Staff Assembly Town Hall Questions
for Division of Finance and Administration Departments/Services

Here are questions and answers from the Staff Town Hall on March 26, 2019. October 2019 updates to the document are noted in *italics*. This transcript was edited lightly for clarity.
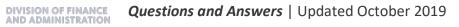
1	There have been rumors that those who work at the Downtown Campus Center will have to pay for parking. Is this true?	**Update:** *As of October 2019, the university and the City of Merced are working on details about dedicated parking in the garage adjacent to the Downtown Campus Center. The city is updating parking maps in the surrounding area. We expect these details to be finalized in spring 2020.* When we came to the DCC we communicated that the parking and pay structure would be assessed in 2018, and that is what we are engaged in now. As part of developing a strong partnership with the City of Merced, while public parking is free to the general public, it comes at a cost to the city and the parking garage was built and is maintained at a significant cost to the City of Merced. The University of California, Merced, in order to be a good partner to the City, agreed to pay for a portion of those costs, acknowledging we would have a significant footprint and impact to public parking in the area. As a result, we are currently paying the City of Merced approximately $70,500 a year, and are looking at proposals for parking passes in order to recoup a portion of that cost.
2	**Why should staff who work at DCC have to pay for parking in a free city public structure?**	The Facilities Use Agreement between the City of Merced and the University of California Board of Regents provides exclusive use of 125 parking spaces in the parking structure. Usage is Monday thru Friday from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. During those times, the parking structure is not public parking. The cost to UC Merced is $70,500 annually.
3	**The previous vice chancellor had said paying for parking would not happen to those who work downtown.**	**Update:** *As of October 2019, the university and the City of Merced are working on details about dedicated parking in the garage adjacent to the DCC. The city is updating parking maps in the surrounding area. We expect these details to be finalized in spring 2020.* You may remember that our previous VC, Veronica Mendez, said in a DCC newsletter, dated Jan. 31, 2018 and titled "Your Download on Downtown," that while there would be no parking fee for DCC occupants and permits would not be issued when we moved in, that parking fees would be re-evaluated during the next parking permit cycle in fall 2018. That is where we are now. We are in the re-evaluation period.

4	If parking will be charged, does that mean that there will be more security in the garage? There has been vandalism against cars parked in the structure.	The Merced Police Department is responsible for patrolling the parking structure. We suggest you report vandalism or other crimes to Merced Police and the UC Merced Police Department. A UC Merced officer is available in the lobby of the DCC during normal working hours.
5	If we are paying for parking in the structure next to DCC, is it no longer public?	*Update: In July 2019 the City of Merced marked parking spots for UC Merced on the second and third floors of the parking garage adjacent to the Downtown Campus Center. The signage indicates parking permits are required during normal business hours. As of September 2019 the university and the city are still finalizing details of UC Merced dedicated parking. During this time, enforcement will not be in effect. We will send out campus notification well in advance of any changes taking place. In the meantime, DCC staff may continue parking in the spaces except those reserved for West America Bank.* The 125 parking spaces designated for UC Merced are not public between 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday thru Friday. We are working with the city in terms of putting signage that it is UC space during normal business hours.
6	It seems like managers (i.e., directors, assistant directors, etc.) all over campus and at all levels are continuing to advance to the next level (directors to assistant deans, assistant directors to associate directors, etc.) while those below them continue to stagnate (coordinators, advisers, etc.). Can you explain how this is equitable? Particularly when those who are stagnated ask about reclassification and are told not to pursue it when the managers clearly did and were recognized. At many institutions there are advancement positions posted for internal hire only and advertised to those in the institution. Is there a mechanism for advancing within the institution here? I rarely see internal positions at UC Merced. Why?	We have an internal process about promotional activities. The University of California Office of the President recognized this need. PPSM20, a UC-wide policy, was revised in 2018 with the goal of fostering career development. On rare occasions that provision was used initially, but we are revisiting it because it was not drafted well and we want to ensure it can be universally applied. We are vetting an improved draft so we can formalize it and publicize it for broad campus use. Employees can ask for their classification to be reviewed at any time. We recommend the employee initiate the request with their direct supervisor.
7	How can staff look for opportunities for upward and lateral mobility?	*Update: In April 2019, Kevin Reyes was hired as Talent Development Manager. For more information regarding training and development resources, visit the HR website. The*

		site has great resources, such as UC Learning Center and LinkedIn Learning.
		We just extended an offer to a training and development manager. We have been hearing this for some time and we agree with the need. We have a dedicated resource now. In the Division of Finance and Administration, initiatives and big projects are a great way for staff to get supervisory experience.
8	**Which unit on campus is responsible for ensuring all divisions have accurate organizational charts? A number of divisions appear to not have any or they are out of date. How can staff navigate the hierarchies of this public university if org charts are not available?**	There is not a policy that requires a department to keep an updated organizational chart, but it is required by Human Resources in order for them to complete certain personnel transactions classification and reclassification. We feel it is the responsibility of the departments to maintain an org chart, and it's a great business practice. Some departments have org charts created and maintained as part of the services agreement with the Administrative Coordination Team.
9	**What is the policy of telecommuting/working from home? Some staff are gone every Friday or Monday and having been doing it for years. How is it fair to all staff?**	While Human Resources provides guidelines, the decision to approve rests with supervisors and division heads. Not all positions or jobs lend themselves to telecommute/work from home arrangements. We updated the flexible work schedule policy recently. Forms and information are on the [Employee and Labor Relations website](#). We encourage engagement on this topic.
10	**Can I work from home when are recovering from surgery?**	If there is documentation putting an employee on leave for a medical absence, they would not be allowed to perform their work responsibilities until they are released by their physician. There are labor laws and UC policies that provide these protections. For more information visit the [Employee Benefits section](#) of the HR website, or contact your supervisor if you have questions.
11	**Chancellor Leland sent a campus message a year or so ago about how the campus was facing an $18 million deficit. What is the current budget situation and how could this impact current staff and any growth beyond the recent workforce planning?**	*Update: The [2019-2020 campus budget](#) is available for review.* Over the last several years, yes, we've had a central deficit between $13 million and $15 million. We are still in the process of finalizing the 2020 budget. We have measures we are putting in place to address it and lower it. We do have campus approval to bring in approximately 126 positions over the next three years, that were identified and approved, that address our new buildings coming online as well as our operations. That is incremental or additional to current staffing levels.

12	Employee attrition has been a major issue in some of the divisions. Has there been anything done to identify pain points from exit interviews with outgoing employees and correct them?	*Update: Human Resources has reported quarterly data to vice chancellors. The annual report and assessment for a comprehensive plan is scheduled for early 2020.* We've made significant progress on exit interviews. We began them starting January of this year, 2019. We have a 70 percent response rate, which is higher than any other UC campus. We anticipate reporting to be quarterly to our executive leadership for responses in their units. Also, a campus report. We can then work with leadership with better information to have a conversation about attrition rates.
13	I have noticed a trend on campus where we are hiring more chiefs of staff and a few of them were appointed/promoted without an interview. Our campus is doing a disservice to staff when only a chosen few keep getting opportunities for advancement. HR is another department where people were promoted as the Chief Public Relations Officer was leaving for another institution. It's nepotism at its finest. We do not have policies on acting vs. interim appointments. How can we rebuild the trust that has been lost because of these practices?	We have an internal policy about promotional activities. UCOP recognized this need. PPSM20 was updated to include the promotion provision. On rare occasions, that provision was used initially, but we are revisiting it because it was not drafted well and we want to ensure it can be universally applied. We are currently vetting an improved draft of that so that we can formalize it and publicize it for broad campus use. Employees can ask for their classification to be reviewed at any time. We recommend the employee initiate the request with their direct supervisor.
14	What does "calibration" mean with respect to performance appraisals and merit?	To support equitable application of appraisal ratings, Human Resources has incorporated a calibration review into the appraisal process. Calibration gives managers in an organization the opportunity to discuss and review consistent application of appraisal ratings.
15	HR's org chart is published but hard to find, so it would be helpful to have HR lead in this area and make this transparent.	*Update: At the time of original organizational chart placement, the location was deemed logical and made sense for open and intuitive location. However, in following up on this concern, we agree we have an opportunity to improve placement and facilitate an easier search location of the Human Resources organizational chart for our site users. The organizational chart* is now here*. We hope you will find this more helpful for future Human Resources organization chart searches.*
16	What is the current turn-around time for reclass requests?	*Update: This will vary based on many factors, such as the extent of changes from the previous position duties and responsibilities, and the revised applicable current duties and responsibilities. A review for reclassification consists of, among other things, reviewing former and new*

		documentation and can include in-person conversations that would include key stakeholders familiar with the duties and responsibilities for the position of request (supervisor, manager, employee, etc.). *As Class and Compensation analysts review and work on a reclassification, they may need to wait on the client requestor or other key information input providers to provide necessary information, clarification, and/or documentation before they can proceed or continue with their review. With that said, the average turnaround time for completion of reclassification requests in 2018-19 averaged 48 business days, and of that amount the average time for Class and Compensation's portion of time was 25 business days. This was a significant improvement from 2017-18.* *Improvements in throughput of classification and reclassification requests are a priority for Human Resources. With a rapidly growing campus, Human Resources' Class and Compensation team received and completed a record number of requests for classification and reclassification in 2018-19, and we anticipate a record volume of requests in 2019-20. We look to leverage new capabilities from system and process modernizations to help inform our understanding of where opportunities to create additional efficiencies exist. Significant improvements ahead will not simply be a matter of Human Resources becoming more efficient in isolation. Future improvements will necessitate a greater level of consultative partnership between Human Resources and our client partners.*
17	**After being encouraged to take professional development here, I found many do not even consider it when deciding on promotions. It seems is not valued. How will professional development, coaching/mentoring be counted? If it's on Halogen or UC Path, will this be checked by those making decisions?**	*Update: Courses that are completed and recorded using the UC Learning Management System (LMS) are captured in the employee's LMS record/transcript. Employees are encouraged to highlight their development activities in their annual Summary of Accomplishments. Continued development is an element of job mastery and continuous learning competency. Professional development also may be identified on a resume by employee candidates to highlight their continuous learning and development.*
18	**What can be done to correct where favorites have already been inappropriately picked for jobs, without recruitment for which they are unprepared, and issues are arising due to lack of experience?**	*Update: Whether it's a recruitment, reclassification, or waiver of recruitment, a candidate/employee is required to meet the minimum qualifications of the position. However, the University has protocols to address allegations of unfair hiring practice through the Campus Compliance Office.* *Supervisors are responsible for effectively managing the performance of their staff. If the performance of others is*

		impacting your ability to perform your job effectively, be empowered to communicate these challenges to your supervisor. Your supervisor may have helpful recommendations/suggestions for addressing the situation. *Additionally, Human Resources is currently performing work to develop a 360 feedback model for our campus. 360 feedback may be an effective method for addressing skill gaps.*
19	**Have you ever considered 360 degree reviews of the managers? Staff have performance appraisals but often managers need to be reviewed, too.**	*Update: Yes, Human Resources is currently performing research on best practices for 360 feedback. The goal of a 360 program is to provide managers and supervisors with awareness in areas that need attention and development.*
20	**Earlier, HR was referenced as a resource for advancement. If an employee has spoken to their management regarding advancement and have not received support, who in HR would the employee reach out to?**	*Update: While Human Resources is always available to consult with employees, employees are encouraged to first engage with their divisional management prior to seeking support from Human Resources. Human Resources has found that employees often don't take advantage of their internal division management support. Every supervisor on campus reports directly to another supervisor/manager in the division who you could consider speaking to about any significant topic of concern.* *With this option, once you have provided your own supervisor opportunity to reasonably respond to a concern, we would advise it is appropriate to escalate to your supervisor's supervisor if you feel the issue is important enough to you. This can be repeated at progressively higher division management levels as an employee weighs the importance of a given issue to themselves.* *However, if you or another employee would like to seek more understanding from Human Resources at any time on any topic of interest or concern, then please feel free to reach out directly via email at hr@ucmerced.edu.*
21	**How many people do you have to supervise before you can move up to supervisor? I have a lot of student employees. How many can equal one FTE so I can become a supervisor with a salary increase?**	*Update: There are many variables that go into determining a supervisor classification that precludes being able to respond appropriately to this question without further information. In reality, the answer is guided by the specific details of a given situation, and how the details match up to a variety of technical guidelines (including those from the U.S. Department of Labor). Generally, the majority of our represented and non-represented staff position classifications allow for the assignment to lead (supervise) students without*

		being classified in a supervisor title. With additional specific understanding of a particular circumstance, your Human Resources Class and Compensation analyst (*comp@ucmerced.edu*) would be able to review and provide back appropriate guidance.
22	**Is there an equation for how supervising students counts toward a full FTE?**	***Update****: Similar to the response to Question No. 21, more information about the specific situation would be needed. There is a detailed calculation of total hours per week on a regular, ongoing basis. There is significant variability of student hours, and there are other basic exclusions that must be considered. Your Human Resources Class and Compensation analyst (comp@ucmerced.edu) would be able to review and provide back appropriate guidance.*