

The Southeastern Human Resources Office Newsletter

HUMAN RESOURCES HIGHLIGHTS

COMPREHENSIVE HUMAN RESOURCES SERVICES

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AUTHORIZATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR FEE WAIVERS
FOR SPRING 2004 SEMESTER

All requests for authorization to take university classes and fee waivers for qualified employees and dependents for Spring 2004 Semester will need to be submitted to the Human Resources Office **no later than the last day of late registration on January 22, 2004.** For more detailed information and required forms please visit our web site at:

(EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION AND FEE WAIVER)

<http://www.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/permissionform.html>

(DEPENDENT FEE WAIVER)

<http://www.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/depfee.html>

If you have any questions regarding authorizations to take classes or fee waivers, please contact Sue Jones at msjones@selu.edu or 549-2057. Please send the completed forms to the Human Resources Office, SLU 10799. The Human Resources Office is located on North Campus.

“START Saving Program”

The Human Resources Office can now setup payroll deductions for the Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority’s “START Saving Program”. The program is a college savings plan for children and qualifies as a Qualified Tuition Program under Section 529 of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. For enrollment and information, interested employees should contact the START Saving Program at 1-800-256-5626 or visit their web site at: <https://osfantweb.osfa.state.la.us/start5.nsf/>.

OPEN ENROLLMENT OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PLANS

The Open Enrollment period for Optional Retirement Plans (ORP) will be held in the months of November and December. All current ORP plan members may change carriers during that time, for an effective date of January 1, 2004. The current ORP carriers are ING-AETNA, TIAA-CREF, and VALIC. Employees are reminded that all change documents must be signed and submitted to the Human Resources Office no later than close of business on Friday, December 19, 2003, in order to be effective for January 1, 2004. Employees may contact the current ORP representatives listed below, or visit the Human Resources Office to complete the ORP change document.

ING-ATENA	Linda Alumbaugh	1-800-873-2161
TIAA CREF	Ken Nwoke	1-800-842-2006
VALIC	Kathy Osborne	1-800-892-5558 ext. 89070
VALIC	Jeff Shafer	1-800-892-5558 ext. 87938

NEW DENTAL PLAN OFFERED

The Southeastern Employee Advisory Committee is pleased to announce that the Crescent Dental Plan was approved for solicitation at the last meeting of the committee on September 30, 2003. Crescent representatives will be on campus for Open Enrollment of the dental and vision plans on Monday, November 3 - Friday, November 14, 2003. Employees are encouraged to meet with the Crescent representatives at this time to obtain information on the new dental and vision plans. The Crescent Dental Plan must enroll at least 25 employees in order to be approved for payroll deduction.

Schedule:

Monday, 11/3/03 - Physical Plant Break Rm, 8:00 - 4:00
Tuesday, 11/4/03 - Physical Plant Break Rm, 8:00 - 4:00
Wednesday, 11/5/03 - North Campus Bldg. B, Rm 174, 8:00 - 4:00
Thursday, 11/6/03 - North Campus Bldg. D, HRO, Rm 102A, 8:00 - 4:00
Friday, 11/7/03 - North Campus, Bldg. D, HRO, Rm 102A, 8:00 - 12:00
Monday, 11/10/03 - Fayard Hall, Rm 303, 8:00 - 4:00
Tuesday, 11/11/03 - Fayard Hall Rm 303, 8:00 - 4:00
Wednesday, 11/12/03 - Athletics, Billups, Rm 8:00 - 4:00
Thursday, 11/13/03 - Athletics, Billups Rm, 8:00 - 4:00
Friday, 11/14/03 - Teacher Education Center, Rm 2020 (new wing), 8:00 - 4:00

Employees may also enroll through the Human Resources Office. For more information contact the Benefits Office at 2057, 5655, or 5451.

U.S. SAVINGS BONDS

What a patriotic way to save! Did you know that you can buy savings bonds through payroll deduction for as little as \$5.00 per pay period. As a Southeastern Louisiana University employee you may set up an accumulative deduction for an amount of your choice. When you reach the purchase price of the

Savings Bond, the Federal Reserve Bank will issue you the bond and mail it directly to your home. What could be easier?

Current Series EE bonds are available in denominations from \$100 to \$10,000. Effective November 1, 2003, the interest rate on Series EE bonds is 2.61%. You may also purchase bonds online at www.savingsbonds.com anytime using a secure credit card transaction – a perfect way to buy Savings Bonds as gifts.

ALMOST 65?

If you are almost 65 years of age, there are important changes that may take place in your health insurance benefits. This information may apply to your spouse as well. You should contact your local Social Security Office to determine whether you are eligible for Medicare. It is recommended that you consult a Social Security Representative in the year **before** you plan to retire. There are two parts to Medicare: Part A – Hospital Benefits, and Part B – Out-Patient Benefits. Part B is an optional program, which requires a monthly premium. There are several rules associated with Medicare enrollment, one of which includes a penalty for not enrolling in Part B when first eligible. If you are eligible for Medicare, you should submit a copy of your Medicare card to the Human Resources Office in order to get the reduction of premiums.

Note: If you are still employed with the state after age 65, Group Benefits will continue to be your primary insurer. Medicare may pick up a part of the bill that Group Benefits does not pay. You will continue to pay the same premium rate you are currently paying, and your claims will continue to be handled as an active employee.

If you are a retired state employee, the Office of Group Benefits will be your secondary insurer and you will pay a reduced premium. However, in order to receive the reduced premium, a retiree must have Medicare A and B. Also, when Medicare is primary, PPO rates do not apply to incurred medical expenses. Medicare does not pay for outpatient prescription drugs.

If you are not eligible for Medicare you should contact your local Social Security Office and obtain a statement that you are not eligible for Medicare. Submit this statement to the Office of Group Benefits or the Human Resources Office.

SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE – 985-345-2178, (now at the new location of 2100 Robin Avenue, Hammond, LA.) www.ssa.gov

DEFERRED COMPENSATION AND 403B CHANGES

As a result of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, an employee may tax shelter more of their earnings into their 403b or 457 annuity accounts. Effective January 1, 2004, the new dollar limit on annual employee elective contributions for 403b accounts will be \$13,000.00 per year. In addition, an employee may elect to contribute up to \$13,000.00 per year into their Deferred Compensation Account.

\$13,000 in 2004

\$14,000 in 2005

\$15,000 in 2006

There are also special catch up provisions for persons over age 50. Employees are advised to contact their respective TSA representative for additional information.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

Orientation for new classified and unclassified University employees will be held on Wednesday, December 3rd in Room 139 of the University Center. All new employees are expected to attend this program. The program will begin at 8:30 a.m. with registration and coffee and will conclude at approximately 11:45 a.m. Participants will receive up-to-date information on federal laws affecting employment, benefits, university policies and procedures and general campus information. Invitations will be sent to new employees, with courtesy copies to their supervisors. You should also plan to attend if you missed a recent orientation or if you are a long-term employee who wishes to receive more current training in university policies. If you have any questions or plan to attend, please email Jan Ortego at jortego@selu.edu or contact the Training Section at x5435 or x5771.

PPR TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS

There will be two upcoming training programs for supervisors who are required to conduct Performance Planning and Reviews on their supervisees. An in-house, two-hour training sponsored by the Human Resources Office will be held on Wednesday, November 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. in Room 125 of the University Center. A second, more in-depth training session on the PPR process will be offered by the State Comprehensive Public Training Program on Monday, December 15th from 8:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in Room 139 of the University Center. The six-hour training is a program that can apply to a State certification program for supervisors, "Certificate in Managing People". Pre-registration and supervisory approval is required for both programs. For more information please contact Jan Ortego at x5771 or Carol Cooper at x5435.

SLU PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING QUESTIONNAIRE

Recently, a questionnaire was emailed to faculty and staff members who participated in a variety of conferences during the 2002 – 2003 fiscal year. Your responses to this questionnaire will help us to prepare for our SACS review and also to meet our Strategic Priority 3, Strategy 3.1 which calls for the university to develop and implement a coordinated plan for faculty and staff professional development. If you have not yet responded to this email, you still have time to submit the information by returning the completed questionnaire via email, fax (2308) or campus mail, to SLU 10799. Your conference/seminar participation will be entered in the People Soft Training Module, where you will be able to access it via employee self-service. If there are any other job-related seminars or certifications that are not listed on your self-service panel, please let us know by emailing Jan Ortego at jortego@selu.edu. Your cooperation in this important task is very much appreciated.

COMPUTER SKILLS COURSES

The Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP) has contracted with NETg to provide computer-based training to state agencies in Louisiana. This training is available at no charge to full and part-time

Southeastern employees. The available training includes courses in computer skills as well as professional development courses. CPTP is offering continuing education credit for the computer skills classes only, provided the proper procedures are followed. For a list of available courses, you may link through the HR website to the Civil Service, CPTP website to view the course lists. Once you have decided on a class, you will need to contact Carol Cooper at x5435 for a password and instructions on accessing the NETg training. The classes can be accessed from a home computer or if job-related, from work, with supervisor approval. This is an excellent professional development opportunity that does not require outside travel.

GA INFORMATION

The last day for GA's this semester is December 12. Employment exit check-out forms for those not returning next semester must be submitted by December 12.

Employment dates for GA's for Spring 2004 are Monday, January 12, through Friday, May 14. These are mandatory days. GA's beginning after January 12 will have their stipend pro-rated.

The minimum number of hours required is six. If students need to be considered full-time for financial aid or insurance purposes, nine hours are required.

Additional duties forms for those working during the break must be approved and submitted by December 12.

It is the responsibility of the hiring department to advise GA's of the mandatory orientation session on Monday, January 12, 2004 at 9 a.m. in UC 133 and that they must bring a Xerox copy of their driver's license, Social Security card and a check for direct deposit to orientation. International students must also bring a Xerox copy of their passport (all pages with notations), visa, I-94, I-20 and a work permit.

Criminal background checks will be performed on all new GA's. The pre-app provides consent for this background check.

Unless the students have been previously employed by Southeastern, the hiring department must complete a telephone verification of one previous employer for all new GA's, including international students, and submit it with the Recommendation of Employment.

You may submit Recommendations of Employment for the spring semester now. Indicate on the ROE the telephone number, building and room number where the student will be located, not a generic department number. Attach an application, pre-application and telephone verification for all new students.

For further information, contact Rissie Cook at 2347.