

The University Staff Council of UW Oshkosh requests a change to the following provisions in The University of Wisconsin System UPS Operational Policies.

**UPS Operational Policy: HR1, Job Security** which states that:

**Any individual appointed to a university staff position shall be required to serve a probationary period at least twelve months in duration. [...] Probationary periods may be extended upon approval of the UW institution Human Resources Director [...]. Probationary extensions shall not exceed six months.** It is recommended that there be at least one performance evaluation with an employee while on a probationary period.

This is a 100% increase over both the probationary period and possible extensions set by statute for classified employees in similar positions with other State agencies. We request that HR 1 be changed to:

**Any individual appointed to a university staff position shall be required to serve a probationary period at least six months in duration. [...] Probationary periods may be extended upon approval of the UW institution Human Resources Director [...]. Probationary extensions shall not exceed three months. It is recommended that there be at least a minimum of two performance evaluations with an employee while on a probationary period.**

This would align with longstanding past practice, and with Wis. Stats. [230.28\(1\)\(a\)](#) which provides that:

**All original and all promotional appointments to permanent, sessional and seasonal positions, with the exception of those positions designated as supervisor or management under s. [111.81](#), in the classified service shall be for a probationary period of 6 months, but the administrator at the request of the appointing authority and in accordance with the rules related thereto may extend any such period for a maximum of 3 additional months.**

We know of nothing unique about the University of Wisconsin that justifies a blanket increase to twice the length of the probationary period served previously by UW classified employees, and by public employees currently in similar positions at other State of Wisconsin agencies governed by Wis. Stats. [230.28\(1\)\(a\)](#).

There are many disadvantages inherent in a lengthened probationary period applied across the board to all University Staff positions across all UW institutions when job classifications and requirements are not taken into consideration.

- Recruitment: The best applicants will accept competing offers of civil service employment at other state agencies where the probation length is shorter rather than accept an employment offer with an unnecessarily lengthy probationary period at the University of Wisconsin.

- Exempt vs. Non-Exempt: All newly hired University Staff positions after July 1, 2015, will be FLSA non-exempt, and the vast majority of the positions will not be so extraordinarily complex or unpredictable that it would require a full year of observation to determine whether or not an employee is able to do the job.
- Morale: Lengthy probationary periods for all University Staff positions are destabilizing to the workforce, and tend to delay full engagement and commitment to the institution. It will increase both the percentage of employees on probation at any given time and the anxiety level among those employees, which decreases overall workplace morale.
- Promotion & Career Progression: A longer probationary period delays the ability of new employees to compete for promotional opportunities, and discourages the most talented hires from pursuing rapid advancement into more demanding positions.
- Exceptions: The guideline for probation extensions as written in the policy is acceptable and should be used on a case-by-case basis as is its intention.
- Performance Evaluations: institutions currently average two to three performance evaluations during an employee's probation. We believe it would be in the institutions best interest to require a minimum of two evaluations during this time so corrections may be made in a timely manner so all involved may exceed expectations.

While we recognize and encourage the continued use of one year probationary periods for any positions that currently have them, as stated above, we believe a blanket increase for all university staff appointments would be a detriment to the UW System recruitment and retention process. In addition, performance evaluations are not only for the betterment of the employee, but their work makes the university better. Guidance provided by these necessary and timely evaluations would make the institution better for everyone.

We respectfully request that probationary minimums revert back to a six month minimum/three month extension, and performance evaluations be performed at least twice before UPS is implemented on July 1, 2015.