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The UB Post

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Furloughs Mandated

UB Employees Pinched by State's Economic Woes

Ibrahim Dabo

Issue date: 1/27/09 Section: News

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The University of Baltimore has begun short-term furloughs for employees as part of the state effort to cut budgets as the economy worsens.

Gov. Martin O'Malley implemented the furlough plan for state workers in December. Nearly \$16 million will be generated from payroll cuts at public universities operating under the University System of Maryland.

Brit Kirwan, USM chancellor, approved UB's plan for employee furloughs as required by the Board. The principles guiding the state furlough plan stipulate that employees earning less than \$30,000 annually should be less impacted.

Allocated by salary levels, employees are required to take up to five furlough days, which began on Jan. 2, when the university was closed for one furlough day.

Employees who make up to \$29,999 receive no furlough but were required to take annual, personal or unpaid leave on Jan. 2. Employees earning \$30,000 to \$39,999 must take one furlough day. Two furlough days are required for those earning \$40,000 to \$49,999, three furlough days for \$50,000 to \$59,999, four furlough days for \$60,000 to \$99,000 and five furlough days for \$100,000 and above.

A number of senior staff will voluntarily take an additional furlough day. President Robert L. Bogomolny said he decided to take a sixth furlough day to recognize the sacrifices that all furloughed employees at UB are making during these tough economic times, adding that the university understands the statewide need for mid-year budget adjustment, with the furloughs preferable to the loss of campus jobs.

Bogomolny said vice presidents and deans may confidentially volunteer for an extra furlough day.

"If the revenue from these voluntary furloughs can contribute even in a small way to increased budget stability, then these actions can achieve a tangible benefit, as well as deliver a strong message of understanding and appreciation to our campus community," he said.

The furlough program was designed to have minimal impact on students.

"We cannot shut our doors; we have to teach classes," said Harry Schuckel, senior vice president for administration and finance at UB. He said the college worked to ensure no classes or programs would be cancelled due to the furlough.

Schuckel said faculty members have been remarkably positive and supportive in maintaining their teaching schedules.

Alfred Guy Jr., Ph.D, associate professor and director of the Hoffberger Center for Professional Ethics, said a "hefty chunk" was missing from his most recent paycheck, with four more cuts remaining.

"I don't mind being furloughed as long as it contributes toward others at UB, including faculty and staff, being able to keep their jobs," Guy said, as long as the furloughing is done fairly across the board among all state employees, including such notables as the governor, state senators and delegates, the Chancellor and all the USM presidents.

Students' reaction to the furloughs was mixed.

"Students won't have to lose their classes, but, on the other hand, faculty will have a dent in their pockets; thus, the cost of living for them [for] a period of time will be high," said Shamija Moncur, forensic studies and Undergraduate Student Senate president.

She added that cutbacks are expected as a result of the recession, but she does not see a problem with the structured way the furlough program is being executed.

Christopher Ifeanyi-Nwanze, MBA, said he wouldn't mind if any of his classes were cancelled as long as it did not happen a week before a quiz or exam.

"Professors cancel classes when they have things going on, be it personal or because they have to go to a conference. So if this helps the state as a whole, then I'm fine with it," Ifeanyi-Nwanze said.

The furlough follows an earlier reduction of \$1.1 million in October. The cut did not impact university employee salaries, as a contingency fund of \$1 million had already been built into the fiscal year 2009 operating budget.

UB's share of budget savings to be generated through the furlough program will total at least \$602,000. Furlough days are required to be taken between Jan. 5 and June 30.



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POLL

In these troubled economic times, how concerned are you about losing your job?

Not at all concerned

Somewhat concerned

Extremely concerned

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UB Furlough Plan

- No classes will be canceled and essential student services will not be curtailed.
- The number of furlough days assigned will reflect employee salary levels.
- All full-time employee categories, including research staff, are subject to furloughs.
- Adjunct faculty, part-time Contingent I and II employees, graduate assistantships, student wage employees and HB-1 visa employees are excluded from the program.
- No reduction of employee benefits, including retirement, health or leave benefits, will occur.
- To ensure the security and safety of the campus, police and security personnel are exempted from the program.
- Employees may take a furlough day in two four-hour increments any week.
- To ensure operational continuity, employees must secure advance approval from their supervisor to schedule furloughs.
- Employees will not be required to work during furlough.
- No annual, personal or sick leave, overtime or compensatory time may be used to offset furloughed time. However, employees who are excluded from the furlough program were required to use any annual leave, personal leave or leave without pay on Jan. 2, 2009, when UB was closed.
- Furlough days assigned to individual employees will be recorded and tracked through the normal timesheet process managed by supervisors.
More details available at www.ubalt.edu/template.cfm?page=2924

Source: University of Baltimore website

Compiled by Ibrahim Dabo



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Silver Spring Movers

posted 5/22/09 @ 10:35 AM EST

It is a sacrifice that the faculty is being forced to make, but it seems like they all understand the reasons and support the cause. If this will help people keep their jobs then this is what must be done. (Continued...)

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