

**UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**WEB SUBMISSIONS**  
September 2019

The following web subs were reviewed at the September 2019 USAC meeting. As web subs are updated or changed, they will be updated on this document with the date they are updated.

**Question/Rationale: Salary Survey/Gender Pay Gap (1).** After a recent discussion with some fellow Administrative Coordinators on campus, I would like to inquire as to whether the University would consider implementing a study on the gender pay gap here at UR. I would be interested in hearing whether one exists at UR and - more importantly - what UR plans to do about rectifying it. The gender pay gap is a very real thing. On average, a woman earns 79% of what a man earns in the US. This is not fair, and given the newly-highlighted emphasis on equity, it is not in keeping with the standards the University hopes to uphold. If there is no gender pay gap at UR, then great! If there is, it should be noted and corrected.

**Question/Rationale: Salary Survey/Gender Pay Gap (2).** Instead of telling us that they know there isn't one because they pay based on experience, I would like the university to conduct a gender pay gap study to determine if there is a gender pay gap here at UR the way there is at other organizations throughout the US. If our goal as a university is equal treatment and inclusiveness, we should at least be informed about from where we are beginning. How will we know if we've made progress if we simply try to tell ourselves that we are already there? If we are already there, why are we, as a university, declaring a goal of equal treatment and inclusiveness?

**Response:** USAC recognizes the importance of this topic. We have reached out to Human Resources for past practices and guidance. Their response follows:

“These are good questions. We pay close attention to the salaries we offer new employees in order to avoid discrimination of any kind. Offers are based on the market value of a position and the experience of the candidates.

Such a study will require a significant time investment from the HR team. We are currently working on several important projects including; completing the Position Framework project; moving forward on many of the president’s Making Excellence Inclusive initiatives; revamping the supervisor training programs; and modifying the annual performance review process for staff.

Conducting a study to ensure we are staying true to our commitment to equitable pay practices is something the University should do at some point, but it is not possible for it to become a priority over the next year or two.”  
*Carl Sorensen, Sr. Associate Vice President Human Resources – 9/16/19*

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**Idea/Rationale: Equal distribution of time off with pay for Employee Appreciation Day.** Busch Gardens Day is advertised as an Employee Appreciation Day and the University closes at noon, allowing the majority of staff, who work 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, to take a half-day off with pay. This is a great employee perk for some staff and we would like all staff members to receive an equal amount of benefit. We would like to suggest that staff members who work an irregular shift be allowed to leave after three and a half hours of work on Busch Gardens Day. This year, some custodial staff were required to come in at 5 am and work until noon, which only gave them the benefit of one and a half hours of time off with pay (along with free Busch Gardens tickets if they opted to receive them). I have been told by management that this is feasible in the custodial department. Could we please see time off for Employee Appreciation distributed equally to all staff?

**Response:** USAC is seeking more information regarding this from HR and University Leadership.

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**Idea/Rationale: Promote USAC resources to non-clerical staff.** USAC is a great resource for UR staff members, but unfortunately there are many colleagues who work in non-clerical positions (think Dining Services, Facilities, etc) who don't even know USAC exists. They don't work on computers and probably infrequently (if ever) check their UR email accounts to see Spiderbytes announcements about upcoming/past meetings, etc. I know from personal experience that some of these colleagues actually need USAC's support the most but have no idea it's available to them. Some have shared with me their concerns about management or scheduling, etc but are afraid to speak out for fear of retaliation or being sidelined by their superiors for complaining. I'm sure they would appreciate the ability to (semi-)anonymously voice their concerns to someone who can help them -- but they can't do that if they don't even know USAC exists to help them. I strongly encourage USAC to look into other ways of reaching out to such colleagues (not by email, which they may not receive). For example, have in-person presentations about USAC resources or meet-and-greets at those departments' staff meetings, etc.

**Response:** USAC has tried a variety of communication methods to spread the word about our functions over the years. In the past we have sent emails to constituents through divisional USAC representatives, posted several Spiderbytes each month, presented at Facilities and Dining staff meetings, and staffed tables at the Benefits Fair, the Wellness Fair, SpringFest, and Winter Celebration. We welcome additional suggestions from the campus community on how best to connect and engage with staff. USAC will brainstorm particularly with the reps from the University's operational units about how we can reach more constituents.

For any staff afraid to speak to superiors for fear of retaliation, we would like to point out the University's [Policy Prohibiting Retaliation](#). Staff may anonymously report compliance concerns [online](#) or by calling the Ethics and Compliance Helpline: (804) 287-1800. Staff who have a grievance that is not resolved directly with their supervisor may work with HR through the [Staff Grievance Procedure](#). USAC cannot serve as a substitute for formal employee grievance procedures.

USAC will continue to partner with HR and the Compliance Office to promote various resources for staff. Further, we will continue to discuss this item with University Leadership.