**Personnel Planning and Assessment Guidelines**

The University of Wisconsin – Superior is facing increasing budget challenges as a result of COVID-19. As a result, the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents has authorized the implementation of a variety of workforce reduction and cost saving measures beyond existing layoff policies to address these financial challenges in a way that minimizes layoffs and maximizes the UW System’s ability to continue to perform its critical educational and outreach mission.

Already this fiscal year, the university will be expending over $1.3 million in reimbursements and costs which have only partially been covered by the CARES act, and it’s possible that the shortfall could be much larger. As we continue to respond to this pandemic, the financial impacts will grow.

We are fortunate to have confronted this crisis from a relatively sound financial footing. We have not had to lay off employees or impose furloughs before June 30, 2020. Savings were achieved through salary savings, reduced travel, and reduce expenditures on purchasing cards, and we have been able to maximize the use of fund flexibility.

However, we are in the “Bad Scenario” as outlined by the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance in the Town Hall meetings. On April 28th, the state announced that all executive branch agencies, including the university, will be asked to cut 5 percent of its state tax dollar funding yet this fiscal year (which ends on June 30). For our campus, this would be over $800,000. This situation is extremely challenging. Projections from enrollment issues run from a quarter million to four million depending on what happens this summer. We know we are already lagging. In addition there is the high likelihood that there may be another lapse in the future.

In order to meet the projected budget deficit at the university and the enrollment issues which are emerging, it is necessary to institute a personnel plan that reduces the salary obligation of the university as this is the primary obligation of the operating budget.

**Furloughs**

At this time, a furlough of 9.8% is deemed necessary to provide potential savings. If the furlough were to extend over all three periods listed below it would save the university approximately $1.8 M. We may need to do additional furloughs outside of the campus-wide furloughs if we wind up in our worst-case scenario.

- The initial furlough will begin on July 1, 2020 and run through December 31, 2020.
- A third furlough period could begin on June 1, 2021 and run through June 30, 2021.
The imposition of the second and third furlough will be reassessed after 10th day of student enrollments in each semester; however, should the worst case scenario materialize, then the plan will need to be reassessed before those dates and additional measures may be necessary. Enrollment, the potential of an additional lapse, and the possible diminishment of student segregated fees are drivers of budgetary impact.

General Considerations

For a definition of employee types please see: [https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-policies/uw-system-administrative-policies/appointment-terms-and-designation-of-positions/](https://www.wisconsin.edu/uw-policies/uw-system-administrative-policies/appointment-terms-and-designation-of-positions/)

The Limited Appointee employee category within the University Personnel System is comprised of employees who “serve at the pleasure of the authorized official who made the appointment.

The Academic Staff employee category is comprised of employees in non-faculty positions which are unique to higher education. These positions are either fixed term renewable or fixed term with a defined end date.

The University Staff positions are quite varied and duties include, but are not limited to, administrative support, information technology, accounting, engineering, facilities, and crafts workers.

Below is general information about furloughs that applies regardless of when a furlough is implemented:

1. Employees are not permitted to work when on an assigned furlough.

2. Employees may not substitute paid leave such as personal, vacation or sick leave for a furlough assignment.

3. Employees may be called back to work before the end of the furlough period, upon seven days’ notice, based on operational needs. If a unit has a specific operating issue that requires a shorter period than stated above, the unit may seek approval for a different period from Human Resources.

4. Furloughs must not be used as a disciplinary measure nor as a substitute for a performance improvement plan. Furloughs may not be based on any classification protected by law, any employee on a protected leave (medical, childcare) are required to be treated equally regardless of leave status.

   - If essential work and budget is available, the employee would remain on protected leave, not selected for furlough. Please seek HR guidance.

5. Employees enrolled in health insurance through the State of Wisconsin who are
placed on a consecutive furlough can continue to receive the State’s contribution of the monthly premium for the month in which the furlough begins and for three months thereafter.

a) Employees must pay the employee share of health insurance premiums through direct bill, payroll deduction from last paycheck (if time permits), deferred payment upon return to pay status, or sick leave accrual.

b) Employees will continue to accumulate vacation, sick and personal leave while furloughed.

c) Employees will realize a reduction in creditable service and reductions in their contribution toward the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS).

**Furlough Duration starting on July 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020**

1. 12 month employees: 13 days
2. 9 month employees: 9 days

**Use of Intermittent Furlough**

**12 Month Employees**

- 12-month employees will be assigned an intermittent furlough for 13 days beginning July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.

- Employees will have the option to select 2 furlough dates per month upon supervisor approval.

- A furlough assignment must not exceed one day in any two-week period. Half days are now allowed. It does not make a difference if the person is paid-biweekly or paid monthly under the state’s administrative code.

- Authorized Categories: University Staff, non-instructional Academic Staff, Limited Appointees, and Temporary Employees who are on 12 month contracts

- Graduate Assistants are exempt

- Employees paid on a lump sum basis are exempt

- Employees who are grant-fund 50% or more are exempt
9 Month Employees (primarily faculty and instructors)

- All 9-month employees will be assigned an intermittent furlough for 9 days during the first furlough period. Faculty contracts begin August 26th, 2020.

- Employees will have the option to select 2 furlough dates per month upon supervisor approval.

- A furlough assignment must not exceed one day in any two-week period. Half day furloughs are now allowed. It does not make a difference if the person is paid-biweekly or paid monthly under the state’s administrative code.

- Authorized categories: Faculty, Academic Staff, University Staff, Limited Appointees, and Temporary Employees who are on 9 month contracts

- Graduate Assistants are exempt

- Employees paid lump sum are exempt

- Employees who are grant-fund 50% or more are exempt

Use of Consecutive Furlough

- 12-month employees whose duties do not permit them to work remotely and who are not deemed essential to work on-site, could be placed on a consecutive furlough period anytime until June 30, 2020.

- After June 30th, continuous furlough periods for employees may be possible if there is sufficient business reason. These may be staggered for groups of employees within the unit so as to provide essential unit coverage – e.g., half of the employees are off one week, the other are off the next week. All state and UW System regulations apply for continuous furloughs.

- Authorized Categories: Academic Staff, University Staff, Limited Appointees, and Temporary Employees

- Employees who are grant-fund 50% or more are exempt

- Employees paid on a lump sum basis are exempt
Use of Temporary Workload Reduction Furlough Assignment

**Temporary Workload Reduction (TWR) Furlough Assignment:** A furlough assigned which reduces the FTE percentage of an employee’s appointment for a continuous period of time with a defined start and end date.

- Authorized Categories: Academic Staff, University Staff, Limited Appointees, and Temporary Employees
- Employees who are grant-funded 50% or more are exempt
- Employees paid on a lump sum basis are exempt