BRIEFING ON THE IMPACT OF SUB HB 187 
AND MODERNIZATION OF THE RULES GOVERNING CLASSIFIED 
EMPLOYEES

Introduction: This briefing is intended to inform members of our community on the background and efforts to modernize State of Ohio civil service regulations and to explain what actions we intend to follow going forward with this effort.

Legislative Background: In December 2006, the Ohio General Assembly passed Substitute House Bill 187, the culmination of a lengthy endeavor to reform Ohio’s law and regulations governing civil service employment. This bill resulted from more than ten years of legislative discussions and public hearings about various ways to reform regulations, and included the recommendations of the Ohio Civil Service Review Commission.

Of great importance to Ohio’s colleges and universities, Sub. H.B. 187, amends Section 124.14 (F) of the Ohio Revised Code to permit each state university’s board of trustees to introduce their own civil service rules that will then govern the employment of their civil service staff. Guidelines for implementing such changes were produced by the Inter-University Council of Ohio (IUC) and there was a recommendation given that institutions of higher education in Ohio proceed with any changes in a controlled and incremental manner.

Key Points of Interest:
- **Areas of Impact:** The legislation allows Wright State University to modernize rules governing classified staff such as (at a minimum): classification plans; recruitment, selection, and appointment; performance and discipline; layoff and reduction-in-workforce; benefits and leaves; as well as the appeal process for review of adverse actions.
- **Current Staff Impact:** Wright State University has 253 non-bargaining unit classified civil service employees.
- **Rule Modification:** Wright State will look to the Inter-University Council of Ohio guidelines as it determines which rules to modify, with changes being undertaken in a controlled and incremental manner.
- **Priority Items:** Our highest priority for change involves issues impacting talent management; significant priorities are the rules regarding reduction in workforce/layoff, vacation and clarification of the definition of classified civil service.
- **Communication Plan:** Central in our communication efforts will be briefings with Classified Staff Advisory Council, Cabinet and Deans, Board of Trustees members, and other key management personnel. Additionally, classified civil service employees will receive a communication notifying them of a 30-day comment period and directing them to an informational webpage.

Areas of Impact:
Under Sub. H.B. 187, Wright State has the authority to create its own classified civil service rules and regulations governing its personnel, which shall, at a minimum, address the following areas:

- Classification plans;
- Recruitment, selection, and appointment processes;
- Performance, discipline, and termination processes;
- Layoff and reduction-in-workforce processes;
- Paid leave and holiday leave;
- Appeal processes for classification, reduction, abolishment, and disciplinary actions; and
- Metrics and measures as appropriate for implementation and modernization of the above listed matters of personnel governance.

We have identified three particular areas that will take priority as we contemplate ways to modernize the rules governing our classified personnel. These three items are:

1. **Reduction in Workforce/Layoff**

   This section is most pressing for a variety of reasons. These include:
   - Employees who exercise their right to ‘bump’ have to impact another human being; specifically, they are required to sign a paper stating they are exercising the right to displace one of their colleagues; at times Wright State has mitigated bumping by being able to offer employees a vacancy, which they readily choose even when the vacancy offered is at a lower level.
   - Employees bumping are often unfamiliar with the department they are moving to and do not know the supervisor or their new co-workers so expectations change and productivity is impacted.
   - As a result of ‘bumping,’ departments can, through no fault of their own, lose employees that they have invested significant growth and development in.
   - Sometimes an employee ‘bumping in’ comes with performance challenges that may or may not have been addressed by the previous supervisor and the department as a whole can be impacted.
   - Because there is only a two-week window between the notification of bumping and the departure of an employee, there is little time to perform a thoughtful knowledge transfer; inevitably as a result of such disruption, productivity suffers as well.
   - The least senior employee of the lowest classification in a specific series is only provided with two weeks’ notice of layoff by the ORC.

   It should also be noted that some employees and departments have risen to this unanticipated challenge and seen success despite the complexities and difficulties with the current provisions of the ORC. However, a prevalent desire exists to provide civil service employees with choices, minimize productivity loss, and improve organizational efficiencies.

2. **Vacation Leave**
Employees in positions defined to be within the classified civil service have vacation accruals as defined by the ORC. This has been an area of consternation for classified staff and has been perceived to create a “class” system that could be mitigated by a proposed rules change.

3. **Definition of Classified Civil Service (CCS)**

Wright State has the authority to define which of their non-student positions shall be within the classified civil service. If Wright State elects to change how it defines who makes up their classified civil service staff, it will establish a process and schedule to achieve this new definition.

**Communication Plan:**
It is our goal that this process of change and modernization be both open and transparent. To that end, we will engage in ongoing communication with Wright State staff and leadership each time a rule change is contemplated. Our communication plan is to:

- Hold informational briefings with the Cabinet, Council of Deans, Board of Trustees, and Chair of Classified Staff Advisory Council;
- Present changes to Classified Staff Advisory Council and seek feedback;
- Send an email to each classified employee (non-bargaining unit) to make them aware that Wright State has been given legislative authority to amend certain rules governing classified employees and highlighting the process and feedback mechanisms;
- Arrange small (10-15 person) meetings for the purpose of informing university staff of these changes and to directly address questions and concerns; and
- Develop a webpage, maintained by Human Resources with support of Marketing, as a dedicated site regarding efforts to modernize classified civil service regulations; it will include copies of key documents, announcements of meetings, contact information for questions and feedback and other relevant materials