



**Texas A&M University
Employee Services**

**USAC Forum Minutes
Important Issues to Discuss**

Recorded in the order mentioned:

- Staff Development/Employee Education regarding financial support, mandatory supervisor training, continuing education and alternate work arrangements
- Parking (affordability, proximity, and continuing fee cost increases)
- Increases in benefit costs have financial impact on staff
- Appointment of staff representative to all search committees
- Employee Services Staff Advocacy
- Child/Elder/Family Care issues
- Advise President on community-related issues that may impact employees
- Employee Benefits (better explanation of benefits)
- Distrust of System Offices
- Better treatment of and higher value place on staff
- Value staff representation equivalent to faculty representation
- Professional Development (create more opportunities)
- Educational financial assistance for staff – scholarships and monthly pay plans for tuition
- Staff representation and acknowledgment at Commencement and Convocation
- Campus safety and violence
- Parking (too expensive and diminishing access)
- Employee Recognition
- Compensation study for staff salaries in comparison to other universities
- Provide ombudsperson for staff
- Better communication regarding information about services available to employees
- Professional Development (emerging issues in training)
- Health benefits for domestic partners
- Difference in application of TAMU and agency rules when employees of each work side by side
- Compensation (Comparable and appropriate compensation – same job titles, different pay); position description and increased work do not correspond with increased pay
- Any topic effecting staff or overall campus operations (e.g. Vision 2020)
- Parking (cost increases, impact on staff resulting from faculty relocation)
- Include TAPPS representation on Council
- Staff who work outside of 8-5 work schedule do not have access to resources (ex: professional development or university offices closed during their work shift.)
- Tuition assistance for employees and their families
- Parking
- Benefits (when determining benefits packages, consider implications for staff)
- Compensation (once an employee is hired there is no salary structure, no prevention of salary compression)
- Staff inclusion in creation of rules (comparable to faculty); staff not included sufficiently in rule creation process
- Staff cannot locate university rules, and rules are complex
- New System policies pertaining to staff – what does it mean?
- New employee orientation is a burdensome supervisor responsibility

- Staff involvement on staff recognition & awards
- Relocation of staff for faculty reinvestment not helpful to students needing service
- Staff in put on rules and regulation (especially hiring timeline)
- Retirement – provide ORP for staff
- Built environment (provide more information on construction projects to staff)
- Provide orientation for student employees (make mandatory)
- Retirement – increase of university contribution and reduction of employee contribution should occur based on length of service
- Building community between departments
- Reduced tuition for employees
- Benefits (equal perks for all employees)
- Benefits (domestic partner or Plus 1)
- Partner placement (dual-career placement) should be available to staff
- Consistency of operation between departments
- Staff development (should be encouraged, no cost to staff, computer classes are expensive)
- Parking (inequity – some departments pay employee parking)
- Free tuition
- Parking (need more flexibility in getting around campus; need parking closer to work location)
- Built Environment (better communication on what is going on and why; provide more money to keep facilities safe; keep campus attractive - decrease in custodial services results in poor campus appearance)
- Benefits (more staff representation and communication on benefit plans)
- Energy/Conservation (council could make recommendations on energy reduction)
- Human Resources Services (who represents staff and where can staff turn?)
- Training needed for faculty and department heads who supervise staff
- Improve communication to staff on benefits, committees, and organizations
- Security (need more police officers on campus)
- Provide social opportunities for staff to interact to get to know other staff better
- Parking (costs continue to rise, lack of long-term planning, competition for spaces, lot oversold)
- Communication (need to find ways to communicate information other than through e-mail - not all employees have e-mail access)
- Communication on benefits and provider availability is poor
- Parking (increases in parking costs exceed pay increases)
- Professional Development (supporting advancement opportunities and information on availability)
- Benefits (Plus 1 would be a meaningful benefit to employees)
- Paid tuition
- Pay equity and career ladders
- Hiring issues - difficulty in attracting/retaining quality employees - poor qualification in applicant pools referring to staff as non-faulty is demeaning; staff are not “non –“
- Provide opportunity for lengthy sabbaticals to staff with benefit retention privileges
- Facilities (poor planning – not enough custodians)
- Consistency in access to perks (Administrative Leaves not used equitably)
- Parking (inequity in departments paying for staff – some pay, some do not)
- Move to cubicle work configuration has had diverse impact on performance and working conditions
- Gender inequity (women not treated equally)
- Need increased sensitivity training for faculty and hold faculty accountable for race and gender insensitive language
- Public transportation for community

- Better definition of such provisions as paid emergency leave due to unsafe working conditions
- Equal treatment with regard to paid parking and compensation
- Unfair selection of which employees must work as “essential employees” during university closures
- Temporary reduction in force of Dining Service employees is unfair in that to remain paid employees must exhaust vacation
- Staff should have provided input on “At Will “ policy changes
- Employees hired in Dining Services for 40 hours/week but only given 32 hours/week shifts
- ORP eligibility should be given to staff
- Dining Services summertime temporary reduction of work force is a problem for those in 9 months positions and the reduction of work for full-time employees from 40 hours to 32 hours
- Board of Regents and President approve high compensation for faculty and coaches; staff compensation needs to be comparable
- University has a lack of staff (under staffed – under funded)
- FLSA staff not treated as exempt with regard to time out of office and requirements to submit leave
- Educational Enhancement pay procedure is problematic because it requires approval of department head
- Should review FLSA with regard to exempt/non-exempt status with regard to leave submission requirements for partial time out of work place
- Staff needs mentoring opportunities
- Hiring policies do not address searches that are not in “real”
- Uniforms that are more up to date and less distinguishing of certain types of work
- Benefit equity (some new hires 90 day supplemental benefits are paid for by department)
- Recommendations to the President should be well-researched and solutions to address issues should be offered
- Staff experiencing a reduction in number of holidays; staff holidays are not spread evenly throughout the year
- Parking (30-minute spaces need to be made 1-hour spaces)
- New Staff Orientation (not all employees have computer access; orientation materials should be provided in print)
- Staff should have input in decisions not just be informed that decisions have been made
- Communication of information needs to be more broad
- University should provide comment boxes in locations that allow for anonymity
- Parking (more daily pay lots should be created; more reserved spaces provided without cost increases)
- Bus service does not start early enough for early arriving employees
- Increases in parking are more than increases in pay
- Inequity in provision of parking benefits – some departments pay, others do not
- What are parking fees used for?
- Relocation of parking to lots further from work locations create difficulties
- As new construction goes up, why aren't parking garages built with the building? Building on existing parking lots pushes employees into parking further away from building and the cost increases
- People who attend athletic events pay for parking, but fees have already been collected from employees for those spaces; parking is leasing the space twice
- Support for staff tuition reduction or assistance
- In the past TAMU staff paid \$450 plus cost of books to attend classes; supervisors provided more flexibility to attend classes

- Tuition discounts for staff who have more than 1 child attending TAMU
- Inconsistency of perks (some departments offer scholarships to their staff)
- Professional Development (available and supported by supervisors; supervisors will not spend funds budgeted for professional development)
- Professional Development should be tracked for progress
- Compensation (competitive career ladders, equity compression, COL increases)
- Salaries need to be more competitive with other Texas employers to attract the best staff
- Salaries need to be more equitable across job responsibilities and duties
- Cost of Living raises seem to have gone away
- Benefits (decrease in the vision plan benefits impact access to usual physician, decreased service delivery delays)
- Increase staff involvement in review of insurance plan proposals
- Staff reward and recognition (expand alternatives, such as time off during slow periods)
- Well funded departments have unfair advantage in attracting and retaining staff
- Built environment/Facilities (improve quality of maintenance of old buildings; reduced custodial support problematic)
- Consider 4 day work week (rotate schedules like the U.S. Postal Service does)
- Revision of policies and regulations impacting staff (at will & probation) should include staff in discussion prior to action
- Staff are having to provide their own custodial services due to reduction in custodial staff; custodial staff are being given too much work
- Not all employees have access to computer and web-based information; this makes electronic communication ineffective
- Training for dept. heads on rules that support staff (rewards and professional development)
- Some departments provide staff tuition scholarships, but there is no consistency campus-wide
- More childcare center space is needed; staff cannot find suitable day car
- Provide forums to discuss university rules and processes
- Safety and Health (provide sanitation wipes in bathrooms)
- Staff last to receive information; provide timely distribution of important information
- Professional Development (provide all employees training that is relevant to their jobs))
- Parking (split opinion on whether employees should pay for parking; concerns expressed regarding cost and financing options)
- Built Environment/Facilities (maintenance employees cannot access work area via trucks or sidewalks which negatively impacts ability to do job)
- Safety (pedestrian traffic, bicycles, and campus drivers)
- Tuition Assistance for staff to take classes at TAMU, Blinn, and obtain CEUs
- Tuition Assistance for staff and dependents
- Broaden scholarship eligibility to include employees
- Provide financial assistance for Professional Development (certification and licenses)
- Reduction of bureaucracy
- Provide computer access for all employees (include training on how to use computers)
- Conduct a Compensation Study (review pay, equity, career ladder, and advancement opportunities)
- Provide more support for Education Release Time
- Parking (communication – information is not conveyed well with regard to some parking payment requirements)
- Parking cost increases; should employees have to pay for parking?
- Recent revisions to policies and regulations ("At Will" reemphasis) insult to staff and creates insecurity
- Parking fees should be proportionate to pay levels – sliding scale (lower paid

- employees pay less)
- Access to Benefit information and continuity in customer service regarding benefit information is more difficult to obtain; old system had one point of contact assigned
 - Transition HR responsibility from dept. representatives
 - Hiring of new staff not in sync w/ hiring new faculty or admitting more students
 - Built Environment/Facilities (not enough custodial support)
 - Treatment and value of staff needs improvement
 - Relocation of some services off-campus (ex: Telephone Support Services) increase difficulty and expense to staff
 - Campus Security & Safety (better communication regarding construction areas)
 - Pedestrian safety w/ increased traffic and with no sidewalks
 - Parking (costs, proximity to work area - not safe for employees who arrive very early or work very late)
 - Parking cost should include insurance against vandalism
 - Uncomfortable uniforms
 - Compensation (pay rate for weekend work; should be paid overtime)
 - Inequities in pay – new employees make as much as old employees in same job
 - Workload (not adequately staffed; hire additional staff)
 - Medical Benefits (cost increases)
 - Expenses incurred by employees (use of personal vehicles with rising gas prices)
 - Electronic communication problematic (only 1 out of 120 employees present had access to a computer)
 - Expand ORP eligibility to professional staff
 - Tuition assistance (free, reduced, scholarships) for staff and dependents (See Washington University, Kansas State, Roosevelt University, University of Utah, University of Southern Mississippi's tuition remission plans)
 - There is no parking for employees who work football games
 - Compensation (career ladder, equity, C.O.L. increases- consider expenses as substitute for B.A. or B.S.
 - Payroll deduction for tuition and fee payment
 - Council needs to address broad campus-wide issues that may not rise to levels of importance for a single employee or campus departments
 - Council should support employee health and wellness initiatives