



College of Arts & Sciences Managers' Meeting

Wednesday, January 10, 2024

10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

[Zoom Recording](#)

Welcome: Roseanda Hall, Senior Director of HR Shared Services

ISSS Updates: Ioana Costant, Director of International Student and Scholar Services

Phase 2 Portal Launch

The ISSS Portal is our new case immigration management system which is developed for universities and has been customized for our use at UNC. The critical purpose of the new system is to allow hosting of academic units and provide international students a way to submit requests to the ISSS office electronically. Previously ISSS used two separate systems, but with the new portal everything will be included in one system. The new system will guide users through the processes resulting in a more intuitive experience. The first phase of the portal launch took place in November of 2022 and was focused on international students and J-1 exchange visitor requests. Phase two of the Portal was just launched on December 4, 2023, which focused on the pre-review process for employee related requests and implemented H-1B requests. ISSS successfully conducted pilot tests on both phases of the portal with the help of HR staff and faculty. Feedback from these tests was implemented into the launch of both phases.

The pre-review process has been carried over from the old paper method to being available on the portal. Having pre-review on the portal will allow ISSS to receive and evaluate documents more efficiently. This will help us to determine if an individual is eligible for a position and will also allow us to ascertain the correct immigrant status. The new process should prove to be more user-friendly and time efficient. The pre-review process should be started in the ISSS portal by the hosting unit once an offer has been extended. From there, the process would be routed to the international employee who would be asked to answer a few questions and upload relevant documentation. Next the request is routed to ISSS for evaluation of things such as eligibility and immigration history. A decision will be given to the hosting unit following this step. The pre-review process is not required for visiting scholars. For visiting scholars requiring J-1 sponsorship, this request can be initiated straight from the existing J-1 request in the ISSS portal. For Postdoctoral Research Associates the general practice is they should be coming in through the J-1 program, it is not necessary to complete pre-review. If the hosting unit is requesting an exception for consideration of an H-1B sponsorship, they should still initiate a pre-review.

We have the H-1B process live within the ISSS Portal which required a tremendous amount of work. I would like to recognize my colleague Trinh Cosey who contributed a lot to complete this. We would not have been able to complete this without all her hard work. We have made several critical improvements to the H-1B process while developing it in the portal. Firstly, the actual wage process has been significantly simplified. Users should find it much more straightforward without the need to list a ton of information, we simply ask a few questions. We have also made significant improvements to the posting system. For those unaware, the H-1B system requires that we post notice informing employees that we will be filing an H-1B. We previously had to physically post notice anywhere someone would be working. We have now partnered with OHR to allow electronic posting for individuals who require H-1B sponsorship and will be working UNC owned work sites.

Several trainings have been developed for pre-review, H-1B requests and H-1B update reporting. These trainings are intended for the hosting unit contacts and it is very important for the training to be completed. We have worked hard to keep the training short and sweet with courses ranging from eight to twelve minutes. The ISSS Portal trainings can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions on work authorization, please contact [Ashante Diallo](#) first. Some questions may not need to go straight to Ioana as they fall under HR.

(Audience): How do we handle posting notices for faculty that work from home?

(Ioana): ISSS will coordinate with the individual to ensure the posting requirements are met since their home is not UNC owned property.

(Audience): Will there be an H-1B visitor playbook similar to the one available for J-1?

(Ioana): We are currently working on an H-1B and J-1 visual workflow. We have received feedback that these are preferred due to everything being on one page.

(Audience): How will posting notices be handled for those who work at other universities such as Duke?

(Ioana): Locations such as Duke are third party sites, so we would still have to follow the normal posting method.

(Audience): Assuming everything is complete, what is the average wait time on a request?

(Ioana): We are still expecting similar response times to what was previously in place. For J-1 requests, we need these 3 months before the proposed start date. For H-1B, we ask for 6 months before the proposed start date.

Finance Announcements: Elizabeth Bakanic, Associate Dean for Finance & Budget Management

A quick reminder to everyone that today is the due date for the NSF R&D survey responses. We appreciate your responses and will be in touch if anything seems off. The data received from the survey is very important due to being used nationally and reflects our research portfolio. If you have any questions on what to include in your response, please reach out to the finance team.

An email went out this week pertaining to requesting additional graduate tuition. Please respond directly to Beverly Wyrick from the grad school and cc Katrina White if you are in need of this.

A new startup spreadsheet has been posted on our website [here](#). We have moved to one sheet instead of having multiples as we previously did. There has been work done to make the sheet more user-friendly as well. Please make sure both you and your chairs are using the most recent startup sheet.

Phased Retirement on a Distinguished Professorship

Going forward those who choose to enter phased retirement will not be able to carry their Distinguished Professorship forward. The Distinguished Professorship will end as soon as they enter phased retirement, and the Distinguished Professor title should no longer be used. There will also be no additional research funds following the entrance of phased retirement. This is mainly based on state restrictions on these professorships for anyone who is not full time. We are grandfathering in anyone who was already on phased retirement before this change.

Benefit Projection on State Funds

ConnectCarolina now provides benefit project on state funds. If you click payroll projections on any report it will project salaries and benefits now. Due to the process the college uses of providing your salary amounts and later match the fringe, somethings may temporarily look out of place. We will try to fix this on all reports that we control but you may still run into some discrepancies on sites such as Infoporte. This comes from the change of benefits being allocated to the unit rather than handled centrally. This does not change how we move money; it can just throw off some reports.

Research Administration Team Update: Andrea Walens, Director of Research Administration

Earlier this week on January 8th we welcomed Shannon Rossi to the team as a contracts and grants coordinator. Shannon joins us from the Physics Department here at UNC and will be helping out the Mathematics Department. The Research Administration team is looking forward to continuing to grow and supporting your departments.

HR Announcements: Ashante Diallo, Associate Dean of Human Resources

Phased Retirement

The provost office will no longer be implementing phased retirement. They will continue to manage the system, but implementation will now be handled by OHR. This change has affected our timing a bit, usually the applications for phased retirement are due in January so the team is scrambling to complete these. The applications are not due to OHR until February 18th, and we will have an internal deadline of February 7th for faculty who want to apply. This application can be found and completed in RASR by the Department Manager. It is very important that those who plan to enter phased retirement realize that they are resigning their tenured position in the process and entering into a part time 3-year fixed term position. After submitting an application, we will send out an email to the faculty cc'ing the Department Chair and Manager confirming it was received and everything looks correct. We then handle sending the applications to OHR for final review and approval. Please do not send applications directly to OHR.

HR Team Realignment

We will be realigning the HR team with the transition beginning on February 1st. Roughly 30 percent of departments may experience a change in their direct HR support. We anticipate the transition to take about 3 weeks. We are excited to introduce some new ways that we as a team can engage you after the transition takes place. We will be sending out communications on this change and those who are impacted by this change will hear from us very soon.

VPN Use

A notification went out at the beginning of the year pertaining to the importance of VPN use when accessing campus systems. RASR has joined the other systems that require a VPN connection to access while working off campus.

Hire Actions

The HR team is monitoring any hire actions that come through. We had a few lingering hire actions that we have been working with OHR on to make sure they get approved. We had a good year completing hire actions and did a lot of work in December to get these approved. If you have any issues with this, please reach out to your assigned HR Business Partner or Consultant.

HR Digest

Please make sure you are subscribed to the HR Digest emails which can be found on the [OSHR website](#). A lot of good information can be found in these that would be beneficial to share with your faculty and staff. Recently the digest contained information on how you can earn wellness credits and get paid out just for having health screenings done. We will see if a representative from OHR is available to speak on this at our next meeting.

Summer School Positions

Previously created positions can be reused for summer school and if you need to recruit for a summer school position that process needs to start as soon as possible. If you plan to utilize an existing faculty member and you do not need to recruit, please reuse positions, otherwise please get these positions created and start the process quickly.

TIM Overhaul

TIM is being overhauled very soon, and TIM administrators will be receiving an email concerning training courses for the new TIM system. The webinar is being held on Monday, January 22nd and we highly encourage you to sign up. If you cannot make the first training more will be held in the future. A recording of the training will also be made available and shared for those who can't attend.

Questions:

(Audience): I have been having a lot of issues accessing items on ConnectCarolina and have tried multiple different web browsers. I have heard of the same issues from multiple faculty members. Is there anything that can be done to ease these issues?

(Ashante): This is not an access issue; it is an issue with the website itself. I have had the most success using Firefox. We have heard that clearing your browser cache helps but this is only a temporary fix. We will contact ITS and stress that this is an issue that needs to be fixed as it is hurting productivity.

(Audience): I am running into broken links on the CASBO website. Who do I send these to?

(Ashante): We are still being impacted by the update of the faculty affairs website. If you run into any broken links, please [email](#) them to Joy with a screenshot if possible.