

Arbitration updates; SERB ruling

YSU will file a motion asking the Mahoning County Common Pleas Court to overturn an arbitrator's ruling concerning personal days for classified employees.

The university and the YSU Association of Classified Employees collectively bargained a contract that clearly provides for two personal days a year. The union claimed that its employees are entitled to four additional personal days, for a total of six personal days a year.

"We have studied the arbitration finding and consulted extensively and believe that the ruling is in error, and not supported by the facts or the law," said Ron Chordas, interim executive director of human resources and labor relations. "Furthermore, it sets a dangerous precedent for collective bargaining not only at YSU, but for other universities and public employers."

He added: "Quite simply, there is a principle at stake here. This ruling ignores the agreed upon contract between the university and its classified employees."

If allowed to stand, the ruling creates an ambiguity for future contract interpretation and could have significant financial implications,

costing the university hundreds of thousands of dollars.

"Given the ramifications of this case and the potential cost, it is our fiduciary responsibility to file this appeal," Chordas said. "The university and our students should not be asked to pay the price for what we believe is an erroneous decision."

In a separate case, three ACE members filed a grievance claiming that they should receive hazard pay for working with certain chemicals in the maintenance of the university's swimming pool in Beeghly Center and for transporting soiled linen from the YSU dental lab to the laundry department. An arbitrator found in favor of the university, ruling that the hazard pay statute does not apply to ACE employees.

In addition, the State Employment Relations Board has ruled in favor of the university in an unfair labor practice filed by six term contract faculty members. The faculty members filed the charge as a result of the union and university agreeing that certain benefits, such as reassigned time and sabbaticals, only applied to tenured or tenure-track faculty. SERB dismissed the case.

HR staff deserves our thanks

By Ron Chordas

It was a year ago on March 1 that I took over as interim executive director of human resources here at YSU, and the challenges have been many.

I have had the opportunity to work with a dedicated, knowledgeable staff. Regardless of the challenges that we as a department face on a daily basis, the staff has responded positively, worked to resolve issues, and been a source of inspiration.

My staff has been a valuable resource for me

for the past year, and I would like to publicly thank them for their willingness to contribute, their support, caring attitudes, and guidance.

As executive director, I often have to handle complaints regarding someone who is unhappy about HR's decisions. But there is one area in HR about which I have not received one complaint, and that's Kathy Ferguson, who oversees employee benefits.

Kathy, an invaluable member of our team, retired Feb. 28. She has handled a difficult job with professionalism, a sense of humor and a gentle kindness. She was our front line person for employees facing major emotional issues, health problems, scary diagnoses, "the bill has not been paid," "what will the future hold," etc. She has always been available for the employees, and her customer service has been exemplary. She also developed very positive working relationships with our health care providers.

We had a party for Kathy on her last day. It was bittersweet. It was great to see the campus appreciation of her 31 years of service, while at the same time knowing we would all miss her. We all wish her well in her new endeavors and look forward to seeing her again from time to time.



Ron Chordas
Interim Executive
Director
Office of Human
Resources



Bid adieu

Kathy Ferguson, center, celebrates with Connie Kocon, left, a representative from Medical Mutual of Ohio, and Janet Lukacs, healthcare consultant from Grossman and Associates, during her retirement party in Jones Hall.

Important information on changes in Payroll

By **Cindy Miller**
Administrative assistant, HR

The Banner team for Human Resources and Payroll has been working diligently to address issues and concerns since the new online system went “live” in January. Banner has changed our way of doing business.

Previously there were five pay cycles that Payroll administered; in Banner there are only two – bi-weekly and semi-monthly.

Other changes that became effective Jan. 1 were increased employee contributions for OPERS (from 9 percent to 9.5 percent), new federal and state tax rates, employee/employer shared health care deductions and the new minimum wage rate of \$6.85.

By way of the new MyYSU Portal, employees can electronically access and/or print their individual pay stubs from any computer/printer with Internet access. Computer stations are available in the Payroll Office, Maag Library, Kilcawley Center as well as departments on campus. Pay stubs will be available online for a minimum of six months after the pay date. As we move forward, we request that you verify your pay and leave balance information through the YSU Portal Self Service environment and notify either Payroll or Human Resources of any discrepancies.

The instructions on how to use the new online system are available on the YES website at <http://www.yzu.edu/yes/>.

Part-time faculty changes

A change that may affect Part-Time Faculty, ETS Faculty, 18-pay Full-Time Faculty and Graduate Assistants involves the calculation of taxes. The new system annualizes all earnings and calculates taxes upon the projected annual income. Due to this calculation method, there may be a significant increase in federal and state taxes deducted from your pay.

If you are impacted by this change, it would be advisable to fill out a new W-4 based on the federal and state semi-monthly tax charts. W-4 forms are available in the Payroll Office or you can download from the Internal Revenue website at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw4.pdf>.

Another change that impacts part-time faculty is the new pay cycle. Instead of receiving three pays over the semester, they will now receive eight semi-monthly pays. The pay dates will be on the 15th and the last day of the month (or the last workday prior to these dates). For spring 2007, the first pay of the semester was Jan. 31, and the last will be on May 15.

Classified/Hourly

Due to the two-week lag in the employee’s pay, the leave balances viewable through the YSU Portal Self Service are the balances as of the *last pay date*.

In preparation for Web Time Entry, new time sheets have been distributed to hourly employees.

One change, in particular, that we would like to bring to your attention pertains to overtime worked. If you would like to receive pay, please indicate the actual hours worked in *Overtime Pay 1.5*; if you would like to receive compensatory time (hours), please indicate actual hours worked in *Comp Time Earned*. The system will calculate the appropriate amount of hours and/or pay. For auditing purposes, please continue to fill out the overtime form indicating how you would like to be compensated and forward it to Human Resources.

Professional administrative

With the manual process, employee’s vacation and sick leave were calculated at the end of the month. With the new system, vacation and sick leave accruals are being system-calculated on a semi-monthly basis and in hours instead of days. Please be aware of the semi-monthly accrual - you may reach your maximum vacation hours earlier than anticipated.

Summer pay schedules

Summer Semester 2007 will bring a variation in faculty pay schedules depending on when faculty are scheduled to teach. Listed below are the pays for the semester.

First Six Weeks	Middle Six Weeks	Last Six Weeks	Full Semester
May 20-June 29	June 18-August 10	July 2-August 10	May 21-August 10
<i>Three pays:</i>	<i>Four pays:</i>	<i>Three pays:</i>	<i>Six pays:</i>
May 31,	June 29,	July 13,	May 31,
June 15,	July 13,	July 31,	June 15,
June 29	July 31,	August 15	June 29,
	August 15		July 13,
			July 31,
			August 15

Changes in computing life insurance

The Internal Revenue Service requires that the cost of life insurance in excess of \$50,000 be included as taxable wages on your W-2.

In the old Legacy payroll system, this was calculated at the end of the year and shown on your W-2 as additional income at the end of the year. Banner disperses this amount over every pay period rather than all at once at the end of the year.

As a result, employees will notice Medicare wages, federal tax, and state tax will be slightly higher due to imputed income being added to the gross earnings.

Retirees

Dozens of employees have retired from YSU in the past several months through the Early Retirement Incentive Program. The Office of Human Resources and the entire YSU community thank the following retirees for their dedicated service and commitment to the university:

March 1	Kathy Ferguson , <i>Human Resources</i>
February 1	Federico Garriel , <i>Facilities</i>
February 1	Rowena Greco , <i>Kilcawley Center</i>
February 1	John Seeco , <i>Computer Center</i>
January 1	Robert Ciotola , <i>Mathematics and Statistics</i>
January 1	Mary Ella Kronstad , <i>Records</i>
January 1	Linda Johnson , <i>YSU Police</i>
January 1	Frank Molnar , <i>Facilities</i>
January 1	Helene Pope , <i>Maag Library</i>
January 1	Barbara Shade , <i>Undergraduate Admissions</i>
January 1	Michael Shepherd , <i>Athletics</i>
January 1	Norma Wise , <i>Student Accounts</i>