

## UNIVERSITY STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL

### August 2017 Web Submissions

#### 1. Date Submitted: 7/10/17

**Web Sub:** *It has come to many staff and faculty's attention that our long-time custodial onsite employee moved to another permanent site and is not going to be moved back to the Jepson Building of which she has been working for over 19 years. Knowing that this has been done in other buildings and other departments with underwhelming results, we would like to ask first and foremost that she be returned to her post here and if not, request an explanation of why she was moved and why others are moved to better explain the disruption of services and what the benefits are to this process, as we right now are only seeing the downside. This is not a negative commentary or offense to the people who have been rotated in to now take on these duties but in light of the many people asking how and why this is taking place, we all wanted to get a better understanding of what is happening. Thank You.*

**Response:** Over the past several months, Custodial Services has been working diligently to look at our overall structure and organization. In addition, we have been looking at creating a fair and consistent process to staff assignments across campus. Each Custodial Supervisor now has a defined area of focus within this structure. We believe this new established structure will allow greater focus, consistency, and improved communication.

One of the recently implemented changes had all of our daytime custodial staff participate in our new annual process of a schedule bid. A schedule bid allows all of our staff to select the general area and shift time they prefer based on their seniority with the University. The supervisor of the area they selected then works on assigning them a new position in a building. In order to be fair and consistent, all of our staff will receive a new assignment annually. Additionally, to support UR policy, some staff have received new assignments to ensure they no longer report to family members.

We are excited for this development opportunity for our staff to learn new buildings and expand their relationships on campus. During July and August, you will begin to see custodial staff training in their new assignments to prepare for the start of the fall semester. We know that you will miss the staff that currently work in your buildings but that you will support them in this new development opportunity. Thank you in advance for making them feel welcome in your building. (Allison Steele)

#### 2. Date Submitted: 7/13/17

**Web Sub:** *Custodial Services recently announced that each custodial employee would be reassigned to a new area annually as a "development opportunity for our staff to learn new buildings and expand their relationships on campus". I applaud the commitment to employee development and recognize that the Custodial Services' leadership has the authority to determine the optimal staffing structure for their unit. However, this news is troubling for many custodial and other campus employees. Could you please provide more information about plans to overcome some of the immediate limitations of the plan - steep learning curves and annually disrupting working relationships on a campus that prioritizes developing very long-term*

*collaborative relationships? Could future iterations of this plan also allow custodial employees to schedule bid their preferences for specific buildings? If not, what would be the downside of including bids for specific buildings?*

**Response:** See prior response

**3. Date Submitted:** 7/20/17

**Web Sub:** I would like to compliment the folks who organized this year's Spring Fest-- the pirate theme was lighthearted, fun, and I LOVED the beach towel giveaway! We ARR U ARRR!

**Response:** Thank you for taking the time to submit a compliment! (USAC Executive Committee)

**4. Date Submitted:** 7/10/17

**Web Sub:** *Current policy denies the possibility of accessing retirement savings while on short term disability unless the participant is 59.5 years old. Is this a point that could be reconsidered or reevaluated? Is there compelling reason to maintain the current policy? Are there other avenues for financial assistance for people who cannot make ends meet on the portion allotted from disability?*

**Response:** The University of Richmond is one of the few institutions that provides short term disability coverage at no cost to employees. But, we do understand 66 2/3% is not total income replacement and making ends meet can be challenging.

Unfortunately, the IRS does not allow us to make retirement distributions while someone is out on disability. Employees who have made their own contributions to the supplemental retirement plan (not the matching plan), may apply for a loan from TIAA against those personal contributions (Carl Sorensen)

**5. Date Submitted:** 7/12/17

**Web Sub:** *I am a 27 year employee at the University of Richmond. Over the course of my time at UR, I have felt that staff are "second class citizens" compared to faculty. At first, we couldn't be members of the Faculty Club and after several letters, staff were able to join but couldn't vote. Eventually, we could. The next issue was allowing 10 month employees having their paychecks divided into 12 months. I wrote several letters and was told that was reserved for faculty. Then Carol Sorensen came on board and said they could divide my paycheck into 12 equal payments. Now, I find out that as I come close to retirement, only faculty members can keep their email addresses after retirement. That is discriminatory. Again, the university treats staff as second class citizens. What I would like is for staff to be able to keep their email once they retire. Please respond. This is my second time bringing this topic up to the committee.*

**Response:** A solution has been devised that is going to be satisfactory to everyone. However, it has to be reviewed by the Benefits Committee later this month before it can be shared with the Campus Community. (Carl Sorensen)

6. **Date Submitted:** 8/1/17

**Web Sub:** *This past Spring semester, the Law Library converted all of our single-stall restrooms to unisex restrooms. We're very excited to offer options for our entire population of students, faculty, and staff. I'm wondering if the University as a whole has considered, or is considering, labeling all single stall restrooms all over campus to unisex restrooms?*

**Response:** Facilities has been working with the Office of Common Ground this summer identifying the single stall restrooms campus-wide. A sign company has been contracted and is working on the signs now and the goal is to have them installed before classes start on August 28th. Approximately 60 existing unisex restrooms in 27 buildings, including residence halls, will have the signage changed to read "ALL GENDER RESTROOM". On July 27th, the an email message was sent from Susie Reid in Facilities to contacts in the buildings where the signs will be changed.