



# FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY

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## **PROPOSAL**

### **TO CONVERT FROM CIVIL SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY SUPPORT STAFF (USS) EMPLOYEES**

#### **NEW UNIVERSITY SUPPORT STAFF COMMITTEE (Formed 2013)**

Since there were numerous Fort Hays State University employees who wished to have this issue revisited, a new committee was formed in February of 2013 to revisit the issue of converting from State of Kansas Civil Service Employees to University Support Staff (USS).

The newly formed committee is comprised of Jerome Dreiling, Christine Gist, Mark Grieve, Bruce Heath, Marnie Kohl, Linda Leiker, Rod Leiker, Lisa Morgan, Sherry Spangler, David Storer, Marcia Tacha, and Cindy Weigel.

If the majority of the classified staff vote is yes, the conversion to USS is expected to become effective June 8, 2014, which is the start of Fiscal Year 2015. At that time, all current permanent staff will retain their permanent status.

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATION SYSTEM**—method to assess job performance, including any link to pay increases.

1. The committee shall develop one or more required performance evaluation forms; which would include four levels of evaluation: Unsatisfactory; Needs Improvement; Meets Expectations, and Exceeds Expectations. Departments would be allowed to add some unique components upon agreement with the supervisor and employee(s) with Human Resources (HR) approval. The evaluation should focus on duties and responsibilities of the position and less on behaviors. Goals may not be as applicable to “trades jobs” (trades jobs would include carpenters, electricians, plumbers, welders and other skilled positions).
2. Everyone conducting evaluations of USS staff will receive training concerning the process and instructions for documentation of reasons (with comments) as to why an individual rating was selected. This would be especially valuable for “unsatisfactory” or “needs improvement” ratings.
3. HR notifies departments when evaluations are due and monitors completion of evaluations by deadlines associated with salary increases. HR will require evaluations prior to salary increases. HR will also incorporate a requirement to have a position description at the time of salary increases since its accuracy is important to the evaluation process.

4. HR maintains central records of evaluation documents and overall ratings.
5. HR coordinates the appeal process with the Performance Evaluation Review Committee (PERC) for the permanent employee appeal of an evaluation rating.
6. Maintain the practice of a six-month probationary period, with extension of up to 12 months.
7. Employees will be given the opportunity to comment on supervisor effectiveness, working conditions, etc. by use of a separate form. The staff feedback form will be sent to all employees by the HR office during the annual evaluation period. It is the employee's option to complete and return the form to the HR office.

A FHSU system would not include the following features of our existing process:

- State mandated form and rating system, with associated regulations.

**DISCIPLINE/PROTECTION SYSTEM**—corrective measures taken to address performance and conduct issues and to terminate employment, e.g. disciplinary process, layoff, method of appeal of disciplinary actions, discrimination or employment conditions, informal methods to address workplace difficulties.

The FHSU Job Correction/Protection System will include:

1. An appeal mechanism for suspensions, demotions, terminations, complaints over working conditions and performance evaluations.

Departmental recommendations for suspension, demotion and termination will be reviewed and acted upon by the appointing authority or designee, including a due process review with the employee.

A final action in this process would be to develop a 3-5 person board of appeals, comprised of USS and unclassified employees, to hear appeals of disciplinary actions recommended by the appointing authority, to review findings and make recommendations to university administration for final action. This system would replace the State Civil Service Board.

2. The time frames and method of delivery of suspension, demotion, and termination proposals will be as currently required by statute. The state statute requires not less than three days nor more than fourteen days from the proposal date to the effective date, unless an extension is granted by the Director of HR.
3. Layoffs would be handled by thirty-day advance notice to the affected employee. Current layoff regulations that determine who will be laid off by calculating a layoff score based upon length of service and evaluation rating will be continued. The layoff score would be calculated only as a last resort if other placement alternatives were not possible. Those other alternatives would be transfer to a vacant position or termination of an initial probationary employee for placement in that vacated position. The University will assist each laid off individual by identifying job openings for which the laid off employee meets minimum qualifications. The laid off employee will be granted an interview for any position he or she meets minimum qualifications as determined by HR.

A FHSU system would not include the following feature of our existing process:

- Appeal of disciplinary actions to an external Civil Service Board.
- Approval by the State Division of Personnel Services for layoffs.

**COMPENSATION**—title management, salary administration, bonuses, pay increases (basic operating rule: no salary decreases with conversion to USS). A compensation system would include the following features:

1. **Salary Pool**: Each year an average percent increase, if available, would be allocated to campus departments for awarding salary increases based on job performance. When allocating the salary amounts to campus departments, the salary pools for the USS staff and the salary pools for unclassified employees will be allocated and maintained separately. ALL of the salary allocated for increases will be used for staff compensation, not redirected to other expenditures. The University's intent is to exceed the State average. The "guarantee" offered by the University is that all staff (USS and unclassified non-teaching staff) will be treated equally. At times, the legislature may allocate special funds for salary enhancements of faculty. This would not affect USS and unclassified non-teaching staff.
2. **Additional Salary Adjustments**: In addition, the University may be able to identify additional funds or utilize existing funds to address specific salary problems, e.g. salary compression, "topped out" employees, market adjustments for difficult to recruit jobs. These additional compensation enhancements would be available based on funding availability and on decisions about issues needing to be addressed. Representatives from the University Support Staff will participate in the compensation discussions.
3. **Skill Differential Pay**: The current 30 cents per hour skill differential pay will be added to the base at the time of the conversion.
4. **Salary Increases**: Depending upon the availability of funding, salary increases will be based upon the employee receiving a minimum performance evaluation of meets expectations. It is proposed any funds allocated for salary enhancements would be divided two-thirds (2/3)(across the board) one-third (1/3)(merit). Any employee receiving a meets expectations evaluation would receive two-thirds of the allocated funds. The balance would be available to employees receiving an evaluation of exceeds expectations (1/3). For example, if the university allocated three percent (3%) for salary enhancements the employee receiving an evaluation of meets expectations would receive a 2% increase. An employee receiving an evaluation of exceeds expectation would be eligible to share in the additional 1% increase. Employees receiving evaluations of needs improvement or unsatisfactory would not be eligible for any salary enhancement.
5. **Performance Evaluations**: HR notifies departments of evaluations due and monitors completion of evaluations by deadlines associated with salary increases. FHSU requires an evaluation prior to any salary increase. HR may incorporate a requirement to have a current (less than one-year-old) position description at the time of a salary increase since their accuracy is important to the evaluation process.

Budget allocations to departments will be dependent upon completed evaluations for each employee. (HR will need to establish guidelines for supervisory compliance.) In addition, no individual would receive a salary increase without a current performance evaluation on file in HR. The salary increase amount provided to any individual cannot be appealed. However, the evaluation upon which the salary increase is based can be appealed.

6. **Increase Authorization:** The President will allocate funds (both across the board and merit) available for increases in salaries to the Vice President/Provost who will then allocate funds to Deans/Directors to allocate funds to Chairs and/or supervisors. The person responsible for administering evaluations will make recommendations for merit increases.

Recommendations for merit increases will be reviewed at multiple administrative levels. An employee's immediate supervisor will recommend the merit percent increase to the department head/dean. The department head/dean will review the recommendation and make a recommendation to the appropriate Vice President/Provost. The Vice President/Provost will be the final authority in approving the discretionary percent of the salary increase. Salary recommendations would follow the administrative chain of command. Two examples are listed below:

***Academic/Department:***

Direct Supervisor to  
Chair/Director to  
Dean to  
Provost to President \*

***Administrative/Service Department:***

Direct Supervisor to  
Director to  
Vice President to  
President\*

\*The President (or his designee) reviews all final recommendations.

7. **Longevity Pay:** For those eligible for Longevity Pay at the time of implementation of the proposal, the longevity pay amount shall be included as part of an employee's base pay. Employees not currently at the longevity bonus level, but hired before June 15, 2008, would be eligible to receive the bonus at the time of conversion with the amount to go into their base pay. (Example: \$40 per year times number of years of service as of June 8, 2014 --\$40 per year x 6 years=\$240. The maximum allowable amount is \$1,000.)
8. **Salary Administration:** Existing salaries will be converted to a new salary administration plan without any resulting salary decreases. A new salary administration plan will begin upon implementation of the university support staff system. Implementation of the new system will take effect at the beginning of the 2015 fiscal year, which will occur on June 8, 2014. The existing salary grade and step matrix will be used as a framework for salary administration.

HR will be responsible for managing titles and creating minimum/maximum amounts in a range of pay for job groups. HR would monitor salary increases for significant variations. Periodic salary surveys may be conducted with specific job groups to assure comparability with current market rates.

9. **Title Management**: Existing job titles will be examined to determine how those titles or new titles could be developed. Updated position descriptions will serve as the basis for establishing job groups. When new job descriptions have been established, they will be assigned to new salary ranges.

FHSU system would not include the following feature of our existing process:

- The existing salary grade and step plan with associated State of Kansas rules.

**BENEFITS**—mechanisms to provide leave and benefits plans for staff appointed to full-time and part-time “regular” positions. A university support staff system would include the following features of these State of Kansas programs:

1. **Retirement**: KPERs will continue to be the mandatory retirement plan for staff. The Kansas legislature mandates the contribution rates for KPERs.
2. **Health Insurance**: Staff will be eligible to participate in any State of Kansas health insurance plans that are offered to all benefits-eligible staff as State employees.

The State of Kansas contributes a percentage toward the cost of “employee” coverage and the cost of covering dependents.

There are also prescription drug, dental and vision components to the health insurance program. Additionally, there is a Flexible Spending Account program for both dependent care and health care out-of-pocket expenses.

3. **Leave Plans**: Staff will be eligible for the State of Kansas sick and vacation leave plans.
4. **Holidays**: The chart noted below is an excerpt from the Department of Human Resources Web Page reflecting holidays for 2013. The same holidays would be offered as University Support Staff that were offered to Classified Staff.

<b>Holiday</b>	<b>Calendar Year 2013</b>
<b>New Year’s Day</b>	January 1, 2013
<b>Martin Luther King Day</b>	January 21, 2013
<b>Memorial Day</b>	May 27, 2013
<b>Independence Day</b>	July 4, 2013
<b>Labor Day</b>	September 2, 2013
<b>Veterans Day</b>	November 11, 2013
<b>Thanksgiving</b>	November 28-29, 2013
<b>Christmas</b>	December 25, 2013

The Discretionary Day is an additional day with pay provided to eligible USS employees for observance of another type of holiday, or other special day.

During spring and fall breaks classes are not in session; however, campus departments will remain open and fully staffed during the normal work week. Any staff wishing to take time off will need to request annual leave.

5. Shared Leave: A shared leave program would still be available. The plan will include the ability to donate accrued leave to other employees who have no leave balances. Staff will be eligible to receive a maximum of 6 months shared leave if they have a good work record and if they or a family member are experiencing a severe medical condition. If the medical condition is a Workers' Compensation situation, the employee would not be eligible for shared leave.
6. Other Benefits: Other benefit programs offered through the State of Kansas and/or Kansas Board of Regents available to Staff include basic and optional group life insurance, long-term disability coverage, long term care, voluntary tax sheltered annuity program, deferred compensation, parking, United Way, etc.