Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is located at the Seretean Wellness Center and is provided exclusively for faculty and staff at Oklahoma State University. It is a FREE and confidential resource for OSU employees/families experiencing forms of personal distress which may interrupt or cause deterioration in work performance or other life situations. Issues addressed include alcohol/drug abuse, emotional/stress, marital/family/relationships, medical issues, professional/career, and addictions.

To schedule a free and confidential appointment with the licensed, clinical psychologist, call (405) 744-6415. Do not wait for a crisis to develop before you contact the EAP!

Keep Your Emergency Contact Information Current

In the event of an emergency or weather-related announcement, it is critical that OSU has your most current contact information.

If you have not already done so, please log in to your O-Key account at *https://app.it.okstate.edu/okey/index.php* and update your Emergency Contact information.

Questions? Contact the Information Technology Helpdesk, (405) 744-HELP(4357).

Insurance Terminology: Appealing a Denial

Most insurance plans provide a mechanism for appealing to their administrative board if you believe a claim was unfairly denied or the covered amount was lower than you expected.

Training Opportunities

Seminars

May 8	Exceptions to Normal Pay
May 9	How to Hire International Employees
May 10	Creating a Culture of Accountability
May 10	Create a Strong Organization
May 11	Payroll Accounting (*Full*)
May 15	Enhancing Motivation Through Coaching
May 17	Grants.gov and ERA
May 17	Making Sense of Leave
May 22	Purchasing Card Training
May 22	Air Fare Training
May 22	Basics of Discussing Performance
May 22	Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training
May 23	The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People
May 24	GCFA: Who Are They and What Do They Do?
May 25	EA Forms and Payroll Sign-Up
May 30	OSU Policies: Managing for Success
May 30	OSU Policies: Attendance and Leave

Computer Training

May 7&8	Word Level I
May 8	Dreamweaver
May 8	Outlook
May 9	PHP Level II
May 9&10	PowerPont Level I
May 14	ADA-Compliance for Websites
May 14&15	Word Level I (Rescheduled)
May 16&17	Excel Level II
May 16	PHP Level III
May 17	FrontPage (Canceled)
May 17	HTML Introduction
May 21&22	Access Level I (Full)
May 22&23	Excel Level I (Full)
May 22	Introduction to Flash

For a description of the classes, go to www.okstate.edu/osu_per/hr/training.html
Training Services, (405) 744-5374

News You Can Use!
Important Information for Employees of Oklahoma State University

Human Resources

May 2007

Appropriate Computer Use

OSU has recently encountered some serious misconduct with regard to inappropriate computer use. Misuse of computing, networking, or information is unacceptable and users will be held accountable for their actions. Serious infractions can result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Some computer abuses are a crime, (such as illegal reproduction of software protected by U.S. copyright law) and penalties can include fines and/or imprisonment.

The University computing systems, including University-owned computers, are the property of the University. No user has rights of privacy. Computer systems have a remarkable memory system which records usage. Websites visited and downloads, for example, can be tracked. In addition, the University may be notified when illegal downloads occur and the download is/can be tracked to an individual's computer.

Inappropriate computer use includes using University time and equipment for personal use. Also, State law prohibits the use of computing facilities, services, and networks in connection with compensated outside work for the benefit of organizations unrelated to the University except in connection with scholarly pursuits (such as faculty publishing activities). Computing resources are to be used only for legitimate University business.

A password should never be shared, not even with computer support personnel. No one should use the ID or password of another employee. Users are personally responsible for all activities on their User ID or computer system, including security of their own passwords.

Information must be handled with the strictest security and confidentiality standards. Unauthorized disclosure of personal/confidential information and data is a serious infraction. You should log out or lock your computer when vacating the area, even for a short time.

Personal use of any University information system to access, download, print, store, forward, transmit or distribute obscene material is prohibited.

OSU Human Resources developed this information for the convenience of OSU employees. It is a brief interpretation of more detailed and complex materials. If further clarification is needed, the actual law, policy and contract should be consulted as the authoritative source. OSU continually monitors benefits, policy and procedures and reserves the right to change, modify, amend, or terminate benefit programs at any time.

OSU Human Resources - 106 Whitehurst, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078 - (405) 744-5373

OSU Information Technology (IT) has an interim policy on their web site titled Appropriate Computer Use. The policy is applicable to all individuals using University-owned or controlled computer communication facilities or equipment. Responsibility for compliance with OSU policies occurs with usage. You can review the Appropriate Computer Use policy at *www.it.okstate.edu/policies/pol_app.php*.

Questions? Contact the IT Help Desk, (405) 744-HELP(4357).

OTRS Retirement Estimate and Estimator

Both OSU and OTRS thought it would be beneficial to develop a calculator and prepare a personalized paper estimate of OTRS retirement. OSU has revised the OTRS Retirement Estimator which was originally developed last year with Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System (OTRS). The information has been updated with the most current contributions through FY06. Remember, however, the information provided is only a non-audited estimate. OTRS alone is responsible for a final calculation at the time of retirement.

You will want to carefully review your total years of service if you have ever bought back service time from OTRS.

The OTRS Retirement Estimator is an Excel spreadsheet, available for download from the Human Resources web site, *www.okstate.edu/osu_per/*. This interactive calculator is in addition to the paper retirement estimate that will be sent through campus mail to OSU employees with OTRS membership. (Your paper *Retirement Estimate* estimates retirement income at normal OTRS retirement age [age 62 with 5 years of service] or Rule of 80/90, whichever occurs first.)

OTRS Uncapped July 1, 2007

JUST A REMINDER -- OTRS "lobase" and "hibase" caps will be removed beginning July 1, 2007. This will NOT affect any employee who joined OTRS after June 30, 1995, NOR any member of OTRS who has total compensation of less than $77,500. Only about 500 OSU employees will be affected.

If you are one of the employees affected, the uncapping means more of your OSU retirement funds will be necessary to pay the required member contributions in OTRS. And consequently less of your OSU retirement funds will go to TIAA-CREF.

Likewise, your retirement income from OTRS will increase due to the higher compensation covered by OTRS contributions and your TIAA-CREF retirement account will not increase as rapidly has it has in the past.

The *OTRS Retirement Estimator* can provide you an estimate of the effect of this change. In order to make individual projections you will want to use the information provided in the *OTRS Retirement Estimate* you receive in campus mail with the estimator provided on the web. *See related article in this issue of News You Can Use.*

Updated IRS Letter Ruling Request

A follow-up call to the Internal Revenue Service has revealed that the IRS agent working on our request is currently involved in another project. We were not given a date when we could expect review of our request.

OSU, OU and OTRS have requested the letter ruling to permit OSU employees enrolled in retirement prior to July 1, 2004, to make a one-time irrevocable election not to participate in Oklahoma Teachers' Retirement System (OTRS). If such an election is approved, employees would have a full year in which to make the election.

Benefits During the Summer

Your benefits may continue during the summer, even if you are without a paycheck. OSU continues to pay health and life premiums for faculty during the summer unless separation of employment occurs.

OSU-paid health and life premiums may also continue for staff members who are on leave without pay during the summer if the leave is at the request of, or for the convenience of, OSU.

If however, leave is at the staff member's request or convenience, then the staff member will be responsible for paying all premiums. Please remember the Office of the Bursar no longer sends out paper bills. Login to check your account and/or pay your bills at *https://bursar.okstate.edu/Login.aspx*. Or you may print your electronic bill and mail your payment.

To ensure continuous benefit coverage, please check with your department to be sure that you have continuous assignments for next year with your leave during the summer reflected with zero pay.

TIAA-CREF Assistance

TIAA-CREF representatives are available to assist you by telephone. Call 1-800-842-2776, Monday to Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Review your TIAA-CREF account selections and make changes by contacting TIAA-CREF at *www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate*.

Attend a one-on-one retirement counseling session with a TIAA-CREF Representative, Tuesdays on the Stillwater campus, in 106J Whitehurst. Schedule at *www.tiaa-cref.org/moc* or call (405) 418-2943.

Mandatory Research Compliance Training

If you conduct research with animals, human subjects, or radioactive materials, you are required to complete training. Training requirements differ depending on the compliance area. Faculty proposing to work with animals must complete the required training course by July 1, 2007, or their protocols (ACUPs) will not be approved until this training requirement has been satisfied.

Investigators proposing to conduct research involving human subjects must complete *Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative* (C.I.T.I.) training prior to their application (i.e., protocol) being reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). OSU administrators who are responsible for approving research activities involving human subjects must also complete the required training. C.I.T.I. is an online course and can be found at *http://compliance.vpr.okstate.edu/hsp/requiredtraining.htm*.

Faculty members desiring to conduct research with radioactive materials or radiation producing machines must complete an *Authorized User Application* and pass the appropriate exams. When these actions have been satisfactorily completed, the Radiation Safety Committee will review the application for approval of the project. Researchers should fill out the application and complete their training well in advance of anticipated research in order to be approved at the date research is anticipated to begin.

If you have questions about these training requirements, please visit the University Research Compliance website at *http://compliance.vpr.okstate.edu/* or call (405) 744-1676.