

UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL
WEB SUBMISSIONS
February 2020

The following are new submissions since our last USAC meeting.

Idea/Rationale: Childcare and the cost burden to returning to work. Can the university work towards funneling our parents towards certain centers- that provide a certain number of spaces and a discounted rate? or consider this link and try something similar? <https://www.eater.com/2020/1/8/21047333/childcare-for-restaurant-workers-westbourne-tipping-point>

Response: Thank you for the submission and link. Childcare is an important and costly concern that has been brought up many times with USAC both during this term and in past terms. We recognize that is an important issue. We appreciate your thoughtful websub as well as the article – it was informative. USAC members, many of which are parents, feel this struggle to locate affordable childcare. It was also noted that UR employs a large number of people who represent many different stages in life and that offered benefits are deeply personal and often life stage dependent.

UR has looked at childcare options extensively in the past and have evaluated the needs and costs for onsite childcare, childcare partnerships, and other potential cost savings measures. The problem is that these benefits are expensive, often do not work as intended, and usage of such services is low. That being said, it was stated in a previous websub this term that HR will be looking at potential childcare benefits again for 2020. Further, from HR, the University provides support for new mothers with flexible scheduling options, free counseling from the EAP, child care referral support from the EAP and a growing number of lactation rooms available for employees.

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Idea/Rationale: Employee compensation raises are not keeping pace with high medical costs. Please consider making a cost of living adjustment in addition to merit increases.

Response: Thank you for your websub. Surging medical costs are a concern for many. The University has been responsible for paying a large amount of medical claims over the past year. In addition to compensation the university offers many benefits. These benefits include healthcare, tuition remission, tuition remission for dependent children, health savings account contributions, and retirement accounts. USAC members noted that employees had the potential to earn raises despite how well the national economy performed. USAC members also considered supervisory biases, which relate to supervisors who may not favor a certain employee thus giving a lower performance score and merit increase. HR affirms that “the CPI for 2019 was a little less than 2%. The matrix used for increases effective 7/1/2019 set the floor of 2.25% for anyone receiving a meets or exceeds.”

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NOTE: Due to time constraints at the February 2020 USAC Meeting the remaining February 2020 websubs will be taken up at the March 2020 USAC meeting. Please see the March 2020 websub document for those submissions.