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**University Staff Council Meeting Minutes**

December 10, 2015, 1:00-2:30 pm  
Swart Hall 217



President Goetsch welcomed everyone, and introduced Laurie Textor, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources. Textor lead the following discussion:

Human Resources is undergoing two new processes; 1) an *equity* study for all employee groups that will be done annually and paid by UW Oshkosh, and 2) a faculty-only *merit* review, which is paid by UW System.

1. **Salary Equity:** UW Oshkosh has employees who are paid 70% of the market value for their work. Because all of UW System has the same salary ranges, UW Oshkosh’s were compared to 33 similar-sized universities in the Midwest. In an attempt to provide a fair and living wage, Chancellor Leavitt has committed $350,000 in FY16 to permanently increase the most egregiously underpaid. Salary equity reviews are planned to continue annually.
   1. Compensation Ratio = your salary ÷ market rate. For example; John Doe makes $11.00/hour as a crossing guard at UW Oshkosh. Market rate (average salary) for crossing guards at our other universities is $15.00/hour. John’s compensation ratio is 73% (11.00 ÷ 15.00 = 0.733).
   2. UW Oshkosh’s goal is to have the lowest compensation ratios at 80%. John Doe would potentially receive a salary increase to $12/hour (12.00 ÷ 15.00 = 0.80).
   3. The $350,000 commitment will not address all employees every year.
   4. Salary increases paid by UW Oshkosh are based on *equity*, only. Merit paid by UW Oshkosh has been suspended indefinitely.
2. **Salary Equity Timeline**
   1. **January**: all data for all positions will be entered in the CUPA database.
   2. **February**: CUPA data will be given to the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors (Earns, Rathjen, Roter, Sonnleitner) who will review salaries in worst-to-best case order based on compensation ratios. The VCs will discuss the data with Deans and Directors, who will have the opportunity to provide insights. Final decisions will be made by VCs.
   3. **March**: PTFs and letters will be sent to those receiving an increase in pay. USC requested that all employees be notified of their status, regardless of change. Textor will make that recommendation to the VCs.
   4. **May**: Everyone receiving a salary change will have it applied to their first paycheck in May. Textor stated she will recommend retroactive pay to January 1 to the VCs.
3. **Salary Equity Processing Discussion**
   1. University Staff, Academic Staff, and Faculty (to a much smaller degree) will be considered.
   2. The most current position descriptions on file in Human Resources will be used. If you’re unsure of the last time your position description was updated, discuss this with your supervisor, and submit a new copy to Human Resources by early January.
   3. Salary change decisions include years of experience (total years at UW Oshkosh; outside service is not included) and demographic information (gender and ethnic background).
   4. DMCs received in the past may affect your review. Lump sum DMCs will not affect salary reviews. Permanent salary DMCs will affect the review, as they most likely increased compensation ratios. The purposes for receiving DMCs are not considered for salary equity (DMCs are considered *merit* increases, and this is an *equity* process, only).
   5. Newly hired employees are brought in at close to mid-point, and are less likely to be included in the salary equity process for a very long time.
   6. Employees taking on additional work (more of the same) will not receive additional compensation from the equity review, unless your Dean or Director notifies the VCs when consulted. Ask your supervisor to flag-up this type of information.
   7. If your supervisor won’t help you, go to your supervisor’s supervisor. If that still doesn’t work, go to Textor, directly.
4. **FLSA Discussion**
   1. Federal legislation will increase the salary threshold from $23,660 to $50,440. Textor anticipates this will be negotiated down to somewhere in the $40,000s.
   2. Anyone paid under the threshold is required to be paid time and a half for overtime.
   3. Whether that means employees will receive a salary increase to avoid overtime or the university will be required to manage overtime pay is unknown at this time.
   4. Employees working eight-hour days are entitled to one 45 minute unpaid lunch break and two 15 minute paid breaks. Supervisors have the authority to determine the operational needs of the department; some have more flexibility than others (i.e. didn’t take a lunch break, so get to leave early that day is at the discretion of the supervisor).
5. **Reclassification Discussion**
   1. The salary equity process is separate from reclassification, however while inputting data into the CUPA database for salary equity, position descriptions may be flagged for further review. Potential reclassification and analysis is a separate process that will be addressed after salary equity.
   2. With increasing workloads, please note that doing more of the same work doesn’t increase the scope of a position. If the position’s duties are at a higher level, than you may be eligible for a reclassification.
   3. The HR website (<https://www.uwosh.edu/hr/payroll/>) offers access to Title Definitions and all University Staff classifications from the UW System page. Titling is also on this page to provide comparative salary ranges for reference.HR staff are available to discuss and craft your position description with you, as well.
   4. Retro-pay for reclassification still exists, but speak to your Supervisor to determine how far back. Retro-pay is not required, and many departments do not have the budget to support it.
   5. Delays caused by HR are due to understaffing, only (we have one HR staff member to every 148 employees, and the average is 1:100).
6. **Retirements and Refilling Positions Discussion**
   1. Forty percent of all retirements will be filled.
   2. The purpose of opening all positions to the public, rather than promoting from within, is to diversify our campus. UW Oshkosh lacks diversity. Diversity is defined broadly (persons of color, veterans, persons with disabilities are all examples).
   3. Positions are opened to the public from the very beginning. However, of 16 searches conducted since July, 12 were filled by internal applicants. This type of recruitment is aligned with UPS policies, as we’re no longer governed by OSER.
   4. More AVCs are being hired than ever before, and paid at a higher salary. University Staff asked how that is affecting their classification on campus. Textor is unsure of the history, and has not looked into the number of positions that have not been refilled based on classification.
   5. A department with four retirees, three faculty and one university staff, are limited to only filling three of the retirements. They chose to fill the faculty positions, and instead hired an LTE for the university staff position. This has the potential to turn the LTE into a long-term “temp” position, giving faculty preferential treatment. Textor stated this is a concern, and will look into the back-fill data from the retirement program.
7. **Custodial and Reeve Union Work Conditions Discussion**
   1. UW Oshkosh administration stated that departmental policies are at the discretion of the department, and does not require governance review. They are viewed more as “departmental rules.” The department crafts the policy, and HR will review them. A grace period was not provided for the new Custodial policy (also implemented in Reeve), but in the future, one will be.
   2. According to a Board of Regents policy (*stated policy #, didn’t catch*), the University Staff Council should be involved in departmental policy-making that affects their classification of employees. When taking away privileges or rights, input from the Council is important. Departmental policies can be harmful to employees, and need some oversight.
   3. Chuck Hermes asked President Goestch for the names of University Staff to be on a committee to review this policy. Specific individuals have been contacted, and accepted.
   4. When everyone has the same rule, everyone should share the same consequences. Allowing supervisor discretion is causing internal conflict. Textor stated that clear consequences are not always possible, as each call-in case is different. If there is a perception that someone is abusing sick leave (with or without proof; employee or supervisor), send it up the chain of command.
   5. Custodial crews have less staff that will not be replaced. Current staff are already doing twice the work they were expected to do years ago. It is unprofessional to abuse sick leave, and needs to be addressed. However, those who do come to work, and are not abusing their sick leave, are being penalized by the university (this policy), and by each other (doing 4x the work).
   6. We can define the purposes of sick leave versus vacation and personal time. We can define a policy that addresses abuse. However, not defining clear consequences allows too much autonomy to supervisors who interpret the severity of each instance differently. Allowing supervisors freedom to interpret as they feel appropriate is causing serious conflict, and potentially punishing non-offenders rather than actual offenders.
   7. “Every time I call in sick and my child is sick, I receive an ‘occurrence.’ How is that fair when someone can take the day off just because, because we have two separate supervisors, and we’re in the same division?’
8. **University Staff Final Comments**
   1. We care about each other. Support one another and provide workplace joy by reviewing the number of staff a specific division had (for example, facilities), and the number of staff they have now. When changes are implemented, use this as a data measure and take it into account.
   2. Reward employees for not abusing privileges and rights (such as sick time) rather than punishing everyone whether or not they have. Some need to use it without being reprimanded.
   3. New policies and guidelines are helpful and welcomed when rational, but as state employees, we have very few privileges. We’re willing to work for less, because of these privileges. Taking away what little incentives we’re offered needs to be part of discussions before new policies and guidelines are enacted.

Textor stated that anyone in a situation that is causing frustration is asked to identify those needs by flagging them up the chain of command. HR will help navigate uncomfortable issues, but it is very important that University Staff first address these issues with direct supervisors. More often than not, those in leadership are unaware, and need to be informed.

Supervisory training is needed, and has begun informally with Lunch n’ Learn offerings. While faculty and academic staff may be knowledgeable in their discipline, most have never been shown how to manage people. This is something organized through the Provost’s Office, so HR does not have authority over this; however, they will continue to advocate for this obvious need.

Goetsch thanked Textor for her time, and University Staff unanimously agreed it was a very welcomed and helpful discussion. Regular Open Forums from Textor once per semester were requested. Textor agreed, as it is helpful for her, as well.

Goetsch asked University Staff to continue to email their concerns to her, and she will bring them to the appropriate groups (i.e. University Staff Council, Leadership Council, Conference of Shared Governance, Human Resources, and Chancellor Leavitt).

Recorded by M. Hoffman, USC VP.