

**Response to Staff Senate Recommendation  
to the VP of Administration & Finance**

On November 12, 2021, I received the Staff Senate recommendation seeking the following action:

*Recommendation: Grant Holiday Leave to Full Time PIN and Contingent II staff for Tuesday, December 21 and Wednesday, December 22 to allow staff a couple extra days of winter break without the need to be connected and available.*

*Basis: This recommendation benefits **all staff**, no matter their classification. For any office with deadlines or those that cannot avoid working prior to the break, accommodations should be given to those staff members to use the leave at a more convenient time. In order to not penalize anyone in a pre-approved leave status, those employees should be able to change their request to use for different dates.*

Response: I appreciate the Staff Senate recommendation and their support of staff needs. The University established that the 2021 Holiday leave begins on Thursday, December 23, 2021 and will re-open campus on Monday, January 3, 2022.

After researching the current leave policy, leave data of PINS and CII's, all staff types and classifications, operational unit impact, and other USM institution leave plans for that same period, in lieu of additional Holiday Leave, SU will implement Liberal Leave on Monday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, and Wednesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> for employees currently scheduled to work those days.

While the campus will remain open and operational, Liberal Leave will allow certain employees flexibility to use their available personal or annual leave with prior notification but without required preapproval from their supervisor. Additionally, for those employees identified as critical to certain operations, prior notification to and approval by the supervisor to use their available personal or annual leave will still need to be made, as soon as possible, to ensure campus needs are met. This will also prevent the potential loss of wages for those employees who do not accrue leave.

I believe this action supports the Staff Senate's goal and at the same time fulfills the operational needs of the campus before the Holiday leave period begins. An announcement with this information will be distributed to the campus community shortly. Your support of this action is appreciated.