

Chancellor's update: Common furlough days

The following e-mail message was sent July 9, 2009, to all UW-Eau Claire employees.

TO: UW-Eau Claire Faculty and Staff

FROM: Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich

Colleagues,

You have received information from UW System President Reilly about the mandated furlough days for 2009-10. This week Human Resources is holding information sessions to answer specific questions about how they will be managed. I encourage you to attend one of the sessions.

In talking to many of you over the past few weeks I know that furloughs are not a practice that fits well with our university's commitment to service and to our students. Yet we cannot continue to demand more and more from each other with fewer resources of time and dollars. This year, more than ever, we need to look closely at all we do to make sure we are spending our time on what is most valuable.

While we all individually and collectively respond to the challenges these furloughs pose, I urge you also to consider ways that can positively create opportunities for us to communicate with the public and particularly with our immediate community. We need to communicate that UW employees are among the only public educational employees being asked to sacrifice in this environment. We need to articulate how this will have an impact on access and quality, and ultimately on cost. We need to continuously communicate the value of a UW-Eau Claire education and the need to preserve the uniqueness of our degrees as being important to our students, our alumni, ourselves and our community.

We need to keep this message in front of our fellow citizens while we build support for what will also need to be a significant effort in the future to correct the imbalances that are worsened by this environment for UW employees.

Common Furlough Days

UW System President Reilly asked each university chancellor to designate four common furlough days in each of the next two fiscal years (July 1 – June 30). All campuses will designate the day after Thanksgiving as one of those days. The three additional common furlough days will be days on which campus offices will be closed, and "non-essential" employees will record a furlough day. After consulting with the Chancellor's Cabinet, I am designating the following days as the common furlough days for UW-Eau Claire:

Friday, August 7, 2009
Friday, November 27, 2009 (designated for entire UW System)
Monday, December 28, 2009
Friday, April 2, 2010

Friday, August 20, 2010
Friday, November 26, 2010 (designated for entire UW System)
Monday, December 27, 2010
Friday, March 25, 2011

Under UW System guidelines, we are not permitted to designate an instructional day as a furlough day. Since three of these days each year fall into the period during which faculty and instructional staff (annual appointments) are under contract, faculty and instructional staff will need to identify the equivalent of three additional days for the academic year as allowed under the system guidelines. Unclassified and classified staff members will need to identify four additional days or 32 additional hours as allowed under the guidelines for each category of employment.

There will undoubtedly be events and activities scheduled for some of these dates that cannot be changed. We will need to identify personnel deemed "essential" to those activities on the above dates. The definition of "essential" will need to change depending on the nature of activities required on those days. Please notify your division heads of specific activities and personnel that are affected by the selection of these dates. Those employees who must perform official duties on those days will need to select alternative furlough times.

Thank you for your understanding and your continued sacrifices.

Chancellor Brian Levin-Stankevich, Ph.D.