Guideline 672 - Performance Standards for Working Off Site When Library is Closed

UMBC Campus Context:

At the Academic Affairs Directors meeting of March 11, 2010, the Provost and the Associate Vice President for Human Resources directed that each unit draft Performance Standards for Faculty and Exempt Staff working off site when the unit is closed. It was noted that employees of the university are obligated to continue to fulfill their duties as far as possible when their workplaces are closed. It is expected that, for most exempt employees, there are some tasks which cannot be performed remotely and others which are significantly less efficient or less effective when performed remotely. Further, in weather emergencies it is understood that some time must be allocated to make sufficient preparation for eventual return to campus, e.g. to clear the snow away from one’s car and driveway, and so some work tasks must be postponed to make time for such preparations. It has been acknowledged that providing such standards for non-exempt staff is more difficult and in many cases it is not possible for non-exempt staff to perform their normal duties off site.

Applies to:

Library Faculty and Exempt Staff

General Guidelines:

1. Communication: Library Faculty and Exempt Staff are expected to provide supervisors and others who have work related business with contact information to use when the Library is closed. They should monitor, when possible, their communication channels at least twice per day of their normal work schedule. They are required to respond in a timely manner, during their normal work days, to communications which request a response.

At minimum, these should include two email accounts and one phone number: each person is responsible for maintaining their UMBC email account and to save emails on the server, not on their desktops. Also, each must maintain an off-campus email account, provide the address of that account to the supervisor and to the Administrative Offices Administrative Assistant who will keep and update a Library wide list of these off-campus accounts. These accounts will be used for email communication in cases in which the UMBC account server is down. Each person must provide at least one phone number; if there is a land line and also a cell phone, it is preferred that both are provided, and in any case it is the responsibility of each person to be reachable by phone and to respond to phone messages received during the work day.

Each Library Faculty member and Exempt Staff member is required to initiate a check-in procedure with their supervisor or the supervisor’s designee when the campus or the library is closed on a work day. This may be a phone call or email providing information on contact for that day and availability for receiving a call back if supervisor or designee is not reached and a message must be left.

2. Preparation for Working Off Site: Library Faculty and Exempt Staff are responsible for making arrangements to enable secure off site access to online files which may be needed to accomplish their work. Normally, this would include email files, campus online systems which can be accessed from off campus, and access to online materials on shared drives. Employees are responsible for backing up online work completed off site. All work files stored on personal computers must be backed up in locations which are accessible from off campus, i.e. the I: drive or some other campus maintained drive, the cloud, or a storage medium such as a thumb drive or HD.

3. Sufficient Progress on Work: Library Faculty and Exempt Staff are responsible for making reasonable progress on work which can be handled off-site, even when off-site work is less efficient than working on site.

4. Guidelines for Library Departments and Individual Positions: Library units are responsible for drafting broad performance standards for the work of their units and for the individual positions which have unique duties. These performance standards may be largely couched in terms of broad types of work, but may require the listing of some specific tasks which must be initiated, continued or maintained from off site when access to the workplace is not possible. Unit heads are responsible for confirming that the Faculty and Exempt Staff in their units are prepared and enabled to work off site.

Start-up schedule: Drafts from units are due to unit heads by May 17, 2010. Preparations for file and computing access due by May 31, 2010.

Caveats: It is understood that off site work environments, normally at home, are likely to be less efficient, ergonomic, and generally conducive to work than Library work environments; therefore, productivity may not be as good as it may be on site. However, reasonable arrangements for work off-site should be made, including the removal of major productivity barriers as feasible. Further, it is understood that productivity may be limited by failure of campus systems or other obstacles from the campus.

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