WISCONSIN
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

To: Vice Chancellors and Deans

From: Robert Cramer, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration
Patrick Sheehan, Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer

Date: May 4, 2024

Re: Update on Position Cap Implementation

Colleagues,

In December 2023, the UW System Board of Regents approved a legislative agreement between the Universities of Wisconsin and state legislative leadership that has since helped move forward several critical priorities for the Universities of Wisconsin, including UW-Madison, such as the release of pay raises for employees and the approval of funding for critical capital projects. The agreement was a compromise, and as part of the agreement the Universities of Wisconsin committed to implementing a system-wide cap on the number of positions funded either by GPR or program revenue as of January 1, 2024, with a set of exemptions for positions with specific focuses or funding sources.

Because the position cap applies to all campuses, we have been working with the Universities of Wisconsin to determine how to implement it, using shared and consistent definitions.

In relation to implementation on our campus, our goals and priorities for the position cap are as follows:

- Meet both the spirit and letter of the compromise agreement.
- Provide clear authority to Deans and Vice Chancellors to make decisions within their individual position caps.
- Establish a central pool of vacancies for reallocation to strategic priorities.
- Minimize administrative burden associated with managing compliance with position cap.

This memo provides information designed to support the achievement of our goals; additional information will follow.

What positions are subject to the cap?

As noted above, the position cap applies to positions funded by GPR or program revenue.

The position cap also has a series of exemptions, including positions in the following categories:

- Faculty and instructional staff,
- Positions that spend 75% of time working directly with students and/or patients,
- Student employees,
- Positions necessary to support subsequently enacted state or federal compliance mandates,
- Research and outreach positions funded 75% or more by gift/grant/contract, and
- Other positions funded 100% by gift/grant/contract.

Once finalized, MBO and OHR will provide school, college, and division leadership with more detailed definitions for these exemptions as part of providing individual S/C/D position cap reports. These definitions are shared across all the Universities of Wisconsin campuses and, to ensure reporting integrity, cannot be edited or adjusted.

What is our current position cap status?

In the coming days, the Madison Budget Office (MBO) and the Office of Human Resources (OHR) will provide school, college, and division (S/C/D) leadership with a report that outlines UW-Madison's overall position cap and the separate school, college, and division position cap status.

The position cap, as defined in the agreement with the legislature, will be calculated in the same manner as the University of Wisconsin System Position Report. Universities of Wisconsin has provided each UW campus with its campus-wide position cap, subject to the same rules and exemptions contained in the agreement. UW-Madison's individual S/C/D position caps are based on authorized positions active as of January 1, 2024, and do not have any connection to allocated positions as part of budgeting or PlanUW processes.

Additional guidance will be provided to HR teams to support the appropriate categorization of all positions hired since January 1, 2024 - whether included in the cap or excluded - and if so, which exemption(s) apply.

Can vacant positions be filled? What about hiring following resignations?

Hiring for exempted positions noted above is not affected by the position cap and may continue.

For positions not clearly exempted in the list above, S/C/Ds should hold on additional hiring as we finalize guidance and issue allocations to units. Recruitments that are in process do not need to be halted, but units may wish to delay offers at this point.

How will FTE be identified and allocated to support strategic priorities?

We will be establishing a pool of vacancies over the next several months to ensure that positions are available for strategic priorities. This will be accomplished by setting individual S/C/D position caps and communicated to vice chancellors and deans. Regular reports on the S/C/D status towards the position cap will be distributed.

Can we hire the staffing we need for our summer programming?

A number of units are planning for summer activities and programs. The staffing for these can be a mix of students and part-time or full-time staff. Recognizing these unique summer staffing needs which may require more immediate guidance, you are encouraged to reach out to Patrick Sheehan in the Office of Human Resources for guidance and support.

When can we expect additional information?

We appreciate your patience as we finalize the operational aspects of implementing this position cap. We plan to provide regular updates regarding implementation of the cap.

In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to Patrick (patrick.sheehan@wisc.edu) with any immediate questions.