Date submitted: 11/20/18  
**Question:** With so many students enjoying the large flat screen TV's outside of the Cellar and dining on carry out food we should have more comfortable seating i.e. sofas and coffee tables. I have personally observed several times students seeking a place to sit and relax and eat the carry out food they got at the Cellar. I was asked recently if I knew where the sofas that used to be in this space went.

**Response:** Tyler Haynes Commons and all of the spaces in it are currently being reviewed by a space envisioning committee. The committee will determine the next best steps for space utilization in the commons.

Date submitted: 11/27/18  
**Question:** Thank you to USAC for fighting for the return of Spiderbytes. Now can we get a follow-up regarding some of the suggestions or questions from July, August, September and October that say “awaiting response” many of those are for HR. Will those follow-ups appear on the new minutes or as a correction to the old minutes?

**Response:** We are working on updating those and they will appear updated in the old minutes. (USAC)

Date submitted: 11/27/18  
**Question:** Have you seen how expensive it is to pay for childcare? While I appreciate the university's commitment to sick day childcare so i don't have to miss work, it would be GREAT if we could get comprehensive childcare coverage, or just a discount that makes the load a little lighter. Companies like Starbucks and Home Depot offer discounted rates through Bright Horizons (just down the street from us) for their part time and full time employees, but we don't do anything to support new parents returning to work, and acknowledge the fact that childcare is an enormous expense. the average cost for "normal" childcare (nothing fancy) is about 200-300 a week, or about 1200 a month! who has that kind of money just hanging around. Please help. I would gladly pay extra for a group discount, or forgo another benefit just so i can get back to work comfortably and without a crazy amount of stress about finances. Please help new parents get back to work.

**Response:** It is true that childcare can be very expensive. And, some local employers do provide child care support for employees but, they do not provide the same level of tuition support for dependent children as UR does. Adding a benefit like this has to be considered in light of the other benefits offered by the University. At this time there are no plans to add any additional childcare support. (Human Resources)

Date submitted: 11/28/18  
**Question:** Wondering if hiring a nurse practitioner to work on campus for the faculty, staff and dependents would be a way to control some of our medical costs. This person - if there is down time could also see students (incorporate this function into the wellness center). Possible way to control medical claims being paid by the University. Great service for staff/faculty and their dependents - would save on time away from the office for random medical needs.

**Response:** Thank you for your submission! We have investigated but the cost is prohibitive and we currently don’t have a proper space. In addition, we are continuously working with our health insurance provider, Cigna, to provide the best services and medical coverage for the UR community. (Human Resources & Health Promotion)
Responses to outstanding web submissions

Date submitted: 10/1/18
Suggestion: Would the University of Richmond consider offering a benefit of Student Loan forgiveness instead of free tuition to staff/dependents — i.e. let staff choose between having free classes on campus OR assistance with student loan repayment. I don't want to take more classes, i just want to have less debt. Pay at UR is often less than standards elsewhere, but the benefits here make up for it. For single employees just starting out-- its impossible to think about taking more classes when you can barely pay your bills to begin with.

While the Tuition Remission benefits are amazing, student loans are a major issue for many people. I have considered skipping my employee match to pay them off, what about an employee match for loan payments or paying off interest or what not. Companies like Gradify offer this as an add on benefit to employees ... see this article https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/26/your-money/student-loan-repayment-benefit.html.

Response: Unfortunately, the plan in the New York Times story is available only to Abbot employees. It has not been approved for use by other employers. It is a very creative way to help employees continue paying toward their student loans without giving up the ability to save for retirement. We are following this closely in order to review if/when it becomes an option for other employers like UR. Until then, the university is not considering providing student loan debt relief for employees. (Human Resources)

Date submitted: 10/5/18
Suggestion: I am curious whether HR has ever explored offering expanded leave benefits to UR staff? VCU provides 28 days to an employee in their first year that can be used for vacation or sick leave. W&M provides 24 days’ vacation to a new employee and 10 days for sick leave. Both also provide additional paid parental leave (3+ months for the mother and additional leave for the spouse) and offer options for paid caregiving leave. While I appreciate UR’s benefits, they are more restrictive in being able to use your leave as needed.

Response: We do review our benefits regularly to make sure they are in line with our peer institutions and, while the leave practices at the schools referenced may seem better, they must be considered in light of the total financial commitment each employer makes to its employees through benefits and other leave practices, including holiday time. (Human Resources)

Date submitted: 10/9/18
Question I’d like to engage the powers that be about expanding our current Cigna health plan to be more inclusive. The plan does not cover gender reassignment surgeries for faculty, staff or their families. It is commonly accepted that gender reassignment surgeries are an appropriate, recommended and often necessary treatment for gender dysphoria (WPATH, Standards of Care, Vol. 7). Thankfully our student health plan does cover these procedures.

With one of the university’s top strategic initiatives currently “making excellence inclusive” it seems appropriate that we address this issue for our campus community. I see this issue has been brought to USAC in the past, with no action coming from it. I would like to see both an official policy from UR addressing transgender healthcare and a change to our existing policies for inclusion of recommended treatments. The events on campus last week have exposed how UR is not a welcoming and inclusive place to our transgender members, and we need to begin taking concrete actions now to change this.

Response: Gender reassignment treatments are one of our top priorities to consider in next year’s Cigna medical plan. (Human Resources)