

UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL WEB SUBMISSIONS

January 10, 2023

The following web submissions were received before January 3, 2023 and were addressed during the closed session of USAC's meeting on January 10, 2023.

Idea/Rationale: Has the University considered updating the Benefits Committee to reflect the constituency of faculty/staff ratio on campus?

Currently, the benefits committee has 6 faculty and 5 staff representatives. The ratio of staff/faculty on campus is 65% staff and 35% faculty. To reflect that ratio, it would need to be adjusted to 7 staff and 4 faculty.

Response: Carl Sorenson, *Senior Associate VP, Human Resources* and Laura Dietrick, *Director of Benefits & Compensation*, were reached out to. This was also discussed during the USAC Executive Committee's meeting with Senior Leadership on 1/11/2023. Carl provided the following response:

In accordance with the University's Administrative Committee policies, the Fringe Benefits Committee reports to the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer.

The Committee's Charge is:

To receive reports from and advise the Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer and the Associate Vice President of Human Resources on the University's approach to employee and retiree benefits. The Committee's work will be based on the following foundational principles that are preliminarily set forth below:

- To attempt to protect employees against catastrophic expenses or income interruptions as a result of a medical condition;
- Providing a total benefits package that is strongly competitive with those of peer institutions;
- Managing the benefits package to get the highest total value for premium dollars;
- Equal weighting of various employee groups;
- Comply fully with all relevant Federal and State laws;
- Manage the benefits program so as to ensure appropriate University expenditure control

The Committee's work is to advise the EVP and Human Resources leadership on decisions relative to employee benefits and to help weigh inevitable trade-off decisions. Each Committee member is asked to serve on behalf of all University employees and not serve as constituent representatives.

USAC is not vested with binding authority, but serves to provide input and recommendations to the administration regarding staff interests and concerns as they bear upon the life and operation of the institution.

Idea/Rationale: I'd like to suggest the University offer paid leave for voluntarism in our community (be it at a child's school, for a nonprofit, in a hospital or elder care facility, or even for a UR initiative).

Many of the above examples cannot truly operate at their best without the generous time of volunteers. Other employers, including higher education, typically offer a range from 4-8 hours and up to 3 days annually.

Response: Carl Sorenson, *Senior Associate VP, Human Resources* and Laura Dietrick, *Director of Benefits & Compensation*, were reached out to. This was also discussed during the USAC Executive Committee's meeting with Senior Leadership on 1/11/2023. Carl provided the following response:

During the last two years, the University

- **Added three vacation days to the accrual for all new employees. All employees now receive a minimum of 15 vacation days, with the ability to carry forward up to two times the annual accrual. Longer tenured employees can still earn up to 20 days per year.**
- **Revised the holiday schedule to guarantee 15 holidays regardless of the calendar. In the past the number of holidays would fluctuate between 13 and 15.**

The combination of a generous vacation accrual and holiday time (a minimum of 30 paid days off) provides UR employees with sufficient time to engage in volunteer community work and take time for their own wellbeing.

Idea/Rationale: Considering that we are experiencing yet another spike in COVID cases in the Richmond area and across the country, can HR extend the availability of COVID sick days?

These sick days are incredibly important for ensuring that staff who are sick with COVID are able to stay home while sick and not feel pressured into returning to work before it is safe to do so.

Response: Carl Sorenson, *Senior Associate VP, Human Resources*, David Hale, *Executive VP & COO, Business Affairs*, Jeffrey Legro, *Executive VP & Provost*, and the USAC Executive Committee will discuss this during our next Senior Leadership Meeting on 1/11/2023. Carl provided the following response:

The availability of Covid leave has been extended through June 30, 2023. For current employees, no new days have been added, only the ability to use existing Covid leave through June 30, 2023. All new employees are provided a balance of 15 Covid leave days when they begin employment. This policy will be reviewed at the end of the spring semester to determine if modifications are needed.

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