



## HR Staff News

**September Sanderlin** was appointed the Director of Human Resources effective April 25, 2008. She is responsible for managing day-to-day departmental operations and coordinating projects, and assisting with policy and compliance activities. September will continue to supervise employee relations, training and organizational development. September has been the Associate Director of Human Resources for Organization Development for the past six years and began her career with ODU in 1997. She received an M.S. in Occupational and Technical Studies from ODU and a B.A. in Sociology from Mary Baldwin College.

**Brenda Whitehurst** is the HR Analyst/Assistant to the Vice President. Brenda has over 30 years of administrative experience at ODU and has a bachelor's and master's degree in Human Resources management

## Quality of University Life Survey

"Thank you" to all who participated in the Quality of University Life Survey. (AP Faculty – 54%, Classified – 57%, Hourly – 36%)

The next step in this initiative is to survey instructional faculty, adjunct faculty and a random sample of students in the fall. Once the surveys have been completed, the data will be analyzed and the QUL Survey Committee will conduct "town hall" meetings to share the findings with representative groups of each constituency surveyed.

The information from this initiative will be used to:

- Help determine which areas need special attention;
- Inform the new President about the QUL at ODU;
- Help shape the new strategic plan; and
- Contribute to our SACS assessment.



The following respondents were included among the winners of the prize drawings of 4 movie tickets each:

Jennifer Priest	Anita Friedman	Lisa Temple
Rachel Hunter	Grace Little	Arcelia Barcliff
Jerri Kemp	Jason Phenicie	Mary Addison
Joanne Johnson	Laurie Chapman	Laura Radford
Tammera Johnson	Michael Dean	Leigh Butler
Felecia Samuel	Vincent Smith	Jennifer Moody
Cynlithia Williamson	Alma Sanchez	Patricia Collins
Gloria Gray	Jamia Hines	William Kilmer
Mahantesh Halappanavar		

Included among the grand prize winners for the free parking decal were:

Sharalyn Weber  
Zhao Yang

## 2008 Classified Employee Performance Evaluations

The annual evaluation process will not begin until August – however – supervisors can prepare now to enjoy a smooth and effective annual evaluation experience.



Important preparations include:

- 1) Be sure all employee position descriptions have been updated and certified in PAPERS. This process includes meeting with the employee to obtain input and discuss expectations.
- 2) Be sure you are documenting employee performance at least weekly. You should note your employee's successes, any challenges faced and overcome, difficulties and how you have addressed them, how well the employee participates in the team, attendance, and so on. You should be documenting when you have communicated this information to the employee – particularly problems with performance – and how the employee is responding to your coaching.
- 3) Block time off now for completing evaluations. You may begin anytime after August 10. The deadline for submitting evaluations to HR via PAPERS will be Friday, October 24.
- 4) Finally – watch for announcement with detailed information about annual evaluations and begin immediately by asking your employees to prepare their self evaluations.

In the past, we have occasionally permitted managers to submit overall ratings when evaluations were not completed on time – so the employee's pay increase was not delayed. *This year we will not do that.* This year, if an evaluation has not been submitted to HR via PAPERS (with ALL the required fields completed and any required attachments), *the employee will not receive his/her pay increase on time.* Supervisors and reviewers will be accountable to the employee.

We will publicize this information again in August and in the detailed evaluation instructions – and we hope that all supervisors will plan for this process NOW – so that employees' pay increases will not be delayed.

## Gift Cards Discontinued

The following notice was issued by the Finance Office:

*Effective immediately, gift cards will not be used for Employee Recognition purposes. Supervisors and departments wishing to recognize and reward employees for their service and efforts may do so by cash or leave bonuses, not through gift cards or gift certificates.*

Contact the Office of Finance if you have any questions about the use of gift cards or gift certificates.

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## HAPPY SUMMER VACATION!

As we head into the time when everyone is looking forward to summer vacation, it may be a good time to review some basic guidelines regarding leave usage.



- While employees have the right to request and use accrued annual leave, they are also subject to department procedures for requesting that leave. Some departments require several weeks notice when an employee is requesting a full week of leave. Some departments have “black out” times when employees know, in advance, that because of the business need of the department, they may not take annual leave during that period. Supervisors are expected to administer these guidelines consistently and with reasonableness.
- It is hoped that supervisors will support employees in their efforts to balance home and work life by cheerfully approving leave requests and encouraging employees to plan time away from work.
- Employees must have leave “on the books” in order to take vacation time (annual leave, personal leave, recognition leave, overtime leave or compensatory leave).
- School assistance and volunteer service leave is available to classified employees and is permitted for very specific activities. This type of leave must be requested in advance and normally the employee using this type of leave is required to provide written documentation verifying the activity.
- While employees are on approved annual leave, supervisors should not contact employees unless an emergency provides no other viable option.

## Did You Know?

In a recent article in the *Virginian Pilot*, it was reported that six percent of U.S. bosses say they have fired an employee for cursing. Cursing was the most frequently cited etiquette offense that bosses said led to their firing someone, followed by excessive gossip, drinking on the job, leaving the office without telling anyone and making too many personal phone calls.



As a state agency, Old Dominion University has a policy of zero-tolerance for “threatening or coercive” behavior. The Standards of Conduct policy has listed “coercive or threatening behavior” as a Group III level offense – which may warrant termination the first time the offense is committed. Obviously, any type of threatening or coercive behavior violates the ODU Code of Ethics and the customer service standards in our position descriptions. Internal customers include our colleagues, supervisors and those we supervise!

It may be helpful to understand that cursing or yelling at another person out of anger or frustration may be interpreted as coercive even if the offending employee is not consciously trying to get the other employee to do something (or stop doing something). The act of yelling at another in and of itself may fit the description of “coercive or threatening.”

Most people would agree that if someone says that they will do a certain thing if the other person does or does not do something – that a threat has been issued. But there are other forms of equally threatening behavior that may seem more subtle. Some examples include:

- Moving or leaning into another’s personal space especially when the two people are disagreeing;
- Standing over a seated employee when speaking loudly or in disagreement;
- Behaving in a way that colleagues cannot predict our “mood.” This often results in concern (fear) about talking with and/or avoiding giving us work assignments;
- A pattern of inappropriate or angry responses followed by apologies – and then repeating the behavior.

The purpose of the progressive discipline system at ODU is to improve performance or change behavior. If we yell or scream at another, use cursing/offensive language, slam a door in anger or frustration, over-react emotionally to a situation or threaten another person in some way – it IS expected that we will apologize and not repeat the behavior. We are accountable for the behaviors and our behavior may be addressed through disciplinary action.

If you know you are stressed and prone to respond inappropriately at work – you may want to consider accessing your EAP benefit. This is a great resource for talking with someone about alternative ways to respond to the normal stresses of everyday life – as well as to the extraordinary situations you may face. The services are totally confidential – and up to four sessions with a counselor are FREE! Call toll free (1-866-725-0602) to get information or arrange to talk with a counselor.

## Commuting Alternatives

As we watch gas prices increase at the pump, we do not need to feel helpless. There are a few options that may be available to employees to help reduce the impact of the price of getting to work. One option is sharing rides to work. Parking Services has a plan that may work for you. For more information, go to: [www.nuride.com](http://www.nuride.com).



In addition, where business necessity is served, employees and supervisors may want to consider alternate work schedules and/or telecommuting options. Alternate work schedules and telecommuting are not available to all employees and they are guided by specific policies. Approval must be obtained in advance and forms must be completed and placed on file in HR prior to use of these options. To review these policies, go to the HR webpage at:

<http://www.odu.edu/af/humanresources/policies/telecommuting.htm>

Contact Human Resources for additional information about these possibilities.

## Benefits Connection

### Tuition Assistance Program Deadline – Fall 2008

The **Fall 2008** session deadline for all tuition assistance programs administered by the Department of Human Resources is **Friday, August 1, 2008**. **Completed application and proof of registration must be delivered to the Department of Human Resources by 5:00 p.m.**

The fall tuition assistance programs are for classified, hourly, full-time faculty, full-time faculty administrators and their eligible dependents and spouses. Please visit the Human Resources’ web page for additional information about the programs. <http://www.odu.edu/af/humanresources/benefits/>.

Information, applications and related forms may be obtained from the Human Resources’ Forms page. <http://forms.odu.edu/browse.php?cat=4>



If you have questions after you read the information, please call the Benefits Office at 3-4237.