

**UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEB SUBMISSIONS**

August 2019

The following web submissions were reviewed at the August 13, 2019 meeting.

Suggestion/Kudos: Thank you to Todd for his service to USAC and to all staff members at Richmond during his tenure as the Faculty Senate representative. Todd has always acted with warmth, respect, and genuine support of all our efforts. He embodies the best of what a collegial working environment and positive partnership can offer. I already miss him dearly!

Response: USAC agrees wholeheartedly! Thank you for your service Todd! This item is closed.

Idea/Rationale: Display personal pronouns in the directory, in the Outlook global address list and on division/department Contact pages throughout the University website. In an effort to prevent misgendering members of the campus community, it would be helpful to allow people to designate their personal pronouns in published contact information.

Response: HRIS was reached out to discuss feasibility. HRIS is currently seeking the thoughts of the data management committee. USAC expressed this as being a good idea and we will continue to work with HRIS and others as needed on future feasibility. This item remains open.

Idea/Rationale: Create a respectful process for managing internal candidates for the hiring process. The lack of respect and professionalism displayed towards internal candidates through the job application process at Richmond is disgraceful. Having been on both sides- as a hiring manager faced with navigating internal candidate applications and as an internal candidate I am disheartened at the way in which we handle this as an institution. The lack of direction and support from HR about how to navigate this as a hiring manager was challenging. I felt internal candidates were entitled to more than a stock "thanks but no thanks" email and my HR partner's response was "well you can email them directly if you want but I'm not sure it's necessary". As an internal candidate myself I was dismayed to receive the same stock email I was offered during my own hiring search. I recognize that not everyone is qualified but since opportunities for growth and advancement often have to come from beyond our own internal departments (thanks to the lack of support or opportunity for promotions) I think that as an institution we need to do more to treat our employees with respect if we hope to retain them.

Updated Response: "It is not uncommon for position vacancies at UR to attract over 100 applications, including several internal applicants. For internal candidates who have in-person interviews but are not selected for the position, it is our practice to call them personally to relay the news. Sometimes this is done by the hiring manager, sometimes it is done by our Talent Acquisition Specialists. While it is possible that this step may have been missed in some circumstances, it is not our practice. Candidates who are not selected for an interview receive email notification that they have not been selected. The emails we currently send to internal candidates are more personal than those we send to external candidates. However, we are reviewing our correspondence to internal candidates in light of this feedback, and are in the process of updating those emails. I strongly encourage anyone who has had a recruiting experience that did not meet their expectations to call or email Leigh McCullar, Director of HR Consulting at lmcculla@richmond.edu so she can follow up directly." – Carl Sorensen, Sr. Associate Vice President Human Resources. This item is closed.

Idea/Rationale: Facilities Staff as Educators. After taking a sustainability class through SPCS, I've realized how nuanced (and critical) the art of recycling is to reducing our carbon footprint. The guidelines are changing every couple of years, it seems, depending upon the policies of our local MRF (Materials Recovery Facility). At the same time, I've always wanted to flip the subtle hierarchy that is often perpetuated: one where facilities staff are in constant service to the rest of campus. What if, once a year, our local facilities staff join us during our staff meetings to train us on the latest recycling protocols. (Can a cup be recycled? If so, when? Can a container with food be recycled? If so, when? I've learned it's much more nuanced than we typically understand.) This would be one great example of seeing their expertise shine.

Response: USAC discussed this item and it was also relayed to supervisors in facilities. We appreciate the sentiments of this idea but we also want to be respectful of employee and supervisor time. Facilities is open to discussing this idea going forward but they will need some clarifying details from the submitter. Also, for recycling specifics please visit the Rethink Waste website at <https://facilities.richmond.edu/about-us/environment-ops/rethinkwaste.html>. This item is closed.

Idea/Rationale: Serving Facilities Staff. I've always enjoyed our annual traditions - SpringFest and Winterfest. It's a great time to connect and see colleagues around campus. Unfortunately, both events seem to perpetuate an unhealthy campus norm: some staff are perpetually limited to roles that put them at the service of others (i.e., our dining and facilities staff). At these big community celebrations, these members serve us food, and clean up after everyone else. What if we flipped this dynamic? What if during one of these celebrations (Winterfest, or Springfest), administrative staff voluntarily signed up for a day to bus tables, serve food, set up tables, etc. - allowing our facilities staff to have a break and enjoy one another's company? Moving the event indoors seems like a start (a lot less set up and tear down), but what if there were other ways we could make this event an opportunity to serve those, who typically serve us?

Response: USAC discussed feasibility for this with particular attention to the areas of dining and facilities. For many events dining services uses temp workers so that dining staff may participate in events. Additionally, Busch Gardens day is a good way for all employees to equally have time to celebrate. Paul Sandman, the USAC facilities rep, will look into the feasibility of temps and volunteers to help out at events like dining. It was also noted that through the nature of some university jobs they must always be available to help serve others. This item will be revisited with more information from facilities via their USAC rep.

Idea/Rationale: Paid time off for community engagement. Has the University considered offering a personal day for staff and faculty to engage in nonprofit / civic endeavors in the metro-Richmond region? Much of advocacy work that needs to take place at the General Assembly in Jan/Feb occurs during day-time hours, and it would be great for the University to allow staff members to take off to engage in this (or similar) work.

Response: USAC is forming a working group to explore this idea. The working group will look at what peer institutions are offering and draft a recommendation for implementation at UR. USAC will follow-up on this item once the working group's recommendation is received by University leadership.

Idea/Rationale: Supervisor Development / Coaching. This past year, I took a course focused Human Resource Management through SPCS. In this class, I had the privilege creating a research paper that allowed me to interview our former director of talent management, Bernadette Castello (a current national advisor for the Association for Talent Development). I don't claim any great degree of HR expertise, but I do hope the following observation is worthy of our consideration. In talking to Bernadette, she indicated that while the Supervisor Fundamentals training was still in place, the Supervisor Essentials training had been eliminated. (The details of this program are still published on [the following webpage: https://hr.richmond.edu/learning/supervisor-development.html](https://hr.richmond.edu/learning/supervisor-development.html)). The Essentials training was an eight month, 8-session course, rooted in adult learning theory, allowing for deep reflection, and genuine change. This raises an important question: if this training was eliminated, what training / professional development does the [University] plan to offer supervisors (writ large), and key leaders (directors, VPs, AVPs) who manage people at our institution in place of Supervisor Essentials? What kind of honest feedback are supervisors receiving (including feedback from their subordinates), and who's coaching them through the process as they try to make improvements? Who's encouraging supervisors to step down, and consider other roles if becomes apparent that their gifts lie elsewhere (i.e., not management). Anecdotally, I've heard of extremely difficult situations that employees are facing, and staff members who are struggling to understand how to address them. I know we are in the midst of hiring new Talent Development Specialist. That said, if the President's cabinet nixed Supervisor Essentials (my understanding), what type of leverage will this new person have to implement similar supervisory training programs beyond two-day "fundamentals" that are more akin to an "orientation" rather than a strategic, ongoing, proactive, supervisor training that is developmental and long-term?

Response: USAC was briefed about supervisor training in the recent past. The last pilot program was very well liked but took a while to complete (9 months). HR is working to retool the supervisor training program. A future roll out is anticipated with supervisors being highly encouraged to complete the training. We will continue to seek progress from HR.

Idea/Rationale: Best Colleges to Work for Survey. This past year, I interviewed our Talent Development Specialist, Bernadette Castello for a graduate research paper. She indicated the University published its most recent "Best Colleges to Work for Survey" on the HR website, only for it to be taken down a few days later. From my understanding, the information was posted to help administrators at UR take an honest look at our current culture at UR. I'm curious, where did this survey go? If we invested the resources we did in this metric, how is it being used? I have the utmost respect for my colleagues in HR; however, if the above information is accurate, I'm concerned about our lack of transparency as an intuition. As staff members, I think we deserve to know the full results of this survey.

Response: The Great Colleges to Work for data was moved from the HR website to the IFX website. The results can be found here. <https://ifx.richmond.edu/research/great-colleges.html> The university uses the results of the Great Colleges to Work For survey to understand the areas where we can improve. This information is reviewed with division leaders to identify specific areas where they and their teams can make changes. HR Business Partners are currently meeting with each Vice President to review the data for their divisions and identify areas that need attention. This item is closed.