



UNIVERSITY
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Our File No. 1630

GUIDELINE

Development and Engagement Opportunities

Guiding Principles (for all employees)

It is both important and desirable that employees of the university are provided opportunities to develop their skills, network with colleagues, learn from others and engage with the broader community.

Supervisors, managers, academic unit heads, and others in leadership positions should encourage opportunities that will assist employees in being successful in their current position, or help them develop along a logical career path. Toward that end, it is appropriate and expected that leaders support employees to participate in development and engagement opportunities.

It is appropriate for those in leadership positions to create and sponsor development and engagement opportunities which fit within the mandate of their unit. It is similarly appropriate for the sponsor to advertise and encourage university employees to participate in such opportunities.

Guiding Principles (for support staff)

The remainder of this guideline is intended to provide advice to both supervisors and support staff employees on how to appropriately treat opportunities, such as professional development, service on university committees and projects, university sponsored events, and community/charitable activities. In some cases, opportunities fall outside an employee's regular job duties, but may occur during regular working hours. In other cases, important opportunities may occur outside of the regular work schedule. Supervisors are encouraged to follow these guiding principles when considering development and engagement opportunities:

Consider the unit's operational needs to determine level of participation.

Although the U of M encourages the development and growth of support staff employees, supervisors need to consider the operational needs of their unit to determine whether it is practical for their employees to attend development and engagement opportunities. With this in mind, supervisors are under no obligation to release their employees, even to an appropriately sponsored event where employees are encouraged to attend.

Ensure a fair distribution of opportunities within the unit.

Supervisors should ensure they are fairly distributing development and engagement opportunities across all their support staff employees. Not every employee should expect to attend every opportunity. Similarly, a fair distribution does not mean every employee will be given the exact same opportunities. It is acceptable for a supervisor to make some opportunities available to recognize merit, and encourage the further development of high achieving employees.

Do not require employees to make up time for sponsored opportunities held during their workday.

If supervisors release support staff employees to attend development and engagement opportunities, this is considered an assignment of alternative work. Employees are not required to make up the time, and similarly, their pay should not be reduced.

Ensure any overtime hours incurred during the sponsored opportunities are authorized and compensated

If supervisors encourage employees to attend development and engagement opportunities which will incur overtime hours, supervisors should pre-authorize these hours and provide payment or the banking of the authorized overtime.

Ensure employees are not compensated for non-sponsored opportunities, or those held outside of working hours.

If employees choose to attend an opportunity outside of their scheduled working hours, employees are doing so voluntarily and on their own time. Employees are not entitled to extra pay or time off in lieu of pay. However, if a supervisor assigns an employee to participate in a particular opportunity outside of regular working hours, they should either adjust the employee's work schedule, or offer extra pay (in accordance with the applicable policy or collective agreement). In some cases, an employee may elect to take time off in lieu of extra pay. These rules are frequently misunderstood by employees, and supervisors should make an effort to set clear expectations.

Personal and Professional Development Opportunities

What is considered a personal or professional development opportunity?

Personal and professional development opportunities are intended to improve and increase capabilities and skills desired by the university through access to education and training opportunities. Opportunities for development may be offered directly by the university, or in association with outside organizations.

What level of sponsorship is required?

Development opportunities are offered through many offices at the university, including Human Resources' Learning and Organizational Development (LOD). Any university unit which has education or development within its mandate may offer such opportunities to university employees. External opportunities, such as programs offered by professional associations or other educational institutions, may also be promoted by supervisors to their employees.

When can an employee attend a personal or professional development opportunity offered during their regular working hours?

A support staff employee may attend only with the approval of their supervisor.

How best should employees' personal and professional development working hours be captured or tracked?

For those employees who submit timesheets, they should use timesheet code 2520 ('education/professional development'). For those employees who do not submit timesheets, supervisors should maintain a record of the occasions employees are released to development opportunities.

Is there a limit on the number of personal or professional development opportunities an employee may take?

There is no specific limit on the number of hours or days for which a supervisor may release an employee to participate in personal or professional development opportunities. The supervisor should exercise judgment based on the needs of the unit, the type of work done by the employee, and the needs/desires of the employee. It is acceptable, therefore, that there should be some variation across the institution. Typically, it is observed that support staff participate in between 2 and 10 working days of activities within a one year period.

Service on University Committees and Projects

What is considered service on university committees and projects?

Service on university committees and projects are instances where employees contribute to the development, design and implementation of university projects and services, or participate in the governance structures of the institution. Opportunities may be unit-specific or university-wide in nature.

What level of sponsorship is required?

The committee or project must be sponsored at a level appropriate to the intended impact. For example, a Dean may sponsor a project to improve efficiency within his/her faculty. Similarly, an Associate Vice-President or Vice-President might constitute a university-wide committee.

When can an employee participate in a university committee or project during their regular working hours?

A support staff employee may participate only with the approval of their supervisor.

How best should the employees' working hours be captured or tracked on timesheets?

Because service is considered an assignment of alternate work, employees who submit timesheets should use timesheet code 1000 ('regular hours'). For those employees who do not submit timesheets, supervisors should maintain a record of service assignments.

Is there a limit on the number of university committees or projects in which an employee may participate?

There is no specific limit on the number of service opportunities that a supervisor may assign to an employee. However, supervisors should consider the expected time commitments for each committee and project, in addition to the operational needs of their unit, to determine which it is practical for their employees to participate.

University Sponsored Community Events

What kinds of events are considered university sponsored community events?

University sponsored events are those which are intended to help build a sense of community and collegiality at our institution. For example, they may include social events, holiday festivities, celebrations of achievement, and recognition of employees, students or alumni.

What level of sponsorship is required?

The sponsorship should be at a level appropriate for the employees intended to participate. For example, a departmental social event may be appropriately sponsored by the department head. A faculty barbeque would be appropriately sponsored by the Dean. A university-wide event should be sponsored by an Associate Vice-President, Vice-President, or the President.

How best should the employees' working hours be captured or tracked on timesheets?

Because participating in a university sponsored event is considered an assignment of alternate work, employees are to use timesheet code 1000 ('regular hours') for regular hours worked.

University Sponsored Charitable Activities

What kinds of activities are considered university sponsored charitable activities?

University sponsored charitable activities are those which are intended to help those in need, often supporting programs run by external non-profit organizations. For example, activities could include the United Way Campaign, supporting other sponsored charities in the city and province, the student food bank, and university fundraising campaigns.

What level of sponsorship is required?

The sponsorship should be at a level appropriate for the intended participating employees. For example, a charitable activity organized for a department to participate in may be appropriately sponsored by the department head. A university-wide charitable activity should be sponsored by an Associate Vice-President, Vice-President, or the President.

How best should the employees' working hours be captured or tracked on timesheets?

Because participating in a university sponsored charitable activity is considered an assignment of alternate work, employees are to use timesheet code 1000 ('regular hours') for regular hours worked.

Other Community/Charitable Activities

How are other community/charitable activities treated?

Employees who attend community/charitable activities which are not sponsored by the university are considered to be doing so voluntarily on their own time.

Guideline approved by:

Gregory L. Juliano, Associate Vice-President (Human Resources)

Version: 14 December 2017