June 2024 Web Submissions

Idea/Question 1: Re-introduce the ability of staff to donate sick time

Rationale/Reason: New staff, those with serious health conditions, and employees taking care of family members may run out of leave (sick and/or vacation), why not allow employees who have a lot of sick leave to donate to others? There must be a way to help our community during these stressful periods so they don't lose needed income and can care for themselves or family. It just doesn't seem right and wears on folk’s mental health to have to worry about that on top of getting better or caring for family.

Response: We understand that employees sometimes need to take time off for personal well-being, illness, or family care. This is always an important consideration in our benefit and leave policies.

In the past, the University had a sick leave donation program. However, it was challenging to manage fairly, and some employees felt pressured by colleagues and managers to donate their time.

To address these concerns, we introduced an employer-paid short-term disability (STD) program and ended the sick leave donation program. Unlike many employers that require a one-year waiting period before new employees are eligible for short- and long-term disability, the University made employees eligible for short-term disability from their first day of employment and removed the one-year waiting period for long-term disability. This ensures that if a new employee faces an accident or illness, they can receive income support immediately. The only exception is a one-year waiting period for pre-existing conditions.

While on STD, employees not only receive payments but also continue to accrue sick and vacation time and receive retirement contributions.

Additionally, our sick leave policy allows employees to use their sick time not only for themselves but also for their children, parents, or spouses.

We hope this clarifies our approach and reassures you of our commitment to supporting our employees' needs.

Idea/Question 2: Why are evaluations done now when the review period is between July 1st and June 30th?

Rationale/Reason: There are still two months to keep working on the goals/competencies according to Talent Web. It seems unfair to evaluate employees two months before the end of the official evaluation period. It is like testing students and giving them a final grade one month before the final exam. Since the evaluations are done two months before the end of the official period, why not move the timeline to May 1 through April 30th if that is when managers are supposed to complete their final reviews?

Response: Presently, the performance and merit processes are aligned with the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30), which also aligns with the academic year. Given the wide variety of work at the university, it is recognized that no performance cycle timing is ideal for everyone.

The end-of-year performance and merit processes currently take place in April and May for two primary reasons: The first is to ensure that merit increases are processed and effective on July 1st, which is the start of the fiscal year. We strive to provide employees and their managers with enough time to engage in performance and merit processes thoughtfully, and to provide the URHR and Payroll teams with the time necessary to accurately enter and test merit increases. The second reason is to avoid the scheduling challenges of employees taking time off which takes place each year in May and June after Commencement. Our move to Workday is providing us with the opportunity to review processes. We will continue to consider the feedback we've received as we plan for any enhancements and changes.

Idea/Question 3: Does HR do exit interviews for employees who leave one division/position for another within the University? How does the exit interview process work?

Rationale/Reason: Some divisions/departments as well as positions have high or frequent turnover. Shouldn't employees be given an opportunity to have the exit interviews even if they stay within the University so that HR has feedback as to why these turnovers may be happening so that if there is unhealthy or toxic work environments something can be done to address it without fear of retribution?

Response:

Our current process is to conduct exit interviews for employees who are leaving the university. This process includes a checklist sent during their offboarding, giving them the option to complete a survey or have an in-person meeting with their HR Business Partner. The gathered information is shared with department leadership unless the individual requests confidentiality. In cases where patterns emerge, feedback is communicated to leaders to help address any systemic issues.

The idea to conduct exit interviews for employees transferring within the university is an excellent one. Although it is not currently part of our standard procedure, we can certainly consider incorporating it into our roadmap for future improvements. This approach would allow us to gather valuable feedback on why employees might be leaving certain divisions or positions, even if they remain within the university.

In the meantime, we encourage employees to meet with their HR Business Partners to share experiences and seek support in navigating any challenges within their units.