What is theResource?

The purpose of this newsletter is to connect our staff and faculty with what’s happening in the Department of Human Resources. Each issue will include useful HR information, upcoming staff development opportunities and interesting features from people across campus. *theResource* will be published when there is a need to communicate HR information, events and updates. The newsletter will be posted on the HR website as well as delivered via email. If you have questions, feedback, an idea for an article, please email human-resourcestraining@georgiasouthern.edu

Your HR Team

**Paul Michaud**  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
478-5171

**Vicki Hodges**  
Benefits  
478-0854

**Fern Illidge**  
Compensation & Classification  
478-5374

**Demetrius Bynes**  
Employment  
478-5713

**Ale Kennedy**  
Organization, Development and Learning  
478-1687

**Karen Iler**  
Records & Compliance  
478-5529

Paul Michaud or Ale Kennedy  
Employee Relations

104 Southern Drive,  
Sweetheart Circle  
Statesboro, Georgia 30460

http://jobs.georgiasouthern.edu/

For detailed responsibilities of your HR Team, please view the following link:

http://jobs.georgiasouthern.edu/directory.htm
Human Resources is part of both the Georgia Southern University and Statesboro communities. Serving the campus, we are benefits, recruitment, compensation, HRIS, organizational development and learning, and employee relations experts; and we are also committed to the community, setting high standards for HR services and challenging ourselves personally and professionally.

HR is foremost a service unit! Our goal is to partner with university administrators, department heads and employees to assist them in achieving their goals and objectives. Toward this end, it is critical that HR staff advise, that we do not direct; that we serve, that we do not regulate; that we look for ways to say “yes.” Our role is to help administrators determine appropriate and permissible courses of action to achieve operational outcomes. We must share our knowledge and judgment, but without supplanting managers’ judgments for our own; we must maintain appropriate internal audit and accountability mechanisms and satisfy stakeholder requirements, but do so in the least intrusive manner possible.

I have empowered my Human Resources colleagues to say “yes” – if they can find a way to accommodate managers’ requests within existing policy and code provisions. No permission from supervisory staff is required; no internal transactional review is necessary. If regulatory or policy provisions appear to require a “no,” HR staff have been instructed to seek advice and counsel from supervisory or management staff within the HR department, cascading up to the chief HR officer. This will ensure that we explore all reasonable avenues to accommodate University needs in a manner that is open to new circumstances and that seeks continuous improvement of administrative processes. We must be prepared to recognize that sometimes existing policies or regulations simply did not envision current operational requirements when they were written, and that the policies or regulations, themselves, need to be updated, modified, or revised to accommodate an evolving workplace.

As the Chief Human Resources Officer at Georgia Southern University, it is my role to recommend to the President’s Cabinet, through the Vice President for Business and Finance, that institutional policies be modified or promulgated to promote best practices in Human Resource administration or to improve institutional efficiency or effectiveness. To support the institution’s mission, Human Resources is committed to providing a strategic framework that includes information, programs, and consultation services that empower administrators, staff and faculty to do what they do best in meeting their organizational objectives. Essential to this is our commitment to:

- Focus on people to promote a campus culture that values all employees
- Facilitate open communication
- Offer competitive, market-based compensation and a comprehensive benefits package to university employees
- Promote a learning environment for campus staff and faculty by providing professional and personal development, training, and continuing education
- Recognize and reward performance and accomplishments, and
- Maximize resources by utilizing technology to its fullest extent to improve efficiency, effectiveness, HR transaction processing, and overall service.

Contributed by Paul Michaud
Changes in Human Resources

Human Resources is proud to welcome Fern Illidge, our new Classification and Compensation Manager, Stephanie Scott, our new Organizational, Development and Learning Coordinator and Erin Shuman, our new Personnel Specialist in the Benefits Area.

In addition, The Department of Human Resources has reorganized: Ale Kennedy as the new Associate Director to Organizational, Development and Learning and Employee Relations; Samantha Melton as the new Benefits Manager, and Sara Jo Britt in her role as the new Personnel Specialist II in Benefits. Demetrius Bynes is the new Assistant Director of Employment, and Karen Iler is now the Assistant Director of Records & Compliance.

Updates & Events:

April 30 - Performance Evaluations Due to HR

May 19 - Merit Award Ceremony

May 18, 19, 20 & 21 - TIAA-CREF Appointments

May 19 - Fidelity Appointments

You can now view and register for all professional development workshops at Georgia Southern in one location.

To make an appointment with TIAA-CREF call:
1-800-842-2003
Ext. 263532

To make an appointment with Fidelity call:
1-800-642-7131 or go to:
Www.fidelity.com/atwork/reservation

New Casual Labor/Student On-Boarding Times:

Tuesdays –
8:00a until 10:00a
4:00p until 5:00p

Wednesdays -
2:00p until 5:00p

Located in the HR Training Room

University Training site can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

https://training.georgiasouthern.edu

All users can log into the site with their MyGeorgiaSouthern username/password.

If you have any questions, please contact the Organization, Development and Learning Office at 478-1687.
TRS Counseling Sessions

TRS encourages you to meet one-on-one with their experienced retirement counselors. This service is offered to all members within five years of retirement, with priority given to those within two years.

Georgia Southern has reserved May 18-20 for the one-on-one sessions.

This 50-minute session will allow you to:

- Receive individual benefit estimates.
- Receive detailed information about TRS retirement options.
- Receive more in-depth information about purchasing service.
- Ask very specific questions about your individual situation.
- Bring a guest with you to listen and ask questions.

To register, follow these easy steps:

2. Click on Workshops and Counseling on the top of the home page.
3. Under “How Do I sign up?” click on Account Management.
4. Register for and/or log in to your TRS account.
5. Click on Register for Workshop/Counseling.
6. Pick the event and time of your choice.

You will receive an automatic email confirmation.

ADP Redesign

ADP shared services has redesigned and updated the ADP portal. The design now offers more intuitive navigation to tasks, as well as more streamlined access by both standard users and for practitioners.

The goal was to enhance the usability of ADP Self Service while expanding levels of control.

Navigational changes took place on Saturday, April 24.

Also, visit the Georgia Southern ADP website for up-to-date information and training materials.

http://jobs.georgiasouthern.edu/ADP/index.htm

Dependent Verification Audit

The Board of Regents has retained Chapman Kelly, Inc. as the independent auditing firm to complete a dependent verification of our health insurance plans. All dependents enrolled in an employee’s health plan must be validated as eligible for coverage based on plan guidelines through appropriate documentation. Each person who has medical coverage on their spouse or children will receive a letter sent to their home address from Chapman Kelly explaining the process for verification by April 30.

A “no questions asked” Amnesty Phase (March 29th – April 21st) allowed employees to remove ineligible dependents without any repercussion.

The Verification Phase commenced on April 30th – June 30th and will be the documentation phase where specific paperwork will be required in order to validate covered dependents as eligible to remain on the plan. Detailed information, as well as a toll-free phone number, fax and customized web address will be included in the information you will be receiving from Chapman Kelly.

Any questions regarding eligibility need to be addressed to Chapman Kelly Dependent Verification. Frequently Asked Questions can be found on the HR website.

Do not wait. Start locating your verification documents now!
The Supervisor’s Edge

To continue to educate all Georgia Southern supervisors, The Department of Human Resources has developed the Supervisor’s Edge workshop series.

The Supervisor’s Edge will consist of workshops that focus on Compliance, Procedures, Policies, and other topics that give supervisors the Edge to supervise and manage both their employees and department at Georgia Southern.

These high-level sessions will be held once or twice a month throughout the year based on presenter availability. Presenters will vary based on the workshop topic.

Managers and supervisors are encouraged to attend all of the workshops offered in the Supervisor’s Edge workshop series. However, participants can register for individual sessions. At the completion of the program, participants will receive a certificate highlighting the workshops they have attended.

To register for Supervisor’s Edge workshops visit the University Training website at https://training.georgiasouthern.edu/courses/default.aspx The workshops will be titled Supervisor’s Edge: (workshop title).

Upcoming Supervisor’s Edge Workshops:

- April 27 - Progressive Discipline
- May 11 - FMLA & ADA
- May 20 - Workers’ Compensation & Return to Work

This program will not replace the current Management Training Series.

*Ethics Update*

Currently Georgia Southern has a 85% completion rate for the USG mandatory Ethics Assessment and Compliance Agreement. The USG is striving for a 100% completion rate for all USG schools; therefore, the Ethics training will continue to be available in GAVIEW until June 30, 2010. All full-time and part-time employees must take both the Ethics Assessment and Compliance Agreement.

If you have any questions, please contact the Organization, Development and Learning Office at 478–1687.

Regional Training Center

Georgia Southern University is one of six University System of Georgia campuses that will serve as a Regional Training Center (RTC) for the Professional Development Consortium – a product of the Regent’s Strategic Goal Six: Increase Efficiency Working as a System.

The consortium will collaborate to identify and address system-wide professional development needs. Ale Kennedy, associate director of HR for Organization, Development & Learning and Employee Relations, is the RTC leader who – along with her staff – will support and collaborate with institutions in the region. GSU will aid the several partner institutions in developing a needs assessment/gap analysis and instituting a training plan and calendar. Each of the training centers will share resources and meet quarterly to update the USG Office of Human Resources Professional Development.

The consortium has identified three main objectives:

- Continuously improve learning and organizational development functions of each institution;
- Identify, develop and execute key learning programs and system initiatives; and,
- Create a system and associated process for system-wide knowledge management.

Georgia Southern University is charged with training human resource professionals at Armstrong Atlantic, East Georgia College, Savannah State, Skidaway, Middle Georgia College, and Coastal Georgia College. The other five Regional Training Centers are: Georgia Institute of Technology, Kennesaw State University, Medical College of Georgia, University of Georgia, and Valdosta State University.
Performance Evaluations

It is that time of year again for all employees to be evaluated by their supervisors. Each Managerial/Professional and Staff employee will receive an annual performance evaluation by his/her supervisor. The Board of Regents (BOR) states that all employees shall be evaluated by their supervisor in a systematic manner at specified time intervals, but in no case less than once each year.

Performance evaluation forms need to be completed and submitted to the GSU Department of Human Resources, Attention: Gloria Lovette P.O. Box 8104, no later than April 30, 2010.

Performance evaluation forms are available on the Human Resources webpage: http://jobs.georgiasouthern.edu/

Tips for Supervisors

- **Be honest and fair in evaluating all employees.** Be certain that you as the supervisor have reviewed all of your employees in an objective and consistent manner as individuals and relative to other employees in the group.

- **Be consistent in your approach.** Do not create a situation where it appears that you create excuses for one employee while holding another employee accountable.

- **Give your comments.** A ranking or number used to rank an employee's performance is useless without a written comment.

- **Make your comments consistent with the rankings.** Do not give someone a high ranking if your comment describes a substandard performance.

- **Set goals with the employee.** Set goals for follow up and for improvement or development. A performance evaluation should motivate an employee to want to improve. The employee should feel excited about the challenges and his/her ability to meet them.

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**Pitfalls When Evaluating Employees**

**The "Halo" Effect**

"Halo" effect occurs when one factor influences ratings on all factors. Examples: An employee's work is of good quality; therefore, other ratings (such as those on promptness or work quantity) are higher than normal. Another employee is frequently absent, with the result that the ratings on other factors are usually low.

**"Cluster" Tendency**

The tendency to consider everyone in the work group as above average, average, or below average. Some raters are considered "tough" because they normally "cluster" their people at a low level. Others are too lenient. "Clustering" overall ratings usually indicates that the rater has not sufficiently discriminated between high and low levels of performance.

**Rating the Job, Not the Individual**

Individuals in higher-rated jobs are often considered superior performers to those in lower-rated jobs. This normally means that confusion exists between the performance evaluation and how the job has been evaluated.

**Length of Service Bias**

There is a tendency to allow the period of an individual's employment to influence the rating. Normally, performance levels should be higher as an individual gains training and experience, but this is not always the case.

**Personality Conflicts**

Avoid judgments made purely on the basis of personality traits. Effective, efficient employees do not necessarily agree with everything a supervisor believes in or states.
Tips for Assessing Yourself

Exempt employees are encouraged to complete and submit a self-evaluation to their supervisor prior to the performance evaluation meeting.

Self-assessments have become very popular and with good reason. Managers cannot possibly remember—as well as you can—everything you accomplished throughout the year. By asking you to provide input into your own review, it reminds your supervisor about all the good things you achieved.

By doing a self-assessment, you beat your boss to the punch on those disappointments. It is always easier to bring up those disappointments. It is always easier to bring up those parts of your performance, than to have it brought up to you.

Finally, it gives you a chance to see if you have the same expectations as your manager about how you work. If your rating does differ in some areas, it highlights the gaps and forces a discussion about how you can meet those expectations next time.

When you are checking a rating for yourself, be as objective as possible. It is tempting to rate yourself based on your intentions, rather than your results. In other words, you may feel very dedicated to the organization and to your job but what difference did you make? How much did you contribute to customer satisfaction? How did you contribute to the business goals? Did you take the lead on any change efforts?

If you do rate yourself higher than your manager does, (and incidentally, research shows that most people rate themselves lower than their manager would) consider it an opportunity to discuss why and make adjustments for next year.

A self-assessment invites you a two-way discussion about expectations and some influence over what you are rated, which is a big step forward in the world of performance management.

Questions to Ask Before Terminating an Employee

Faced with a termination, managers are typically upset and uncomfortable. They want to just "get it over with."

1. Have you followed the GSU progressive discipline process?
2. Have you been consistent?
Consistency is an important part of fair treatment. If you have consistently terminated others for the same offense for which you want to terminate this employee, you are probably going to be all right.

3. Could this termination be viewed as discriminatory?
Could the employee claim that he or she was terminated not for the reason the organization claims, but because of discrimination? ("You terminated me because I am [old, black, Muslim, gay, disabled, etc.], not because I broke a rule.")

4. Could this termination be viewed as retaliatory?
Could the employee claim that he or she was terminated for performing a protected activity? For example, making accusations of sexual harassment, or making a workers' compensation claim? If so, look at the situation carefully.

5. Is the employee pregnant?
In general, treat pregnant women the same way you treat any employee with a disability. You may not fire a woman because she is pregnant.

6. Do you have a well-documented business reason for the termination?
Generally, if you can produce a well-documented business reason for your termination—for example, poor performance—you are more likely to avoid—or win—any lawsuit.

7. Do you have supporting documentation?
Imagine yourself on the witness stand explaining that a termination was due to poor performance. Then the defense attorney produces a string of performance appraisals—signed by you—that say "satisfactory" or "good." Case closed.

8. Have you been fair?
It is necessary to evaluate both the actual legal requirements and the softer issue of fairness before terminating an employee.

9. Have you received approval from HR to terminate the employee?
It is necessary to seek prior approval from HR if you are to demote, suspend or terminate any employee.

Contributed by HRBLR
Compensation Basics
Exempt & Non-Exempt: a brief definition

All jobs at Georgia Southern University are governed by the Fair Labor Standards Act. The FLSA is a federal labor law of general and nationwide application, including Overtime, Minimum Wages, Child Labor Protections, and the Equal Pay Act. Employees whose jobs are governed by the FLSA are either classified as “exempt” or “nonexempt.” Nonexempt employees are entitled to receive overtime pay; Exempt employees are not. Public entities have been given the right to substitute overtime pay with compensatory time off. The FLSA requires overtime compensation or compensatory time off (at time and one-half) for all “hours actually worked*” over a prescribed “threshold” (typically 40 hours per week). Other jobs, while governed by the FLSA, are considered “exempt” from the FLSA overtime rules. For most employees, however, whether they are exempt or nonexempt depends on how much they are paid, how they are paid, and what kind of work they do.

When HR’s Compensation Department is considering whether to classify a position as exempt or non-exempt, there are three “tests” that are applied to each position: salary level test, salary basis test and the duties test. A department cannot arbitrarily change the exempt/non-exempt status of a position.

If you have questions regarding your position’s classification being exempt or non-exempt, please feel free to contact Fern Illidge, Manager of Compensation and Classification in the Department of Human Resources at 478-5374, or by email: fernillidge@georgiasouthern.edu.

*Example: A GSU employee works from Monday through Wednesday for a total of 24 hours. The individual takes 8 hours of annual leave on Thursday, and comes back to work on Friday for 8 hours. The person also comes in to work on Saturday for 8 hours. Assuming the person has enough annual leave, the timecard will reflect that the individual would have 48 hours of paid time. The person is not, however, eligible for overtime pay for the eight (8) hours worked on Saturday because the person does not have 40 hours of total time that she “actually worked” for the week. If the individual had come in to work on Thursday, and had prior approval to come in to work for eight (8) hours on Saturday, then the person would receive overtime pay or compensatory time off for the time worked on Saturday. In this example, the person would be paid straight pay for 40 hours.

For more information about the FLSA, please visit www.flsa.com/faq.html
Prevent Strains & Sprains

DOAS Loss Control Tip:
In 2008, 39% of all injuries nationally were related to Strains and Sprains. Georgia employees had a similar experience.

Most strains and sprains affect the back, arms, and shoulders and can be caused by: incorrect lifting, carrying, pushing, and overreaching; sitting or standing bent in an awkward position for long periods of time; poor material handling, etc. A few simple measures can help you prevent or minimize body strains and sprains. Workers often lift things that weigh too much or they lift incorrectly. The goal of safe lifting is to maintain your back’s natural posture during the lift. Your back forms three natural curves: one in the neck, the middle back, and the lower back. Maintaining these curves in your posture while lifting minimizes pressure on your discs and gives you maximum lifting strength.

No single lifting technique will apply to all situations, but the following tips will help avoid back injuries during any type of lifting and/or carrying:

- Inspect your intended path of travel for obstacles or other possible hazards.
- When carrying a load that requires two people, teamwork is essential.
- If using moving equipment, make sure it works properly to avoid straining trying to get it to work.

Alternate Dispute Resolution - Mediation

Mediation provides an option to help resolve work-related conflict. Whether a problem developed last week or over a longer period, mediation offers people an opportunity to discuss issues in a confidential atmosphere. Mediation is voluntary. Therefore, if one person chooses not to participate, mediation cannot take place.

Who are the mediators?
The mediators are faculty and staff from all areas of the University who have received training in conflict resolution techniques and the mediation process. They have no prior knowledge of the dispute and enter the process as neutral third parties. If you and the other party agree to participate, a certified mediator will be assigned by the Mediation Administrator to help open the lines of communication in a non-threatening and supportive environment.

How does mediation work?
Each participant will have a chance to speak, and the certified mediators will help clarify issues that you may wish to address. There is no time limit to this process. Mediation will take as long as needed to resolve the conflict and may include more than one session. Once the issues have been identified and discussed, the mediators will assist in developing possible solutions. If a mutual agreement is reached, the mediators will help clarify the details in writing and the document will be signed by all participants.

What Topics Are Appropriate for Mediation?
Mediation is an appropriate tool for dealing with most interpersonal and work-related conflicts, including

- Personal disputes
- Office behaviors
- Issues of respect and cooperation

Confidentiality
Matters discussed in the mediation sessions are considered confidential. The only information recorded is a statement of mediation outcome.

To inquire about Mediation contact the Mediation Administrator, at: 478-1687
Eagle Perks

The GSU Employee Perk Program (EPP) is a free service for Georgia Southern employees. The program consists of businesses including restaurants, hair salons, entertainment, tax services, retail stores, amusement parks and much more. Please feel free to contact the ODL office at 478-7120 if you have any suggestions for the EPP.

The list is updated monthly and can be found on the front page of the HR website at http://jobs.georgiasouthern.edu/

Congratulations and thank you to all Faculty and Staff for completing another successful academic year. Please remember that whether you will be on or off campus this summer, we are here to meet your needs. Enjoy the warm weather and be well.

The Department of Human Resources

May 2010

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Please continue to check the University Training Website. Classes are added daily.

https://training.georgiasouthern.edu

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