

ASEC Activities, March 9 to April 12, 2021

Announcements:

Offsite Vaccinations:

Enter your information so you can get a green/building access badge: <https://covidresponse.wisc.edu/fag/i-was-vaccinated-off-campus-how-do-i-let-uhs-know/>

Return to Campus Survey:

Watch for communications from OHR and the Secretary of the Academic Staff inviting you to share your thoughts about returning to onsite work and remote work.

Academic Staff Assembly Representative and Alternate Elections:

All academic staff members in odd-numbered districts will receive an email this week from the Secretary of the Academic Staff Office regarding interest in serving as an Assembly Representative or Alternate. If you are interested or have questions about either role, please contact the Secretary's office.

Standing Committee Elections:

Elections for Assembly Standing Committees will launch in two weeks. As a reminder, only Assembly Representatives and ASEC members are eligible to participate, so make sure to cast your vote!

Resources:

- Vaccination information: <https://coronavirus.uwhealth.org/covid-19-vaccine/>
- Employee Assistance: <https://hr.wisc.edu/employee-assistance-office/>
- Life Matters: <https://hr.wisc.edu/employee-assistance-office/lifematters/>
- Ombuds office: <https://ombuds.wisc.edu/>
- SilverCloud: <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/silvercloud/>
- Professional development website: <https://acstaff.wisc.edu/professional-development> or OHR <https://hr.wisc.edu/professional-development/>
- Join ASPRO: <https://www.aspro.net/memInfo.html>
- Contact ASEC at asec-chair@soas.wisc.edu and the Secretary of the Academic Staff at soas@soas.wisc.edu

ASEC Report:

Please see [ASEC meeting minutes and agendas](#) for more detailed information.

Rebecca Blank, Chancellor

Chancellor Blank reported that our testing program is in a good place. She reiterated the message that employees should record their vaccinations with University Health Services as they get vaccinated elsewhere, which will exempt them from the necessity of testing for building entry. In terms of a wider return to onsite work, we think we will be in a space that looks more like 2019 than 2020, but there will be differences in the ways some work is organized. Administration is thinking about how we welcome people back, taking into account long-term isolation and a variety of health-related issues. Although there are some jobs where remote work is possible, we also know that one of our long-term strengths is as a residential campus. The question is how we balance these. We will have to work through this in the fall and over the next year. On the topic of the Title and Total Compensation (TTC) Project, implementation will be occurring in the fall. Once we place employees in the new titles, we will be able to provide market comparisons for academic staff for the first time. As we are in a difficult financial situation right now, salary adjustments won't happen quickly, but they will happen. A lot will depend on the financial picture. We have also made it clear that salaries will not be reduced. On the budget, the Chancellor has been having discussions with legislators. Interim System President Thompson is a wonderful advocate at the UW System level. The hope is that there will be some new funding, including for much needed building projects.

Matt Mayrl, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor

Matt Mayrl discussed a set of remote work principles with ASEC, which will inform the remote work policy and its implementation. Having a decentralized campus means that there will be a lot of local discretion and decision-making that comports with our overall principles. As such any remote work needs to meet our mission and maintain service quality. OHR is working to help equip managers to work with a diverse team of in-person and remote employees. The remote work policy will come to governance groups for feedback this month, and be intentionally broad, from an employee working internationally to an employee who has remote work as a component of their position.

Karl Scholz, Provost

Provost Scholz discussed the recent survey that went to instructional academic staff and faculty. The survey found that instructors worked harder this fall as compared to the previous fall, and there was a greater amount of stress. In surveys and course evaluations, students generally thought the fall went well. Summer instruction will be heavily remote, as will SOAR, but they are also looking for possible in-person opportunities. There are also efforts to have in-person QuickStart programs as well. Provost Scholz reported on the progress of creating a Center for Teaching, Learning and Mentoring. The goal is to improve student learning by continuing to improve teaching. Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning John Zumbrunnen will be leading this effort. Provost Scholz and Chancellor Blank attended a Chairs' Chat, where mental health and planning around summer/fall semester were the main topics. The university couldn't have made it this far without thousands of people working hard to make it happen, and we want to celebrate both the people at the university and our beautiful setting. We need to make it clear how much every person matters and that they belong, and we need to acknowledge the trauma that people have been through by supporting our colleagues as much as possible.

Laurent Heller, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

Vice Chancellor Heller reported that the \$300 level for purchases without further approvals in the new Procure-to-Pay system is set at this point, though we will be looking at how that level works and may revisit as needed. On the topic of the Administrative Transformation Project, the team has been doing visioning sessions on the overall project, as well as in specific areas such as finance, HR, and research administration. Regarding the single payroll initiative, Vice Chancellor Heller has asked for a clearer business case for this implementation. There are good reasons to implement this project, but the time and cost impacts need to be thought through.

John Zumbrunnen, Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning

Vice Provost Zumbrunnen discussed the preliminary results of the recent survey that was sent to instructional academic staff and faculty, which show 77% of respondents indicating a higher workload and 85% indicating higher stress levels in Fall 2020 as compared to Fall 2019. Increased workload is occurring in the areas of remote technology and student support. Vice Provost Zumbrunnen also provided an update on a change that campus got HonorLock to make regarding its exam pause feature. There have been student complaints through focus groups, undergrad surveys, and ASM that the exam pause feature amplifies stress and anxiety, and there has also been feedback that the software appears to have a racial bias as well. The exam pause feature has been turned off by our campus. This is also part of a larger conversation about academic integrity, what have we learned during the pandemic, and whether we have the right tools to accomplish what we want to accomplish.

Beth Meyerand, Vice Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs

Vice Provost Meyerand and Interim Chief Diversity Officer Cheryl Gittens are working with the Campus Committee for Diversity Education and Training to choose a path forward for the committee's work. Currently, it looks like campus may be able to use existing training similar to one of our peer institutions for a base-level training for all employees. After that point, the idea would be to implement a series of pipelines that are determined by job duties, with an appropriate curriculum constructed in a tiered fashion. Thinking about the recent Academic Staff Chat, it is clear that there are differences in how performance reviews are happening on campus, and that there is a strong desire to make the process more uniform and more helpful to employees. It is important to convey the message that the performance management process is an ongoing process as opposed to one that solely happens twice a year.

Karen Massetti-Moran, Director of Talent Rewards

Regarding the single payroll initiative, UW-Madison OHR is developing more internal communication so that employees have more specific resources to rely on (e.g. TSA, W-4, direct deposits). UW System is also in conversation with UW Credit Union to make their budgeting presentations more specific to the employees' situations. Once there is more guidance from System on leave balance tracking (including the process for recording when no leave is taken), there will be more specific communication in the MANAGE newsletter as well as other venues. Campus is also looking at options to best ensure correct summer payroll processing for C-basis employees. System is also planning to do more direct communications, and OHR is providing weekly updates to the HR Reps. Implementation of the Title and Total Compensation Project will happen on November 7th. Potential FLSA changes for academic staff are currently being reviewed carefully in terms of mapping to standard job descriptions.

Patrick Kass, Director, Transportation Services

Patrick reported on the impact to overall operations in the last year caused by the campus closure. Transportation Services lost about \$13M in revenue but was able to delay some capital projects to offset some of the losses. The current focus is on the reopening of campus and how they can best support that. The fall parking program should be announced in the next couple of weeks, with potential for a delayed application process. They're looking at adding additional flexibility to the program to account for a greater number of employees working remotely.

Dan Tokaji, Dean, Law School

Dean Tokaji introduced himself to ASEC and discussed his thoughts on the Law School and some goals he hopes to accomplish. The Law School has a great tradition of law in action, a great research tradition, and a strong tradition of public service. He wants to ensure that we can keep our high-quality education affordable, with a particular focus on increasing economic and racial diversity among students. He hopes to hire an Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion before the start of the fall semester, and would like to have diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all law students. He's very happy to be at UW-Madison, loves the culture of shared governance on our campus, and has found the CASI a useful mechanism to get advice on policy.

Mark Walters, Chief Human Resources Officer

Mark discussed updates to remote work policy with ASEC and the remote work principles that inform the policy. These documents will continue to evolve as OHR receives feedback over the next two weeks, with a goal of finalizing the policy by May 1. This policy is not meant to replace flexibility for occasional remote work; it is intended to address regular remote work schedules. On the topic of TTC, the implementation date has been set for November 7. OHR is continuing to meet with stakeholders and addressing concerns as they arise.