8. UNCLASSIFIED STAFF BENEFITS

This chapter includes information on staff benefits and related matters for unclassified staff: faculty, academic staff, and limited appointees.

8.1. ABSENCES AND LEAVES

8.1.1. System Guidelines of Paid Vacations and Holidays for Annual Appointments

UW System Policy

A. Annual (12 months) appointments include provision for vacation entitlement with pay to be taken at the convenience of the employing institution. Academic year (9 month) appointments are made without vacation allowance, but do allow for paid holidays described in F.

B. Definition of Vacation Entitlement

Full-time annual-basis staff members shall accrue a paid vacation entitlement of 176 hours per year or at a rate of 14.7 hours a month. Part-time appointments receive a prorated portion. Vacation accrual and allocation occurs on a fiscal year basis (July 1 - June 30).

Eligibility for sick leave and vacation leave is contingent upon eligibility for participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System: a minimum of one year's service in a position that is at least one-third of full-time.

C. When Annual Leave May be Taken

In determining annual leave requests, the wishes of the employee shall be respected insofar as the needs of the department will permit.

D. Vacation Carryover

Under special circumstances unused vacation may be carried over to the next fiscal year. However, the unused vacation carried forward must be used within the next fiscal year or it will be forfeited.

E. Vacation Options

Annual staff who have completed ten (10) or more years of service may reserve up to five (5) days (40 hours) of vacation each fiscal year (or prorated amount for part-time employees) in an Annual Leave Reserve Account (ALRA). Vacation/annual leave accumulated in the Annual Leave Reserve Account may be used at any time.

Staff who have completed 25 or more years of service may elect to receive up to 5 days (40 hours) of vacation earned in the fiscal year (prorated portion for part-time employees) in the form of a cash payment.

F. Vacation Credits Upon Termination

Annual appointees who terminate their employment within the System will be paid for unused vacation. Overuse of vacation will result in a deduction. If the appointee is to be employed by another UW System Institution or Wisconsin state agency, the hiring agency may either assume the appointee's vacation entitlement in return for an earlier starting date or it must allow the appointee to utilize accrued vacation credits prior to employing the individual.

Staff members whose appointments are supported by extramural funding must use their accrued vacation prior to the expiration of their appointments. The University does not have funds to pay for vacation days after such funding has expired.

G. Holidays

The following days have been established as holidays, when offices of state government are not required to be open for business:

January 1
Martin Luther King's birthday, the third Monday in January
Memorial Day, the last Monday in May
July 4
Labor Day, the first Monday in September
Thanksgiving; the fourth Thursday in November
December 24

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December 25
December 31

If the legal holiday falls on Sunday, the University will be closed on the following Monday. If the legal holiday falls on Saturday, another day of leave shall be granted to all annual (12 month) basis appointments. An additional day of leave is granted when December 24 and December 31 fall on a Sunday. This additional leave must be used within the fiscal year or it will be forfeited.

H. Floating Holidays

In addition to the above, annual appointees are granted three and one-half days of paid leave each fiscal year as a non-cumulative floating holiday. Unclassified staff with less than a full-time appointment shall receive a prorated share of these floating holidays.

I. Records

Annual leave/floating holidays will be reported monthly to the Office of Human Resources which will maintain the official vacation accrual and use records.

8.1.2. Jury Duty

An employee summoned to jury duty during regularly scheduled work hours does not have to use vacation or sick leave time. An employee receives his/her regular salary in addition to any pay that he/she may be given as a juror. An employee is expected to report to work when not needed for jury duty.

8.1.3. Leave of Absence Without Pay

The University provides for leave of absence without pay when such a leave enhances a faculty or academic staff member's teaching effectiveness, enlarges his/her scholarly usefulness, or strengthens the University's academic program. Leave may be granted for a period of not more than one year, except that a leave may be extended for one additional year upon request. Normally, a person will not be allowed to take more than two years of leave in a five-year period.

When granted to a probationary faculty member, a leave will not be considered as an interruption of service in the University but shall not be considered as counting toward tenure.

A faculty member should apply for leave, or make known his/her intention concerning leave plans, at a reasonable time in advance so that the University can make plans for her/his possible absence. A statement of justification for a leave request or request for an extension of leave should outline the benefits which will accrue to the individual and the University if leave is granted. The application for leave or extension of leave should be accompanied by the recommendations of the Department Chairperson and the Vice Chancellor. Final action on all applications for leave is the prerogative of the Chancellor of the University.

A faculty member has an obligation to return to the University for further service following a leave of absence unless other arrangements are mutually agreed upon. When a leave is granted, it shall not interfere with the faculty member's opportunity for promotion or increase in salary.

Nothing in the Policy should be considered to preclude the right of the administration of the University to grant a faculty member a leave for compelling personal reasons.

8.1.4. Military Leave

Staff members are eligible under 1975 Assembly Bill 222, Section 65.16.30 (3) (a) to be granted military leave with pay. For specific details concerned individuals should contact the Office of Human Resources.

8.1.5. Personal Leave

Faculty and academic staff members taking leaves for personal reasons should confer with the Department Chairperson or supervisor, and the Provost/Vice Chancellor in determining whether salary payment can be made for the period of leave. While the State has provisions for sympathetic leaves, these cover limited personal obligations.

8.2. SICK LEAVE/FMLA

See http://www.uwsa.edu/hr/upgs/upg10.pdf for the complete Unclassified Personnel Guideline (UPG) #10 covering leaves.

An appointing authority may require a medical certificate to justify the granting of sick leave.
8.2.1. Policy Statement

Paid sick leave is a significant fringe benefit for a UW System unclassified employee. It is provided in accordance with Section 36.30, Wis. Stats., Chapter UWS 19, Wis. Adm. Code and consistent with the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and the Wisconsin Family and Medical Leave Act (WFMLA).

Other state statutes affecting sick leave provide that:

Accumulated sick leave is converted at the current rate of pay to an account to pay health insurance premiums upon the retirement, death or layoff of an insured employee.

Conversion of sick leave will occur on the effective date of the annuity or lump sum payment. Conversion will be at the employee's basic rate of pay immediately prior to termination of all creditable service.

Sick leave record keeping requirements subject to the approval of the Department of Administration must be met in order to avoid limits on the amount of sick leave that may be converted to pay health insurance premiums.

Faculty and academic staff, retiring with a minimum of 15 years of service, are eligible for supplemental sick leave credits added to your existing sick leave balance. This benefit also allows, within limitations, the restoration of an additional 500 hours credit resulting from single illness occurring in your final three years of employment.

8.2.2. Eligibility for Sick Leave

All faculty, academic staff, and limited appointees earn sick leave while in pay status unless the following conditions apply:

1. The Faculty and academic staff who are not expected to work at least one-third (440 hours) of what is considered full time employment, or
2. The employee's duration of employment is less than one year.

8.2.3. Accrual of Sick Leave

Staff members whose "initial appointments" are for nine months or more shall be granted 22 working days of sick leave upon which they may draw. After 1 1/2 years of service, additional non-lapsing leave is earned by such members at the rate of 1 day per month for persons holding annual appointments and 6 days per semester for persons who hold academic year appointments with a maximum annual accumulation limited to not more than 12 days. Unused sick leave shall accumulate from year to year in the staff member's account.

Except for the 22 days of sick leave granted to the staff member upon initial appointment, sick leave may be taken only after it has been earned (i.e., it may not be anticipated). A staff member who uses paid sick leave remains in pay status and continues to accumulate sick leave. A staff member shall not accumulate sick leave while on an unpaid leave of absence. Previously accumulated sick leave shall not be affected by unpaid leaves of absence.

Pro-ration of Accumulated Sick Leave

Initial entitlement and accumulation of sick leave as specified in the preceding section assumes full-time appointment of 9 months or more. Part-time appointees have an initial entitlement, earn and are charged sick leave in proportion to the percent of their appointment.

8.2.4. Use of Sick Leave

Faculty and academic staff of the University of Wisconsin System use their accumulated sick leave for:

Absence due to personal illness, injury, disability, pregnancy or adoption;

Attendance upon an immediate family member whose health or medical condition requires the employee's direct care; and

The death of an immediate family member. ("Immediate family member' includes employee's spouse, parents and children of an employee, an employee's and employee's spouse's immediate family members, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters and their spouses, children over the age of 18 and their spouses and any other relative who resides in the same household as the employee.)
Special Circumstances Governing Use of Sick Leave:

Sick Leave During Summer and/or Inter Sessions

Faculty and Staff appointments whose basic appointments are for nine months or more and who, under contract, teach in the summer session are covered by sick leave provision. This eligibility begins on the first day of summer session and ends at its conclusion. Sick Leave and/or colleague coverage may only be charged while the individual is in pay status. No additional sick leave accrues during summer session employment.

Sick Leave During Winter and Spring Sessions Breaks

Nine (9) month faculty and academic staff appointments are in pay status during winter and spring session breaks and are required to fulfill their university obligations and/or educational pursuits. If, due to illness, they are not able to fulfill their academic obligations/educational pursuits, sick leave must be charged.

Relationship of Sick Leave to Income Continuation Insurance

Paid sick leave benefits stop when income continuation insurance benefits begin.

8.2.5. Categorization of Employees and Methods of Determining Amount of Sick Leave to be Charged

1. Sick leave shall be reported in either one-half or full day increments. Reported sick leave may not exceed 40 hours for a given week. Unclassified employees holding less than full-time appointments report sick leave based on actual hours used.

2. For the purposes of collecting and reporting sick leave, each full-time unclassified employee will designate a work week consisting of 40 hours as required by state statute Chapter §40.05 (4)(bp)(3a). The work week will be pro-rated for less than a full time appointment. The work week will include all scheduled classes, office hours and research, as well as other regular University meetings and activities. The work week will be defined by either (a) automatic consent to the standard business week Monday through Friday from 7:45 AM to 4:30 PM or (b) by mutual agreement, in writing, with the department chair and in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). FLSA defines a normal work week to consist of 40 hours worked within a fixed and regularly reoccurring period of seven consecutive 24 hour periods. Hours worked per day may vary providing the sum total equals at least 40 hours during the designated 7-day period.

8.2.6. Amount of Sick Leave to be Charged

Sick leave for full-time unclassified employees shall be charged in units of one-half days for full-time appointments. Absence of one quarter day up to three fourths day shall be charged as one half day. Absence of three-fourths day up to one and one-quarter day shall be charged as one day. Employees with less than full-time appointments and the exception noted in 8.2.6(2) above may report actual hours absent.

The rate of sick leave compensation shall be calculated on the employee's base salary, on the date(s) the sick leave is used.

8.2.7. Reporting Sick Leave

A report, summarizing sick leave usage for each employee, must be signed by the department chair, designee or supervisor. The report or its contents must be transmitted to a divisional or campus-wide office at least once per month. A report must be submitted for each unclassified employee regardless of whether sick leave was used.

Each unclassified employee must be provided with a report of his/her official sick leave balance at least once each month. This process should allow for review by the unclassified employee for accuracy of the record.

8.2.8. Coordination of University Sick Leave Guidance with the Wisconsin Family Medical Leave Act (WFMLA) and the Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The WFIVILA and FIVILA guarantee employees specified periods of leave when necessitated by family events or personal illness or injury. The employee may sometimes use sick leave during this leave.

A. Wisconsin Family Medical Leave Act. An employee qualifies for WFMLA if he or she has worked for the state for more than 52 consecutive weeks and for at least 1,000 hours during the preceding 52-week period. The employee may use any accrued leave, including sick leave, to cover absences granted under WFMLA. Under the WFMLA, leave is available as follows:

2 weeks medical leave per year for personal illness/injury.
2 weeks family leave per year to care for a child, spouse, or parent (including natural parent, foster parent, treatment foster parent, adoptive parent or legal guardian of the employee or the employee’s spouse) with a serious health condition.

6 weeks family leave for the birth of a child, adoption or placement of a child as a condition for adoption. This leave must begin not earlier than 16 weeks prior to and not later than 16 weeks after the qualifying event. If both parents work for the state, both are eligible for 6 weeks of family leave under this provision.

The year is the fiscal year for unclassified employees.

The employee may schedule leave for his or her own personal illness or injury as medically necessary. The employee may schedule family leave "after reasonably considering the needs of his or her employer"(s. 103.10(3)(c), Wis. Stats.). Family leave may be taken intermittently or as a partial absence, but the employee must schedule such intermittent or partial leave so it does not unduly disrupt the employer's operations.

The period immediately following the birth of a child when the biological mother is physically unable to work is not considered family leave. A birthing mother may take two weeks medical leave under WFMLA in addition to six weeks family leave to care for the newborn. All of this leave can be covered by sick leave.

University policy for absences due to illnesses of the employee or family member are more generous than the two-week allocation under WFMLA. A birthing mother can generally take up to six weeks (per doctor's orders) to recover from child birth.

B. Federal Family Medical Leave Act

An employee qualifies for federal FMLA if he or she has worked for the state for at least 12 months and has worked at least 1,250 hours during the previous 12 months. Under federal rules, full-time faculty members and other exempt employees are deemed to meet the 1,250-hour standard unless the employer can clearly show that the employee did not work 1,250 hours during the prior 12 months. Paid leave, such as vacation and sick leave, does not count toward the 1,250 hour requirement. Under FMLA, the employee may take up to 12 weeks of leave per year on a full-time, part-time, or intermittent basis for one or more of the following reasons:

1. For the employee’s serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the functions of the employee's position.

2. To care for the employee's child, spouse, or parent (but not the spouse's parent) with a serious health condition.

3. For the birth, adoption, or placement of a child for foster care.

An employee who is exempt from the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act may report unpaid leave taken under federal FMLA in less than full day increments without affecting his/her exempt status.

Leave entitlements under WFMLA and FMLA run concurrently. When the new fiscal year (calendar year for classified employees) begins, the employee may qualify for a new leave entitlement, depending on the hours worked in the previous year.

8.3. EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The UW-Superior Employee Assistance Program provides the first counseling/assessment session with a professional counselor at no charge. The EAP is available to assist employees with problems that may impact their effectiveness on the job. The program includes family members as well, since family problems may have detrimental effects on one’s ability to work effectively. Some of the common concerns are: stress or burnout; marriage, family or parenting difficulties; alcohol or drug abuse; emotional or mental health issues; financial and/or legal difficulties; work-related problems; adjusting to injury, illness, retirement, etc.; grief and loss. If additional assistance is indicated after the initial problem-solving session, the EAP will help identify other resources available within the limits of what they can afford. All EAP services are absolutely confidential. No one at UW-Superior can access any information without the employee’s written signature on a Release of Confidential Information form, which specifies what information, is to be released and to whom. The University contracts with a local agency to provide these services. Call the Office of Human Resources, the Office of Counseling and Health Services or review the benefits web site on the Office of Human Resources Home Page for more information.

8.4. EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The University provides fee/tuition reimbursement to unclassified staff for authorized job-related coursework and training to improve employee job performance. Approval must be obtained in advance of the commencement of such
coursework or training by completing a form available in the Office of Human Resources or on the office "forms" web site.

Normally, no more than one course (up to five credits) or its training equivalent may be authorized for an employee in any academic term. Ordinarily coursework will be taken on the employee's own time. If the employer determines that the needed coursework is available only during the employee's scheduled hours of service, a program of proportional compensatory time may be worked out provided normal services of the employing unit are not disrupted or impaired. Upon documented, successful completion of the course, the employee will be reimbursed for the agreed upon basic instructional fee/tuition charges and segregated fees if not waived, but not book and supply costs.

The course must result in a “grade” or other formal certification of completion. The staff member must be at least half time. Coursework may be taken at any state or private higher educational institution or VTAE district institution. Reimbursement for coursework at a private institution shall be limited to the rate of an equivalent course at a state institution.

Where the employer has directed training deemed essential to the continued effectiveness of an employee, that training may occur during scheduled work hours and should be paid for by the employer.

8.5. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of development grants available through UW System and UW-Superior for participation in scholarly activities, teaching improvement or other activities beneficial to the staff member and the university. Information on these grants will be distributed to the staff in the University Bulletin, staff "digest", or memoranda.

8.6. WISCONSIN RETIREMENT SYSTEM (WRS), INSURANCES, EMPLOYEE REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNT PROGRAM (ERA), TAX SHELTERED ANNUITIES, DEFERRED COMPENSATION, RETIREMENT POLICIES, SOCIAL SECURITY, WORKERS’ COMPENSATION, UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

See UW System Benefits Summary insert or go to http://www.uwsa.edu/hr/staff.htm for the most up-to-date information on these benefits.

WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION: Contact your campus Office of Human Resources to get detailed, personalized information. The UW System Administration web site can be consulted for any changes to this form: http://www.uwsa.edu/hr/staff.htm. Master insurance contracts are available for inspection upon reasonable notice by contacting the UW System Office of Staff Benefits and Payroll Policy, 780 Regent Street, P.O. Box 8010, Madison, WI 53708-8010.

8.7. UNCLASSIFIED PAYDAY PROCEDURES

The unclassified payroll is paid once per month on the first. When the first falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the pay date shall be the previous Friday. If the first falls on a holiday, the pay date shall be the previous day. The exception to this policy is the pay date that would fall on New Years Day (January 1). To avoid tax-related problems, the pay date will be the next business day following the New Years holiday.

Employees working on annual appointments are paid every month. Individuals on academic year appointments are paid nine times beginning on October 1st and ending June 1st. Employees holding an appointment for a single semester have their salary divided into 4.5 payments. First semester appointments are paid October 1st through February 1st, with the February 1st check consisting of the half payment. Second semester appointments are paid February 1st through June 1st with the February 1st check consisting of the half payment.

All employees, whether receiving a paper check or participating in direct deposit, will receive a separate earnings statement via campus mail on or before each scheduled payday. If you are not normally on campus during routine office hours, you should check with your department regarding distribution of this statement.

8.8. DIRECT DEPOSIT

Employees may elect to receive an actual paycheck or they have the option of participating in direct deposit. UW-Superior’s payroll is a segment of the University of Wisconsin System's aggregate payroll. The payroll is processed on the Madison campus and checks are issued by the State Treasurer's office and forwarded to individual campuses for distribution. The Treasurer's office has published guidelines for check distribution and has issued a directive stating that paychecks may not be negotiated prior to the date appearing on the check. If checks arrive late, distribution will be delayed. Direct deposit of paychecks is completed electronically to any financial institution in any state. The deposit is made at the opening of business on the morning of the scheduled payday.

8.9. VOLUNTARY PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS
In addition to non-voluntary deductions and voluntary insurance deductions, the following elections can be made. For further information, contact the Office of Human Resources.

Credit Union: Information on various payroll deductions for services provided by the Douglas County Credit Union, Superior Community Credit Union, and UW-System Credit Union can be obtained by contacting each institution. Deduction authorization forms can be obtained from either the Payroll Office or credit unions.

Parking: Deductions for parking permits are made each year at the beginning of the fall quarter on pretax basis. Public Safety sends out the information and deduction forms.

Savings Bonds: Deductions for U.S. Savings Bonds can be requested. Contact the Payroll Office for the deduction form.

A variety of charitable, campus co-curricular activity deductions are also available.