

Instructional Faculty Support Resource Page

OU-AAUP Chapter Contacts

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- Stephanie Miller, IF Coordinator OU-AAUP, navigate1999@hotmail.com
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Legal Resources

- Marc Mezibov with Mezibov Butler, Cincinnati
<https://www.mezibov.com/?npcmp=dir:local:3357928:45202>
- Chris Jenkins with Minnillo & Jenkins – he is apparently married to a University of Cincinnati professor who is in the faculty union there, <https://www.mjbankruptcy.com/>
- David Mann with Mann & Mann Law, Dublin, <https://www.mannandmannlaw.com/>
- Don Mooney with Ulmer & Berne LLP, <https://www.ulmer.com/>
- Bennett Allen with Cook & Logothetis LLC, Cincinnati,
<https://www.employmentjusticelaw.com/Attorneys/>

Unemployment Benefits

- If you were issued a non-renewal, you should be eligible for Ohio unemployment benefits next year when your contract ends. The key is to apply immediately after you stop working. <https://unemploymenthelp.ohio.gov/>
 - When AAUP rep emailed and asked, they received the following answer:

Question: Some of the faculty who are being laid off around the state are receiving a "terminal year." This means that they will have one additional year of employment, but then will be fully terminated from their position at the end of that year. Will these faculty be eligible for unemployment benefits after that terminal year?

Answer: It would depend on the circumstances at the time they file for unemployment benefits. If they are unemployed through no fault of their own, they meet the weekly eligibility requirements when they file regarding able, available, and actively seeking work, and they have sufficient weeks and wages to establish a claim at the time, then they may be eligible, however there is no determination of eligibility until a claim is filed.

What are OU's "Transition" Support Resources as President Nellis described in his university wide letter? Below is an email drafted by a group of Instructional Faculty and the reply given by an OU HR representative.

Email Sent: Dear University Human Resources,

On behalf of the 53 colleagues who were recently notified their contracts will not be renewed after May 15, 2021, and for at least 13 colleagues who had their last day of employment at Ohio University on May 15, 2020, we are writing to seek information and clarity.

The most recent email sent by President Nellis on March 15, 2020, regarding the personnel reductions stated that OU has partnered with an external organization for "transition support." We ask for clarification on this matter:

- *Why is an outside partner needed for this "transition support" when OU has an entire dedicated HR team?*
- *What is the cost associated with hiring this external organization?*
- *Would that cost be equal to one or more personnel salaries of dedicated OU employees?*
- *What is the scope of support provided, aside from help revising CVs?*
- *When and how will faculty access this "transition support"?*

Faculty will need to start utilizing the transition support resources soon if they expect to have a plan by the time their employment ends.

On the landing page of the HR website, a clear and direct link to rules, regulations, and resources for classified employees is available, explaining their employment status, furloughs, and options for SharedWork Ohio (voluntary layoff aversion program), as well as information on reinstatement. Could you direct us to a similar weblink for recently dismissed faculty? 53 state-employed educators who received their non-renewal letters will be looking for similar information, but when searching the HR website, such information is not available. Are we not publicly-employed educators serving the public, and thus deserving of similar resources and clear information? Can you explain why there is no mention of rehire, reinstatement, or alternative employment options (part-time contracts) for dedicated faculty? Many of these faculty member have been OU employees for decades and deserve at least an explanation as to why these resources or options are not available for them.

As explained by President Nellis and Provost Sayrs, these faculty reductions were due to the budget shortfalls that were compounded by the pandemic. Everyone has feared this reduction in personnel since March 2020, and many faculty have been living with this fear for months, based on statements from

some deans as well as the notices given to many of our colleagues last May. Why wasn't there a plan for how HR would support OU faculty who would not be renewed?

We would like to thank HR for their efforts in launching the Excel professional development peer learning program. At this time of planned layoffs, however, would there not be a more pressing need for other programs, such as job seeking, networking, and filing for unemployment insurance? Could there be focused programs/webinars for faculty and staff about how to offboard

Instructional faculty urgently need information on eligibility for unemployment benefits. Can full-time faculty collect regular unemployment upon separation from OU? Are there any resources for unemployed educators in the CARES Act? Information on unemployment should also be conveyed to the instructional faculty whose last day was May 15, 2020.

Non-renewed faculty should also be made aware of the specific services offered through the EAP. They should be apprised of the deadline for contacting the EAP provider in order to secure transitional services post-separation. This is urgent for those who just had their last day.

In short, we request clarification on the following:

- *What are the transition resources for faculty?*
- *Where are the resources clearly described, and how do our colleagues access them?*
- *Are there or will there be **any resources directed to retaining** these dedicated employees within Ohio University?*

We await a timely reply, in hopes of clarification so that we can communicate this vital information to colleagues with positivity and encouragement. As they work through their terminal year, they deserve to feel supported by this institution to which they have given so much.

Sincerely, Instructional Faculty,

Stephanie Miller

Patty Stokes

Christina Jones

Reply: Christina, Patty, and Stephanie:

Thank you for your recent correspondence and the opportunity to answer your questions.

- Why is an outside partner needed for this “transition support” when OU has an entire dedicated HR team?

Providing one-on-one support to transition to careers outside of OHIO isn't a service that Human Resources currently offers; we wanted to ensure a high level of service that would meet the needs of the faculty and staff who are affected by recent reductions. We chose an outside

partner to ensure we had the specialized expertise and sufficient capacity to ensure that all affected employees could receive individualized support.

- What is the cost associated with hiring this external organization? Would that cost be equal to one or more personnel salaries of dedicated OU employees?

The costs associated will depend on the number of individuals who participate in the services. That number is currently unknown, so I am unable to provide a cost at this time.

- What is the scope of support provided, aside from help revising CVs?

The services are personal, individualized and will continue free of charge to affected faculty and staff until they secure another position. Our faculty will be matched with a job coach who will provide personalized guidance at all points during the job search such as self-branding, networking, interviewing, and salary negotiation. Additionally, we chose a partner with specific expertise in assisting faculty; many of our partner's job coaches were faculty members at other points in their careers.

- When and how will faculty access this "transition support"

Affected faculty will receive information about these services from the Provost's Office. Those interested will be directed to contact UHR@ohio.edu to sign up and expect to be contacted by a job coach within a week.

- What are the transition resources for faculty? Where are the resources clearly described, and how do our colleagues access them? Are there or will there be any resources directed to retaining these dedicated employees within Ohio University

Affected faculty and staff are encouraged to reach out to their HR Liaison for support and assistance in understanding and navigating the benefits available to them. A list of HR Liaisons by planning unit is available [here](#).

There are a variety of online resources that affected employees may choose to access. The Faculty Handbook provides pertinent information on notice periods, pay, and benefits. They may also find UHR's [benefits website](#) valuable. Faculty and staff also may leverage the Professional Development Pathways program and its wide array of courses, included a vast Skillsoft library, that may help will their job search and relevant skills. More information can be found [here](#). I hope you find this information helpful.

Sincerely,
Nick



OHIO | HUMAN RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY

University Human Resources

Nick Wortman

Director, HR Services

HR Liaisons by planning unit

Apply filter to table

Unit/Dept	Liaison	Email	Phone
Advancement	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Athletics	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
College of Arts & Sciences	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
College of Business	Suzanne Durst	dursts@ohio.edu	3-9875
College of Communication	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
College of Education	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
College of Engineering	Suzanne Durst	dursts@ohio.edu	3-9875
College of Fine Arts	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
College of Health Sciences & Professions	Suzanne Durst	dursts@ohio.edu	3-9875
College of Medicine	Brenda Noftz	noftz@ohio.edu	3-1744
Diversity & Inclusion	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
Finance & Administration: Facilities	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: Finance	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: HR	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: Logistics (Printing, Moving and Mail)	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: OIT	Rich Schmaltz	schmaltz@ohio.edu	3-1646
Finance & Administration: OUPD	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: Parking & Transportation	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Finance & Administration: University Planning	Vickie Wortman	wortmanv@ohio.edu	7-1436
Graduate College	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
Honors Tutorial	Rich Schmaltz	schmaltz@ohio.edu	3-1646
Library	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
Unit/Dept	Liaison	Email	Phone
Office of the President	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
Provost	Suzanne Durst	dursts@ohio.edu	3-9875
Regional Higher Education	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
Research and Creative Activity	Eva McConnell	mcconnee@ohio.edu	3-1619
Student Affairs	Rich Schmaltz	schmaltz@ohio.edu	3-1646
University College	Rich Schmaltz	schmaltz@ohio.edu	3-1646
University Communication and Marketing	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624
Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Affairs	Adam Pergram	pergram@ohio.edu	3-1624

Other HR info:

- EAP Employee Assistance Program 18002276007 for in the moment counseling and information about finding a local mental health professional, you have 30 days to access after employment.
- STRS Retirement Info 18882277877 or www.strsoh.org

Alumni and Student Groups, Media about Non-renewals/ Faculty Layoffs

- #SaveOurProfs student-run Twitter Account
- My{OHIO}is Alumni run website www.myohiois.org

In the future, if you have a meeting with your chair about your employment status

- If you desire AAUP representatives to be present, please contact us and let your chair know that you will be including us in the call. We can take notes, record the conversation, and be on hand to answer questions and raise points as needed.
- In your meeting, state your wish to record the conversation and ask for consent to do so. If no consent is given, then take detailed notes and then send them to the chair to certify that they accurately reflect the conversation. Feel free to copy Loren and Julie on that communication if you wish.
- Ask for clarification about a terminal year. You are due that if you've been in your position for longer than three years.
- Ask for a detailed list of any university-provided offboarding resources like employment services, guidelines or rules regarding rehire, employee assistance programs, etc.
- You are also entitled to receive a detailed written explanation for your non-renewal. I've copied the relevant language from the handbook further below.