3 Days/Yr	0-6 Days/Yr Average: 2.3 Days/Yr	2 Days/Yr	LEADING
TOTAL STANDARD PAID DAYS OFF (MAX)	52 Days/Yr	50.5 Days/Yr	49 Days / Yr	LEADING
INCLEMENT WEATHER	Up to 6 days (2 Yrs)	Varies 0 - Limit not stated (most did not have specified # days off)	n/a	(Wide Variation)
BEREAVEMENT	4 Days/Death ²	3-10 Days/Death Average: 4.1 Days/Death	4 Days/Death	ALIGNED within 1 Day/Yr
JURY DUTY	Paid at regular rate + jury pay	Same day balance and some in addition to jury duty pay	N/A	ALIGNED

¹ Additionally OPU includes any day declared by the university president or state governor as a holiday.

² For OPU, if necessary, an employee may use no more than ten (10) additional days of accrued leave, including sick leave, or if leave is not available, leave without pay, at the time of death of an immediate family member.

Retirement

Of the 21 entities reviewed, the majority participated in PERS. Of those reviewed, the majority also pick up the employee contribution.

BENEFIT	OPU	COMPARATORS	OPU POSITION
PERS Pick Up – All Comparators	YES	76% provide pick-up or contribution in lieu of ¹	LEADING
PERS Pick Up – Higher Ed	YES	67% provide pick-up or contribution in lieu of ²	LEADING

¹ Of the 21 entities participating in PERS

² Represents data from three colleges

Differential Pay

Comparator data was reviewed for the most common types of pay differentials for comparisons with OPU. Milliman data was not available for differentials. Overall **OPU comparison varies by benefit.**

BENEFIT	OPU	COMPARATORS	OPU POSITION
Bilingual	5% of base pay	13 - % of pay (5.1% average) 5 – No differential indicated 7 – Fixed \$ amount	ALIGNED
Lead	5% of base pay	11 – 5% of base pay 10 – No Lead differential	LEADING

BENEFIT	OPU	COMPARATORS	OPU POSITION
Out-of-Class	1 step increase or first step of higher range (whichever is higher)	15 – 4.6% average 4 – Equivalent pay for role ¹	ALIGNED
2nd Shift	(same 2 nd and 3 rd) \$1.00	9 - \$1.11 average 3 - % of pay (3.5% average)	LAGGING
3rd Shift	(same 2 nd and 3 rd) \$1.00	11 - \$1.21 average 3 - % of pay (6.5% average)	LAGGING
Longevity	2.5% after 5 years	7 – Increase % of base pay 6 – Lump sum 8 – Not provided	ALIGNED

¹ Equivalent pay best practice for pay equity compliance.

Other Benefits – Staff Fee Tuition

In addition to the benefits included above, OPU also offers a rich benefit not available at most comparator organizations included above of discounted tuition rates. The benefit includes 12 hours of credit per term at the staff rate of 30% of resident undergraduate tuition. This benefit may be transferred to a qualified family member or domestic partner upon verification that the transferee is a qualified recipient of transferred staff fee privileges.

Total Compensation

METHODOLOGY

Trüpp calculated total compensation for each benchmark job and then compared those totals to the market. Total compensation was defined using the following components:

- Salary at salary range midpoint for OPU / 50th percentile base salaries for the market
- Employer paid benefit costs from the 2025 Milliman Benefits Survey or OPU OPE rates including:
 - Average annual employer cost per employee for medical insurance
 - Average annual percentage of salary for retirement contributions and required payroll taxes

MARKET SEGMENT	DESCRIPTION OF BENEFITS DATA	ANNUAL MEDICAL INSURANCE \$	RETIREMENT %	REQUIRED TAXES %	RETIREMENT + REQUIRED TAXES
Public Administration	Oregon Public	\$19,883	19.41%	6.58%	26.0%
All Industries	Oregon All	\$16,021	12.29%	6.74%	19.0%
College*	Oregon & Washington All	\$15,652	10.14%	6.48%	16.6%
OPU	OPU Average	\$18,718	31.63%	8.30%	39.9%

** The Oregon and Washington “all” data set includes all organizations in Oregon and Washington for College benefit comparisons because market data comes from both states. Data including only college/institution costs was not available.*

These inputs were applied consistently to each benchmark job to calculate total compensation for OPU and each market segment, enabling direct comparison across segments.

TOTAL COMPENSATION FINDINGS

OPU leads the market in total compensation across all market segments. In aggregate, across all benchmark jobs combined, OPU leads by 10–22%, depending upon the market segment.

Across job categories, OPU maintains a market lead in total compensation. Information Technology roles show the strongest lead, while the Education, Science & Professional category reflects the smallest lead.

JOB CATEGORIES	OPU vs COLLEGE (CUPA + ERI)	OPU vs PUBLIC ADMIN (ERI)	OPU vs ALL INDUSTRIES (ERI)
ALL	122%	110%	113%
Clerical & Support Services	117%	105%	110%
Education, Science & Professional	115%	105%	108%
Facilities & Trades	120%	110%	114%
Finance, Business & Contracts	127%	115%	116%
Healthcare	118%	107%	112%
Information Technology	147%	126%	124%

At the individual job level, eight (8) benchmark jobs fall 5% or more below the market for total compensation in one or two market segments (College, Public Administration, or All Industry segments); however, no job falls below market for total compensation across all three market segments.

These comparison points are highlighted in red in the Total Compensation Summary in Appendix B. Detailed job-level market and total compensation findings can be found in Appendix C.