

## **HR Forum Meeting Minutes**

**11/2/05**

**Present:** M. Aguilar, M. Bird, L. Hanson, J. Heath, L. Hughes, E. Luera, D. McDaniel, J. Mosley, P. Naylor, S. Nusbaum, S. Pivonka, P. Prado, M. Randow, G. Robinson, T. Ryan, G. Thyberg, A. Frisbie, K. Yaklin, J. Henry

### AGENDA

1. Topics of Interest from the Membership
2. ZUTIME – Locked and Unreleased Time
3. EASY Update
  - a. For MAC Users
  - b. Terminated for Cause now includes Job Abandonment
4. Paying Tuition for University Employees
5. Content Survey for HR Supervisor's Course
6. Professional Staff Development Recommendations from Employee Performance Appraisal Forms
7. Biennial Salary Survey – Status
8. TRS Rule Change Re: Counting Overtime as Creditable Compensation for Retirement Calculations
9. Other

Mr. John McBride welcomed everyone to the meeting. The following information was presented to the membership.

#### **Topics of Interest from the Membership – None**

#### **ZUTIME – Locked and Unreleased Time – Selma Selvera**

A brief overview of the new SAP ZUTIME function was presented. The new transaction is a tool to help the time administrator monitor time that has not been released or approved. It is very important that all time for FY2005 be released by November 11, 2005 for December payroll. HR will be contacting departments who have unprocessed time that needs attention.

Q. Can you put a link in the minutes to this site?

A. Only the time administrators have security access to this function, but we can e-mail you a copy of the memo that describes the process. Just email Selma at [ss24@txstate.edu](mailto:ss24@txstate.edu) and she can forward it to you.

#### **EASY Update - For MAC Users – Floyd Quinn**

- For MAC Users - PeopleAdmin, the company which developed the EASY system, traditionally only supports the Internet Explorer (Version 5.2 or higher) and Netscape Navigator (Version 4.7 or higher) browsers. However, a number of users and applicants have been accessing the site successfully using Safari. We have been notified by PeopleAdmin that a recent Apple Safari browser upgrade is causing many applications, including EASY, to crash. Apple is working on an update to correct this problem, but in the mean- time we recommend the following alternatives:
  - There is a new patch available for the Tiger operating system. If you use this system, please insure you have the latest patch for the Safari browser.
  - If using another operating system (Jaguar/Panther), please do not update your Safari browser until the next scheduled release.
  - If you have already updated to this version, some MAC users have experienced excellent performance with the Firefox browser. Users can download this browser free of charge at [www.getfirefox.com](http://www.getfirefox.com) .

#### Terminated for Cause

HR has been compiling a list of applicants terminated for cause through the EASY application system that now includes the reason code “job abandonment.” The last 4 digits of the Social Security are included in the list so as to avoid confusion over similar names.

#### Content Survey for HR Supervisor’s Course

HR anticipates sending out a survey to managers on campus regarding content for the HR Supervisors Course. The survey is tentatively scheduled for release to the campus by the end of November. Content areas will include our core process areas (Employment, Classification, Compensation, Communications, Benefits, Employee Relations, Records).

#### Paying Tuition for University Employees

UPDATE - Government Code § 656.044 and § 656.047 gives state agencies authority to use “public funds” to provide training and education for its employees...including courses leading to graduate and undergraduate degrees. The use of state funds to pay for these college courses is permissible once the employee’s supervisor determines: (1) that the overall training of the degree relates to the employee’s duties, as required by § 656.044; and (2) that the course will enhance the employee’s job performance as provided in § 6.3 of Chapter V of the Regents’ Rules. In the absence of any restrictions in policy, the supervisor has broad discretion in these matters. However, a relationship must exist between a course and the employee’s current or projected duties. The authority to use public funds for employee college courses extends beyond this campus to other institutions. Neither the Government Code nor the Regents’ Rules restrict payment of funds only to our university.

The university is not required to pay an employee's tuition under this code. Whether the university will choose to do this is not known at this time. Many considerations must be addressed such as funding sources and IRS issues. Any policy or procedure changes would probably be made to UPPS 04.04.01.

Q. How did this come up?

A. A person wanted to attend a class at another institution and wanted to have the tuition paid. We found this information in our research of whether this could be done.

Q. What do other universities do?

A. We looked at the top 10 universities and found that some just allow their employees time off to take classes and others do about the same as we do. It does not appear that any of the "Big 10" public universities in Texas have a direct tuition payment program.

Q. I know we have the professional development UPPS where you can get release time to attend classes, but some people don't even apply for this because there is no one around to do their job in their absence. Is there anything being done about this...like a temp pool?

A. Through the EASY system there is a temp pool but there is the matter of who pays for the temporary person. Right now there is no pool of money out there to pay for this. It may be up to the department to pay if they choose

### **Professional Staff Development Recommendations from Employee Performance Appraisal Forms – John McBride**

HR has forwarded to Professional Development the top 20 staff development recommendations identified by supervisors for their employees on their CY04 performance evaluations. This review of supervisor recommendations resulted from the findings of Internal Audit's Evaluating Employee Performance Audit. A graduate intern in HR went through Part II of CY04 employee performance evaluations and identified the most requested training needs.

### **Biennial Salary Survey – Status**

HR is now conducting their salary survey of the top 10 university market institutions. It is anticipated that by December, this information will be forwarded to the vice presidents for their consideration for any mid year pay increases.

### **TRS Rule Change Re: Counting Overtime as Creditable Compensation for Retirement Calculations**

There has been much discussion regarding the crediting of overtime towards retirement calculations. In some instances, overtime that has been paid while it is earned counts towards compensation earned for retirement calculations. In other cases, overtime that is

paid out in a lump sum is not counted. HR is looking into further clarification of the TRS rule change.

#### Other

The first 3 days of the Christmas holidays are EC days. Please remember that classified employees who request to work overtime to cover for these days must be allowed to do so.

HR has completed their quarterly overtime report which shows a drop in university overtime liability (unpaid overtime balances). Previous reports from past years have shown around \$600,000 in overtime due for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter. The latest figures show \$438,000 for the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of FY06.

Remember – The TexFlex deadline for last year is November 15, 2005.

Q. Am I correct in understanding from the latest HR Bulletin, that there are only two examples where the student “task worker” title is not to be used?

A. You are correct. However, there may be numerous incidents where students/non-students need to be compensated and a title or payment process needs special attention. Please call our office so that we may research the appropriate use of this title for your particular situation.

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