



Education toward Golden Indonesia 2045: Reforming Welfare, Remuneration, and Career Governance of Lecturers in Public and Private Universities

Maysarah

Universitas Dharmawangsa

Corresponding Author: Maysarah maysarah@dharmawangsa.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Higher education is a strategic instrument for achieving Golden Indonesia 2045, and its quality cannot be separated from the quality and sustainability of the lecturer profession. This article analyses the welfare, remuneration, career development, and governance of lecturers in public (PTN) and private (PTS) universities. Using a normative juridical method with statutory, conceptual, and public-policy approaches, supplemented by descriptive secondary data on the North Sumatra provincial minimum wage, civil-servant base salaries, a campus-worker wage survey, and United States professor salaries, the study finds that between 2021 and 2025 the North Sumatra minimum wage rose by about 19.7% while the entry base salary of civil servants in grade III/c rose by about 8.0%, narrowing the gap from roughly 12% to roughly 1%; that private-university lecturer pay has no single national standard; and that welfare, performance, career, and digital academic records are still treated separately. The article proposes the Integrated Lecturer Welfare and Academic Career Governance Model (ILWAC-GM) and the Academic Digital Career Passport (ADCP), a verified digital academic record portable across institutions. The model is conceptual and requires empirical testing before it is used as a policy basis.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Golden Indonesia 2045 places humans as one of the foundations of national development. Law Number 59 of 2024 on the National Long-Term Development Plan (RPJPN) 2025–2045 serves as a guideline for development and sets improving human resource competitiveness as one of the vision targets. Bappenas is also developing the 2025–2045 Education Roadmap for higher education and mapping human resource needs as part of these efforts. Universities are in a strategic position because they produce professionals, scientists, researchers, leaders, legal practitioners, healthcare workers, teachers, and various other professions that shape the direction of development.

The quality of universities cannot be separated from the quality of lecturers. In addition to the number of universities, students, laboratories, digital technology, and curriculum, human factors are a fundamental component. Lecturers carry out education and teaching, research, community service, student mentoring, publication, and innovation. The specific framework for the lecturer profession is regulated, among others, in Government Regulation Number 37 of 2009 concerning Lecturers. This article starts from the conceptual hypothesis that lecturers' well-being is related to the quality of academic work, learning quality, and graduate quality. That chain of relationships makes sense theoretically but hasn't been tested in this article. If lecturers' well-being and careers aren't managed well, there's a risk that they will spend more energy meeting economic needs than developing research, publications, innovation, and community service.

This issue is especially important for private universities. Not all private universities have the same financial capacity: some have a large number of students and strong funding sources, while others survive with limited resources. For that reason, discussing lecturer welfare isn't enough by just comparing a salary figure. You also need to look at employment status, highest education, academic position, certification, workload, research, publications, community service, intellectual property rights (IPR), books, allowances, social protection, promotion system, and career sustainability. At the same time, demands on lecturers keep increasing: higher education, research, publications, community service, mentoring, meeting the Lecturer Workload (BKD), academic promotions, and digital transformation.

Problem Statement and Goals

The main question of this article is whether the current system of lecturer income and career development has provided a proportional relationship between qualifications, workload, performance, academic responsibilities, and well-being, especially in the comparison between public and private universities. The sub-questions are: (1) what is the legal framework governing the lecturer profession and income; (2) what does secondary data show about the income of public and private university lecturers, as well as international comparisons; and (3) what governance model can link well-being, the tridharma performance, career, digital track record, and professional protection. The goal is to analyze

these three aspects and formulate the ILWAC-GM model as a conceptual policy framework.

Research Gap and Novelty

Research on lecturers in Indonesia has covered topics like compensation, job satisfaction, performance, social protection, and private university lecturer salaries. For example, there have been legal studies on paying permanent private university lecturers below the minimum wage, as well as studies on minimum wage and the welfare of private lecturers from the perspectives of Islamic law and positive law. Even so, there are four gaps. First, welfare research and career research tend to be done separately; salaries are rarely systematically linked to things like PhD progression, academic positions, workload credits, research, publications, community service, patents, books, credit points, and Professor positions. Second, lecturers' career records haven't been treated as portable professional assets, even though verified academic work shouldn't be lost when lecturers move between institutions. Third, there aren't many models that simultaneously link well-being with the tridharma performance. Fourth, ethical aspects and religious values haven't always been integrated into faculty income reforms.

The novelty of this article lies in three ideas: (1) the principle of welfare-performance balance for lecturers; (2) the Academic Digital Career Passport (ADCP); and (3) the integrated governance model ILWAC-GM. Lecturers are not just seen as employees, but also as academic human capital that produces knowledge, innovation, graduates, public policy, and community service. The claim of novelty is limited to the integration and conceptual framework; each element, such as BKD, SISTER, and academic positions, already exists in the current system.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

This research uses a normative juridical method with three approaches: the statutory regulation approach, the conceptual approach, and the public policy approach. Primary legal sources include the 1945 Constitution, Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, Law Number 12 of 2012 on Higher Education, Law Number 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, Government Regulation Number 37 of 2009 on Lecturers, as well as regulations on academic positions, lecturer careers, wages, and minimum wage determination. Secondary sources include journal articles, policy documents, and government information systems, namely SISTER and BIMA. Religious values are analyzed from the Qur'an and hadith as an ethical foundation, not as a source for determining policy figures.

This article also presents descriptive secondary data: (a) the provincial minimum wage (UMP) of North Sumatra from 2021–2026; (b) the basic salary of civil servants in grade III/c; (c) a survey of campus worker wages and highlights from the DPR regarding the income gap between public and private universities; and (d) the average salary of professors at doctoral universities in the United States from the AAUP. The data are analyzed descriptively, including calculations of ratios and nominal percentage changes by the author. Three

methodological notes apply. First, the units and definitions of the data differ (Indonesian rupiah per month for Indonesia, US dollars per year for the comparison), so the US data are presented separately and not directly compared. Second, the civil servant data represent basic salaries, not total earnings, since ASN lecturers may receive other components like professional allowances and performance allowances. Third, the wage survey data are not an official salary standard for all private university lecturers. This article does not include primary data; the proposed model is conceptual.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Legal Framework and Overlaps of Five Areas of Law

Education is a constitutional right for citizens and is an important part of national life. The legal framework for the teaching profession includes the 1945 Constitution, the National Education System Law, the Higher Education Law, the Law on Teachers and Lecturers, government regulations on lecturers, regulations on academic positions and lecturer careers, wage regulations and minimum wage determinations, BKD policies, as well as the SISTER and BIMA systems. This review shows that lecturers are at the intersection of five areas: higher education law, professional law, labor law, wage law, and university governance. As a result, lecturer welfare policies can't be seen from just one angle.

Characteristics of Public and Private Universities

Public and private universities have the same function in the national education system, but their management structures are different (Table 1). The biggest differences lie in the organizing body, sources of funding, staffing structure, and determination of income.

Table 1. Comparison of Public and Private Universities

Aspects	PTN	PTS
Organizing body	Country	Organizing body or foundation
Funding sources	State Budget, PNBP, and other legitimate sources	Tuition, foundations, grants, cooperation, and other legitimate sources
Staffing structure	Can include ASN and non-ASN according to the form of PTN	Generally follow a working relationship with the organizing body
Income	Influenced by employment status and regulations	Influenced by the status, contract, ability of the institution, and the policies of the organizing body
Karier academic	Follow national regulations	Follow national regulations and institutional governance
Tridharma, BKD, SISTER	Mandatory and used in the lecturer data ecosystem	Mandatory and used in the lecturer data ecosystem

Thus, the academic duties of lecturers at public and private universities are the same, while their sources of income are different. The type of institution shouldn't be a reason to overlook a lecturer's professionalism.

Income Data

North Sumatra Minimum Wage and Civil Servants' Basic Salary

Table 2 compares the North Sumatra UMP with the basic salary of civil servants in grade III/c with 0 years of service before and after the 2024 adjustment. Grade III/c is used as an illustration. The ratios and differences were calculated by the author and are nominal.

Table 2. North Sumatra Minimum Wage and Basic Salary for Civil Servants Group III/c

Year	UMP North Sumatra (Rp)	Basic salary of civil servant III/c, working period 0 (Rp)	Difference (Rp)	Basic salary to UMP ratio
2021	2.499.423	2.802.300	302.877	1,12
2022	2.522.610	2.802.300	279.690	1,11
2023	2.710.494	2.802.300	91.806	1,03
2024	2.809.915	3.026.400	216.485	1,08
2025	2.992.559	3.026.400	33.841	1,01
2026	3.228.949	Not available on the script	-	-

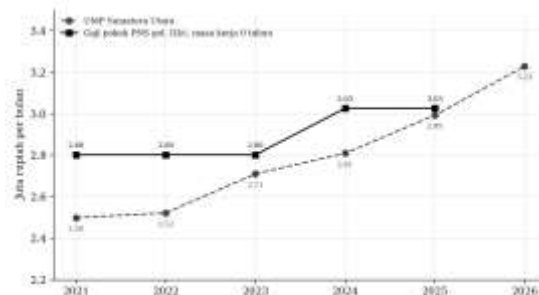


Figure 1. Minimum Wage of North Sumatra and the basic salary of civil servants grade III/c (0 years of service), 2021–2026. The basic salary of civil servants in 2026 is not available in the manuscript.

Between 2021 and 2025, the minimum wage in North Sumatra (UMP) went up from Rp2,499,423 to Rp2,992,559, or about 19.7%, while the starting basic salary for civil servants (PNS) in group III/c increased from Rp2,802,300 to Rp3,026,400, or around 8.0%. The basic salary for PNS didn't change from 2021 to 2023 and was only adjusted in 2024. As a result, the starting basic salary for PNS group III/c, which was around 12% higher than the UMP in 2021, is only about 1% higher in 2025. Note that basic salary isn't the total income; professional allowances and performance allowances aren't included in this figure.

Private University Lecturer

National data isn’t available in the form of a single uniform PTS salary table like for civil servants, because PTS wages depend on the organizing body, employment contract, academic position, years of service, and university policies. As an example, the Campus Workers Union survey updated on September 21, 2026, with 427 respondents recorded a median campus worker salary of IDR 3,571,295 and an average of IDR 4,153,076 per month. Compared to the 2026 North Sumatra minimum wage (IDR 3,228,949), the median is about 1.11 times higher and the average about 1.29 times higher; this comparison is only indicative because respondents are campus workers, not specifically private university lecturers in North Sumatra. Also, in February 2026, the House of Representatives highlighted the income gap between public and private universities; a House article mentioned that over 42% of private lecturers in the cited data earned a fixed income below IDR 3 million per month. Both of these sources are survey data and citations, not official salary standards for all PTS lecturers.

United States Comparator

As an academic comparison, Table 3 shows the average salaries of professors at U.S. doctoral universities according to the AAUP. The 2021–22 data comes from a survey of over 900 U.S. colleges. For 2025–26, the AAUP has only released preliminary results so far: the average full-time faculty salary went up 2.3% nominally but dropped about 0.4% in real terms after inflation; this figure includes all full-time faculty, not just professors.

Table 3. Average Salary of Professors at U.S. Doctoral Universities

Academic year	Average salary of professors, US doctoral universities (US\$ per year)
2021–22	163.485
2022–23	169.821
2023–24	176.162
2024–25	181.273
2025–26	Preliminary results are available; final report has not yet been published

That value went up by about 10.9% in nominal terms from 2021–22 to 2024–25. Because the units, periods, and definitions are different from Indonesia's data, this table isn't used to directly compare with Indonesian lecturers' salaries.

The Formulated Models: ILWAC-GM and ADCP

Based on the analysis above, this article formulates the Integrated Lecturer Welfare and Academic Career Governance Model (ILWAC-GM), which consists of five pillars (Table 4).

Table 4. Five Pillars of ILWAC-GM

Pillar	Components
1. Welfare	Income, social protection, job security, benefits, awards, work environment
2. Performance	Education, research, PKM, publications, guidance, supporting tasks
3. Career (karier)	S3, Expert Assistant, Lecturer, Head Lecturer, Professor
4. Digital Governance	SISTER, BKD, ADCP, verification, audit trail
5. Ethics and Protection	Integrity, professional protection, anti-plagiarism, anti-data fabrication, transparency, accountability

This model works on the principle that welfare follows professional responsibility and verified performance: well-being is not separated from professional responsibility and verifiable performance. However, all income shouldn't be turned into output-based incentives; a basic income that provides security is still needed, along with performance-based rewards. The proposed income structure conceptually is:

Total Lecturer Income = Basic Income + Professional Allowance + Performance Incentive + Academic Award + Additional Duties

The Academic Digital Career Passport (ADCP) is a digital academic record attached to lecturers that can be verified across institutions. It includes academic identity, undergraduate/masters/doctoral education, academic positions, BKD, certifications, research, publications, PKM, intellectual property rights, books, awards, credit points (KUM), and institutional history. To make verified work transferable between institutions, the system needs: a unique academic identity, work metadata, proof documents, verification date, verifying institution, validation status, audit trail, correction mechanism, and objection mechanism.

DISCUSSION

Reading Income Data Carefully

The most striking finding in Table 2 is the narrowing gap between the starting basic salary of civil servants in grade III/c and the minimum wage in North Sumatra. This finding needs to be understood with three caveats. First, the basic salary is not the total income; professional allowances and performance allowances can add to it. Second, grade III/c is just an example, and income increases with tenure and position. Third, the minimum wage is a labor regime instrument, not a standard for a lecturer's professional value. Therefore, the right conclusion is minimum wage $\neq$ lecturer's professional standard. Lecturers generally require higher education, specific competencies, research, publications, and professional responsibility; precisely because of that, their income system needs to be designed more comprehensively than just using the minimum wage as a reference.

At private universities, the absence of a national standard means that an understanding of income has to be built from indirect sources, like surveys and

policy highlights. The Campus Workers' Union survey and the figures in parliamentary articles both point to gaps, but neither can be generalized. This itself is a policy finding: without transparency in income structures, policies can't be designed based on solid data. Studies highlighting the payment of below-minimum wages to permanent private university lecturers reinforce the urgency of monitoring wage compliance according to authority and legal provisions.

Balance of Well-Being and Performance

Pay reform doesn't have to mean that all lecturers get the same amount. What's needed is fairness and transparency: lecturers with a doctoral degree, high academic rank, big responsibilities, and productivity can be rewarded based on objective indicators. The system needs to avoid two extremes. First, a system that only looks at attendance without considering academic productivity. Second, a system that only chases publications without paying attention to teaching quality, service, academic integrity, and well-being. The basic income structure plus performance components in ILWAC-GM is meant to ensure both certainty and accountability.

In the human capital framework, spending on lecturers can be seen as an investment in human development, not just operational costs. The chain of well-being, academic focus, research productivity, publications, innovation, student quality, and quality of human resources are reasonable conceptual assumptions, but proving causality requires further empirical research.

Academic Record Portability

The idea of Academic Career Portability means that a lecturer's verified academic track record is attached to the individual, not just the institution. When a lecturer moves from college A to B, publications, intellectual property, books, research, community service projects, certifications, workload credit, credit scores, and academic positions can be verified without losing their track record. The principle is: verified work becomes a lecturer's academic asset, can be traced, re-verified, and accounted for according to regulations. Recognition of credit scores still follows the applicable rules; ADCP is not meant to change how credit scores are assessed, but to make it easier to prove them.

Portability must come with risk prevention: duplicate claims, predatory publishing, manipulation of credit scores, plagiarism, document forgery, and double recognition of the same output. Since ADCP contains personal and employee data, its design also needs to comply with personal data protection rules, including limiting purposes and access control. Correction and objection mechanisms are important so that lecturers can dispute incorrect data without losing their rights.

BKD, SISTER, and BIMA as Career Infrastructure

BKD shouldn't just be seen as an administrative duty. BKD data can be linked to workflow, productivity, quality, career development, and incentives. SISTER can be developed into an academic track record database that helps the government and universities understand the needs of lecturers, areas of expertise, research productivity, the need for professors and doctors, lecturer

distribution, and centers of excellence. This aligns with Bappenas' direction, which emphasizes mapping HR needs and centers of excellence. Integrating SISTER, BKD, academic positions, publications, research, PKM, intellectual property rights, books, certifications, and credit scores also reduces the burden on lecturers who have to enter the same data repeatedly.

BIMA plays an important role in the research funding and PKM ecosystem. For private universities, access to grants based on the quality of the proposal and outputs, not whether it's a public or private university, is one of the most direct ways to reduce gaps in research access. The Tridharma can then work as one ecosystem: research produces articles, IP, and books, which are implemented through PKM and impact public policy and benefit society.

The Ethical and Religious Values Dimension

Reforming lecturer welfare isn't just about salary; it's also about values. From an Islamic perspective, Quran Surah Al-Mujadilah verse 11 puts knowledgeable people at a high rank:¹

يَرْفَعُ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ دَرَجَاتٍ

Yarfa'illāhul-ladzīna āmanū minkum walladzīna ūtul-'ilma darajāt ("Allah will raise those of you who believe and those who are given knowledge by degrees. This verse serves as a foundation that knowledge holds a high position, and therefore the profession of guardians and developers of knowledge needs to be appreciated through a system that respects the professionalism of lecturers. QS Al-Qashash verse 26 emphasizes two qualities in work:²

إِنَّ خَيْرَ مَنْ آَسْتَجَرْتَ الْقَوِيَ الْأَمِينُ

Inna khaira manista'jartal-qawiyyul-amīn ("Truly, the best person you can hire to work is someone who is strong and trustworthy. Al-qawiyy can be understood as competence and capability, while al-amīn refers to trustworthiness and integrity. So, an ideal lecturer system considers competence, integrity, welfare, and responsibility all at once. The hadith 'each of you is a leader, and each of you will be held accountable for those he leads,' narrated in Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, places responsibility on everyone: the government in policy, universities and foundations in governance, lecturers in student education, and students in their learning process.

The qualities of shiddiq (honest), amanah (trustworthy), tabligh (conveying the truth), and fathanah (intelligent and wise) can be applied to academic ethics: not faking data and avoiding plagiarism; taking care of students, data, and research funds; teaching well and sharing research results; as well as researching, solving problems, and using technology, including artificial intelligence, ethically. This dimension aligns with the Ethics and Protection pillar in ILWAC-GM and with the goal of education to shape future leaders, not just workers.

¹Al-Qur'an, QS Al-Mujadilah [58]:11.

²Al-Qur'an, QS Al-Qashash [28]:26.

5W+5P Framework and 2026–2045 Roadmap

Reforms can be outlined using a 5W+5P framework. The five Ws are Welfare, Workload, Work Performance, Work Protection, and Work Career. The five Ps are Professional, Productive, Portable, Protected, and Principled. The implementation can be divided into four phases leading up to 2045 (Table 5). This phase division is the author's suggestion, not an official government target

Table 5. Proposed Roadmap for Lecturer Reform

Phase	Focus
2026–2030: Foundation	Welfare audits, income transparency, strengthening of BKD and SISTER, integration of career data, protection of professions
2031–2035: Strengthening	Research incentives, international publications, impactful PKMs, IPR, international collaboration, increasing the number of professors
2036–2040: Integration	ADCP, academic record portability, system interoperability, lecturer mobility, global collaboration
2041–2045: Golden Indonesia	Lecturers who are prosperous, productive, with integrity, and globally competitive

Policy Implications

The implementation of ILWAC-GM requires actions on three levels. The government needs to align lecturer regulations, strengthen welfare standards, expand research grants, boost funding for private university lecturers, integrate academic data, and build a system for tracking career records. Universities need to set up transparent income structures, link performance to incentives, support research, help speed up academic promotions, and provide professional protection. Lecturers need to enhance their qualifications, maintain academic integrity, improve the quality of publications, produce impactful research, strengthen community service, and use digital systems responsibly. In private universities, policies need to consider the financial capacity of the managing institutions but still maintain professional protection for lecturers.

Limitations

This article has a few limitations. There's no primary data; the ILWAC-GM and ADCP models haven't been tested empirically. Income data comes from salary tables, non-representative surveys, and policy media citations. Civil servant data is just the basic salary, so it doesn't reflect total income. U.S. data isn't directly comparable. Minimum wage and survey data need to be cross-checked with official documents at the time of publication, and regulations regarding professors' professions, careers, and income should be reviewed based on the latest versions. Follow-up research could use surveys of public and private university lecturers, contract document analysis, and ADCP trials at several universities.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

Education toward a Golden Indonesia 2045 can't be separated from lecturer reform. Lecturers are one of the main players in shaping Indonesia's human resources, so their welfare needs to be seen from the perspective of long-term human development. The differences between public and private universities should be understood based on institutional character, funding sources, employment status, and applicable legal provisions. The minimum wage can be one of the parameters in wage discussions, but it can't be the only measure of a lecturer's professional value. Data from 2021–2025 shows that the gap between the starting basic salary of civil servants in group III/c and the minimum wage in North Sumatra narrowed from around 12% to about 1%, and private university lecturers' income still doesn't have a transparent national standard.

This article presents ILWAC-GM as a conceptual model that integrates PhD qualifications, academic positions, tridharma, BKD, SISTER, publications, research, PKM, intellectual property rights, KUM, remuneration, and professional protection, as well as ADCP as a portable, verified, and individual-centered academic record. The policy recommendations proposed:

1. Basic national lecturer income standards that take into account qualifications, responsibilities, status, and institutional conditions.
2. A framework for income protection and a transparent income structure in private universities, while still considering the capabilities of the organizing bodies, along with wage compliance audits according to authority and legal regulations.
3. Recognition of PhD qualifications and proportional academic position incentives.
4. Development of ADCP, which is an academic track record system that can be verified across institutions.
5. A mechanism for portability of credit points for legitimate and verified work, with audits and duplication prevention.
6. Integration of SISTER and BKD so data isn't fragmented and repeated administrative burdens are reduced.
7. Expanding research funding access for private university lecturers based on proposal quality and outcomes, not just whether the institution is public or private.
8. Clear professional protection mechanisms for work contracts, evaluations, career development, complaints, and dispute resolution.
9. Strengthening the role of professors as knowledge creators, academic mentors, and guides for young researchers.
10. Viewing lecturer welfare as an investment in long-term human development, not just a cost component, along with strengthening character education based on honesty, trustworthiness, truth-telling, and intelligence.

The well-being of lecturers isn't the ultimate goal of education, but it's one of the foundations for producing outstanding, character-driven Indonesians who can lead Indonesia into 2045.

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