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About the Employee Handbook

The Employee Handbook provides employees with Fitchburg State College's current personnel policies and procedures. This handbook is designed to assist you, as a member of the Fitchburg State College staff, in the performance of your daily duties. It was prepared in accordance with current collective bargaining agreements, Massachusetts Board of Higher Education policy handbooks and applicable state and federal laws.

This handbook has been designed to consolidate local practices and benefits as well as state and federal regulations applicable to all faculty, staff and excluded personnel. Noted within the handbook will be different applications pertinent to specific employee groups. While this handbook contains summaries of many College policies, rules, procedures and guidelines, its contents are *not intended to constitute a contract for employment with Fitchburg State College*. Applicable collective bargaining agreements will be cited as appropriate. Collective bargaining provisions may supersede Handbook requirements as they affect conditions of employment.

All policies contained are applicable to benefit eligible employees unless otherwise specified. Information will be changed periodically as a result of modifications to institutional policies, collective bargaining agreements, policy changes effected by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education or the Governor, and changes in state and federal law. Employees will be notified of changes to the Handbook through memoranda, the website, and/or periodic revisions of the Handbook document.

Questions or comments may be forwarded to:

**Human Resources
Fitchburg State College
160 Pearl Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
HR@fsc.edu**

College History

Established in 1894 by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature, the State Normal School in Fitchburg opened in temporary quarters in the old high school building on Academy Street. Principal John G. Thompson, aided by a teaching staff of three, implemented a two-year teacher training program for women that had forty-six participants. In December 1896, the school expanded into a new building, known as Thompson Hall, and set up the State Schools of Observation and Practice in city buildings on Day Street and Highland Avenue.

In the next decade the school was a trendsetter for programs in Education. The Edgerly School opened, originally as an eighth-grade model and practice school, and then in 1910, it became one of the first junior high schools in the United States. The following year the school initiated the first practical arts teacher training course in the country for men.

In 1930, the State Normal School was authorized to offer a bachelor's degree in practical arts, and in 1932, when it became the State Teachers College at Fitchburg; four-year degrees were offered in all areas of education.

Under the auspices of the State Division of University Extension summer courses were first offered in 1915, marking the beginning of the college's commitment to Continuing Education programs. In 1935, the college was also authorized to establish graduate programs and in 1954 the first evening courses were offered.

In 1960, the college changed its name and expanded its mission. The State College at Fitchburg diversified its programs to include degrees in disciplines other than education. In 1965, its name was officially changed to Fitchburg State College, which today offers forty-nine undergraduate degree programs in eighteen academic departments, twenty Masters Degree programs, five Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study programs, and seven Graduate Certificate programs. Enrollment is up to 3,100 full-time and 4,000 part-time students which include 1,100 matriculated graduate students. The campus has expanded from a single structure on High Street to thirty-two buildings on ninety acres, becoming the educational center for the Montachusett region. The college proudly offers traditional and nontraditional programs to serve the educational needs of its students as undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education students.

Fitchburg State College - Our Mission

Fitchburg State College is an institution of higher education that integrates an interdisciplinary, multicultural liberal arts and sciences core with all professional and arts and sciences majors.

In 1997, the Board of Higher Education designated the college as the site of the Leadership Academy. The college emphasizes the importance of leadership studies, service learning, civic responsibilities, ethical development, and international education. Thus, it is this central theme that animates our mission statement: the establishment of a leadership honors program, extensive course work and extracurricular emphasis, and a commitment to exploring leadership for the twenty-first century.

In the process, the college encourages the development of the whole person and prepares students for careers that meet the needs of their varied communities. Our faculty members are scholar-teachers who employ a variety of pedagogies and modes of technological instruction to further such goals for all.

In addition, this comprehensive public college is committed to providing affordable, life-long learning opportunities in undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education. Lastly, Fitchburg State College is extensively involved in promoting sound economic development, especially in the Northern Worcester County Area.

Fitchburg State College's mission strives to:

- Integrate high-quality professional programs with strong liberal arts and sciences studies
- Promote, facilitate, and model self-reliant learning within a cooperative framework
- Stress high standards of academic, professional, and societal performance
- Provide opportunities for social and academic success to enhance self-esteem
- Foster excellence in teaching, service, and research
- Provide library resources and services necessary to support the current and anticipated academic needs of the college
- Promote an atmosphere of collegiality, openness to ideas, and esprit de corps
- Support faculty and administrators with professional development opportunities
- Respond in an affirmative and creative manner to the changing character of society
- Develop a global perspective through international exchanges and programs
- Meet social, economic, technological, and environmental changes
- Support racial, cultural, and ethnic diversity in the college community
- Maintain a healthy, safe, and aesthetic living and learning environment sensitive to local and global concerns

Fitchburg State College seeks to achieve its mission through:

Mutually supportive strong Liberal Arts and Sciences professional majors:

- Offering a liberal foundation that encourages multicultural and interdisciplinary courses
- Focusing on modes of inquiry within each discipline to strengthen critical thinking skills
- Providing extensive field experiences that bring together theory and practice
- Integrating technological development across the curriculum
- Educating students for participation in the world community at both the undergraduate and graduate level through academic and experiential opportunities
- Supporting undergraduate majors that complement graduate programs that, in turn, build on the strengths of the undergraduate offerings

A student-centered environment:

- Emphasizing creative teaching and active learning
- Providing learning experiences where students come together to challenge one another's ideas in an environment of mutual respect
- Responding to the intellectual, cultural, social, physical, and recreational needs of the residential and commuting populations
- Providing support for students, including an academic advising center, computer facilities, a freshmen readiness program, developmental skills and ESL programs, peer advising, tutorials, counseling, as well as health services
- Offering appropriate services for students with physical and learning disabilities

Commitment to the welfare of the larger community and region that it serves with:

- Collaborative efforts with school districts, the health care community, social service agencies, the business community, and higher educational institutions, particularly community colleges
- Programs for disadvantaged and gifted students, both outreach and on-campus
- Cultural events and activities that enrich the life of the community
- Faculty, administration, and student participation in community programs
- Tuition and fees that are within reach of people with moderate economic means

Key Employee Qualities

All employees of Fitchburg State College are expected to actively contribute to the success of the College through the effective performance of their job responsibilities and duties and to do so within organizational, ethical and legal guidelines.

Employees are expected to be dedicated and committed to Fitchburg State College and to demonstrate the willingness to be:

- flexible,
- multi-skilled,
- at work when scheduled,
- considerate to other co-workers and customers,
- a team player,
- motivated to do a good job,
- a problem-solver, and
- successful through quality job performance.

Employees who meet these expectations will help make Fitchburg State College successful as well as creating a productive and enjoyable work environment for everyone.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action

Fitchburg state College is dedicated to maintaining a non-discrimination policy for all of its employment practices and administration of employment opportunities. All employees will be given employment opportunities based on their education, training, experience, and qualifications. All employees will be treated equally and will not be discriminated against based on race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by law. This applies to all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment including, but not limited to hiring, placement, promotion, demotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leave of absence, compensation, training, and referrals for employment.

The College is devoted to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act to ensure equal employment opportunity of those employees with qualifying disabilities. A disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more life activities, a record of such impairment, or being regarded as having such impairment. Physical or mental disabilities include orthopedic disorders, visual, speech and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, HIV infection, cancer, heart disease, mental retardation, emotional illness, specific learning disabilities, drug addiction, and alcoholism. Upon notification, the College will make reasonable accommodations for those individuals with a qualifying disability as long as the accommodation is compliant under the guidance of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy on Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action

As part of the Massachusetts Public Higher Education System, Fitchburg State College is committed to a policy of non-discrimination and affirmative action in its educational programs, activities and employment practices. It is the policy and commitment of Fitchburg State College not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, veteran status, marital status, or national origin in its educational programs, activities, admissions, or employment policies, and to comply with the requirements of Federal Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 as amended, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title IX of the Educational Act of 1972, Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and pertinent laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, directives of the Board of Higher Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and other applicable state and federal statutes. Inquiries concerning the College's application of, or compliance with, the laws and regulations pertaining to discrimination and affirmative action should be addressed to: Jessica Murdoch, Interim Director for Human Resources and Affirmative Action, Designated Coordinator for Title IX, Section 504 and Title II of the ADA, (978) 665-3172.

Policy on Sexual Harassment

Fitchburg State College prohibits any member of the college community, male or female, from sexually harassing another employee, student or other person having dealings with this institution. The college is committed to providing a working, living and learning environment that is free from all forms of sexually abusive, harassing or coercive conduct. This policy seeks to protect the rights of all members of the college community and other persons having dealings with the institution, and to assure that all are treated with respect and dignity.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted attention or behavior of a sexual nature from someone in the workplace or classroom that causes discomfort or interferes with work or academic performance. Unwelcome sexual advances, sexual remarks, touching and requests for sexual favors are examples of behaviors that may be considered sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment is a form of behavior which fundamentally undermines the integrity of academic and employment relationships. It is of particular concern within educational institutions where all members of the college community are connected by strong bonds of intellectual interdependence and trust. Both the federal courts and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have ruled that sexual harassment constitutes sex discrimination as defined under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Sexual Harassment has also been judged to be prohibited sex discrimination under Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 as amended, and under Chapters 151B and 151C of the Massachusetts General Laws.

Individuals at the college who are determined to be practicing sexual harassment shall be officially reprimanded, censured, or punished more severely, as warranted by the circumstance. Moreover, the college will not tolerate reprisals against victims of sexual harassment, and any reprisal by the accused and/or others shall result in disciplinary action being taken.

Students, faculty, administration, and staff, are entitled by law to a workplace and learning environment that is free from unwelcome sexual behaviors. Confronting an offender is often difficult. While deciding how to best deal with the situation, individuals are encouraged to seek information and guidance at any time from the college Counseling Center, the Human Resources Department, and/or the Affirmative Action Office.

If it is felt that an incident of sexual harassment has occurred, a member of the college community has the following options:

- If possible, resolve the issue with the individual whose action is being questioned. In many cases, the “harasser” may not even realize that his or her actions are offensive. Be assertive and firm about your own rights. It is advisable to take a representative along as an advocate or for support. This person can be asked later to serve as a witness, if needed. Keep a careful written record of the meeting.
- If the offensive behavior is not corrected, the incident(s) should be reported. It is recommended that you contact the college’s Affirmative Action Office for guidelines and policy information for processing a complaint.

Policy on Racial Harassment and Diversity

Fitchburg State College is dedicated not only to learning, but to the development of ethically sensitive and responsible persons. Because this college prepares individuals for participation in an increasingly diverse world, the climate of college life must be one in which academic freedom prevails along with respect for and tolerance of cultural, ethnic, racial, and religious differences.

The college seeks to achieve these goals through sound educational programs and conduct policies which encourage independence and maturity. Racial harassment, clearly in conflict with the general mission of this college, is strictly prohibited. In addition, racial harassment, in many

instances violates Massachusetts's criminal statutes, and, when civil rights are denied, may violate other state and federal laws as well.

Racial harassment includes—but is not limited to—verbal, physical, or written abuse directed towards an individual or group on the basis of race or racial affiliation. While some examples of racial harassment such as physical and verbal assaults are easily identified, more frequent and generalized instances such as blatant and subtle graffiti and insensitive use of language—including epithets and “humor”—often go unacknowledged. Both types, however, can be equally damaging.

This college is a public institution, and as such, its policies must be consistent with existing state and federal constitutions and civil rights laws. In keeping with Fitchburg's special role as an educational institution, however, college policy regarding racial harassment in several respects is more stringent in defining unacceptable behavior than state/federal law.

Beyond state law and college regulations, Fitchburg State College sees as part of its educational mission the responsibility for creating an open environment which develops and nurtures respect for cultural and linguistic differences, and seeks to educate its members of the need for all types of diversity within its community.

Persons who feel that they have been victims of racial harassment are encouraged to use the college's administrative and/or legal processes. Whether an individual decides to pursue a complaint through the college procedures or through the civil courts, or both, it is important that all cases of racial harassment be thoroughly documented.

If you feel that you have been a victim of racial, religious or any other type of harassment, it is recommended that you contact the Affirmative Action Office for guidelines and policy information for processing a complaint.

Policy on Age Discrimination

In recognition of the current problems which exist in society today with respect to discrimination against persons over 40, and in accordance with federal and state law, Fitchburg State College has adopted a policy prohibiting discrimination based on age in the working, living and learning environment of our college campus.

This policy specifically prohibits the use of age as a factor where prohibited by law, in decisions affecting the employment or educational status of a member of the college community or of an applicant for admission or employment.

Any individual who feels he/she has been a victim of age discrimination or harassment should contact the Affirmative Action Office for guidelines and policy information for processing a complaint.

Policy on Non-Discrimination and Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

Fitchburg State College recognizes the multitude of barriers which confront persons with disabilities in access to both employment and education. Consistent with state and federal statutes which affirm and protect the equal opportunity rights of otherwise qualified persons with disabilities, the college adopted a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. In all matters of employment and education such persons will receive full and fair treatment. If you have a disability and are in need of a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of your job or to pursue candidacy for a job, please contact Jessica Murdoch, Interim Director, Human Resources and Affirmative Action, and Designated Coordinator for Title IX, Section 504 and Title II of the ADA, at (978) 665-3172, for more information.

Employment of Persons with Disabilities

The college will examine all existing employment policies, practices and facilities to assure that they do not disparately treat or impact otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. Where such disparity is found, it will be corrected as quickly and completely as is reasonable under existing financial constraints.

The college will make every effort to employ and advance in employment otherwise qualified persons and will take measures to advocate for equal opportunity in all areas of employment, including recruitment, selection, upgrading, training, compensation, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment. Such measures shall include but not be limited to vigorous identification of competitive persons with disabilities for selection, promotion and training.

In accordance with law, the college will afford reasonable accommodations to any otherwise qualified employee with a disability to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations will also be afforded to applicants for employment who have a disability to enable them to adequately pursue a candidacy for any available position.

If you have a disability and are in need of a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of your job or to pursue candidacy for a job, please contact the Director of Human Resources for more information.

Institutional Discrimination Complaint Procedures

Complaint Procedures to help resolve claims and complaints of discrimination on the campus. These Procedures will serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of discrimination. Any member of the College community and/or any applicant for employment who believes she/he has been a victim of discrimination, discriminatory harassment or retaliation may initiate an informal claim or formal complaint as outlined in the Discrimination Complaint Procedures.

Hard copies of the Discrimination Complaint Procedures are available in the Human Resources and Affirmative Action Office. The Discrimination Complaint Procedures are also available at: www.fsc.edu/humanres/aaeop.cfm.

Further advice or information regarding the College's Discrimination Complaint Procedures may be obtained by contacting Jessica Murdoch, Interim Director, Human Resources and Affirmative Action, and Designated Coordinator for Title IX, Section 504 and Title II of the ADA, at (978) 665-3172.

Conflicts of Interest

An actual or potential conflict of interest can occur when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of FSC's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases it is imperative that they disclose to an officer of FSC as soon as possible the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflict of interest. FSC's conflict of interest policy is mandated by the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission, which provides guidelines for political activity as Conflict of Interest Law and Massachusetts Financial Disclosure Law. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide

general directions that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the Human Resources Office for more information about conflicts of interest and to obtain copies of the policy guides.

EMPLOYMENT

First Week Initial Employment Procedures

Employee Orientation

New employees will be expected to attend a benefit orientation session with a Human Resources Representative. At the time of orientation, which generally occurs either on or just prior to the employees start date, new hires will be expected to complete forms for payroll and benefit processing as well as receive important information relative to working at Fitchburg State College. Supervisors may wish to arrange such an appointment prior to the arrival of employee in their new position.

New employees will be asked to complete a Banner Employment Authorization Form, W-4 and M-4 tax form, I-9 form and other informational material required. The I-9 must be completed within the first three days of employment in accordance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, and all original documentation of employment eligibility must be examined by a member of the Human Resources Department. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 is no longer retained or valid.

Failure to comply with this law can result in substantial fines for the college.

During the orientation appointment, new employees also receive information about available insurance plans and retirement options.

To help new employees track the documentation that must be provided or obtained during the first week of employment, the following checklist has been prepared.

New Employee Checklist:

- Attend an orientation session with an HR representative
- Complete a W-4 and M-4 form
- Complete a Banner Employment Authorization Form
- Complete an I-9 form and provide all original documentation to establish employment eligibility within 3 days of hire
- Present social security card
- Obtain a parking hang tag at Residential Housing & Services
- Obtain an employee ID card at the One Card office
- Read available insurance plan brochures
- Enroll in the plans of your choice by scheduling a follow up meeting with the Benefits Coordinator
- Read your employee Handbook. If you have any questions, schedule an appointment with the Human Resources.

Employee Categories

Five categories of full-time personnel are employed at the college. Policies relating to benefits, periods of leave, appointment and other aspects of employment are set forth in the collective bargaining agreement or Board of Higher Education (Board) policy handbook which applies to each employee category.

<i>EMPLOYEE CATEGORY</i>	<i>APPLICABLE AGREEMENT/HANDBOOK</i>
Unit Classified*	AFSCME Agreement
Non-Unit Classified* (Confidential/Excluded)	State College Employee Benefits Handbook for Non-Unit Classified Personnel
Faculty/Professional Staff Member	MSCA/MTA Agreement
Non-Unit (excluded) Professional Administrator	State College Employee Benefits Handbook for Non-Unit Professionals
Unit Professional Administrators	APA Agreement
*Only classified employees are considered non-exempt for Fair Labor Standards Act purposes (eligible for overtime pay).	

Union Membership

New employees will be contacted by representatives of the bargaining unit during their initial months of employment. Copies of collective bargaining agreements can be obtained from union representatives. Or, if you prefer, you may download the agreements from the Human Resources website at www.fsc.edu/humanres. Links to the unions can be found on this website as well.

Faculty/Librarian

Full-time faculty and professional librarians are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Higher Education and the Massachusetts Teacher's Association/Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA). All faculty members and professional librarians must either join the union and pay assessed dues or pay an agency service fee.

Administrators

Full-time administrators, except those excluded (NUP) because of the level and nature of their positions, are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Higher Education and the Association of Professional Administrators (APA). Administrators (except those excluded) must either join the union and pay assessed dues or pay an agency service fee.

Classified Employees

Classified employees, except those excluded (NUC) because of the confidential nature of their positions, are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Higher Education and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO. Classified employees (except those excluded) must either join the union and pay assessed dues or pay an agency service fee.

Probation and Provisional Employment

All full-time appointments to positions at the college are subject to the approval and policies of the Board of Trustees; the general laws, rules and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the policies, rules and regulations of the Board of Higher Education; the terms and conditions of current collective bargaining agreements or non-unit handbooks and the availability of funding for the position. (Positions at the college are not included in the Massachusetts Civil Service System.)

Probationary Period – Classified Employees

All newly appointed classified employees must serve a seven-month probationary period. Probationary employees receive two performance evaluations (**3 months – 5 months**) during this period.

The college may terminate the services of a classified employee at any time during the probationary period (for AFSCME employees, without recourse to the grievance and arbitration procedure except as provided in Article 27, section 4).

Probationary Period – Professional Employees

Every administrator appointed to a position in the bargaining unit (APA) shall serve on a provisional basis for one calendar year from the date on which he/she shall have first commenced his/her duties in such position. Probationary employees will receive a **(six month)** performance review. In the case of any administrator so appointed but whose annual term of service is less than twelve months, such calendar year shall be the entire calendar year, commencing with the first date of such employment. Further information on employment terms is found in the APA agreement.

Terms of employment for faculty members and librarians are set forth in the MSCA agreement, and for non-unit employees are found in the appropriate Board handbook.

Transfers and Advancement

Position vacancies are posted on nineteen bulletin boards across the college campus. An employee who wishes to apply for a posted position should visit our online job application website at <https://jobs.fsc.edu> and complete an online application by the application deadline. Classified and hourly employees must also complete an online application and may attach a new resume if they are applying for a classified or hourly vacancy.

Outside Employment

Generally speaking, an employee may hold a job with another organization as long as they satisfactorily perform their job responsibilities with FSC. All employees are expected to comply with their respective collective bargaining agreement or personnel policies handbook with regard to work hours and schedules and will be subject to FSC's scheduling requirements regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If FSC determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the job requirements of FSC, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if her or she wishes to remain with FSC.

Job Postings

FSC provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and advance within the organization according to their skills and experience. In general, notices of all regular full-time and part-time job openings are posted, although FSC reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening, subject to the terms of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or personnel policies handbook.

Job openings will be posted on the employee bulletin board located outside of the Human Resources Office and on our Human Resources Web site at <https://jobs.fsc.edu> . Postings will normally remain open for 14 days. Each job posting notice will include the date of the posting period, job title, department, location, job responsibilities, salary range, minimum qualifications (required skills and abilities) and application deadline dates. Open positions are generally advertised in various publications and local newspapers. Other recruiting sources may also be used to fill open positions in the best interest of the organization.

To apply for an open position, employees should submit a resume and cover letter to the Human Resources Representative by the deadline date designated on the job posting.

Unemployment Compensation

Unemployment insurance is mandated for state employees, including College employees, under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 151A. Under the law employers are required to inform all employees permanently about unemployment insurance. This insurance applies to employees who are separated from work, or temporarily, for seven or more days. The state's Division of Employment and Training [DET] oversees and administers the unemployment process. Please contact the Human Resources Office for a copy of a Division of Employment and Training brochure on filing for unemployment insurance benefits.

Public Employees and Campaigns

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 55, the Campaign Finance Law regulates political activity by public employees and the use of public buildings and resources in campaigns.

Section 13: Public Employees

No person employed for compensation for the Commonwealth, its cities, towns and counties, and public agencies, other than an elected official, may directly or indirectly solicit or receive a contribution or anything of value for any political purpose.

Section 14: Public Buildings

Soliciting or receiving campaign contributions in a public building is prohibited. Examples include City or Town Hall, office buildings, public schools and libraries, police and fire stations and public works garages.

Use of Public Resources

Campaign finance law prohibits the use of public resources for political campaign purposes, such as influencing the nomination or election of a candidate, or the passage or defeat of a ballot in question. "Public Resources" encompass just about anything that is paid for by taxpayers, such as vehicles, office equipment and supplies, buildings and the paid time of public employees.

For more information or a copy of the complete policy, please contact the Human Resources Office.

Personnel Files/Confidentiality

All personnel files (and payroll records) are maintained under the provisions of the Fair Information Practices Act and in accordance with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements. Employees may obtain access to their files by request of appointment with Human Resources. Files must be examined in the presence of a member of Human Resources. Employees may examine references furnished on their behalf only if they did not waive their rights to examine references when they applied for their original position.

Some positions within the college involve access to confidential information on students and/or employees. Employees who handle such information are expected to maintain confidentiality and to comply with laws and policies that govern the release of that information. Misuse of confidential information may constitute a violation of state ethics statutes.

Access to Personnel Files

When a request is received for information contained in an employee's personnel record the Human Resource Director or his/her appointed representative, shall verify only that the individual concerned is employed by the College and shall further reveal in what capacity the individual serves for example: clerk, custodian, etc.

No further information concerning the individual shall be divulged unless the person making the inquiry supplies written authorization from the employee concerned or there is a court subpoena.

Employees can request review of their own personnel records. Personnel records can be reviewed by prior appointment in the Human Resources department. Records cannot be removed from the department. Employees who wish to obtain copies of documents contained in their personnel file must make the request with Human Resources.

Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and shall become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment shall be placed in a file unless the person making the comment signs it and the staff member is informed of the comment and is given the opportunity to include a response. Generally speaking, Human Resources will determine appropriate file material in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Reference Checks

To ensure that individuals who join FSC are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the general policy of FSC to check the employment references of all applicants. The Human Resources Department or the appropriate supervisor will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers.

Personnel Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify FSC of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, promptly notify the Human Resources Department.

Employment Applications

FSC relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in FSC's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

Employee Development

The college recognizes the importance of the continuous development of skills and knowledge for all employees. Employees are encouraged to utilize tuition remission benefits to attend classes which will assist them in advancing in their chosen fields or in preparing for a career change.

Full-time professional employees covered by the MSCA agreement are eligible to apply for sabbatical leave for the purpose of professional development. Training programs for classified and professional employees may be coordinated or presented to HRD. As the college budget allows, professional and classified employees may also be sent to seminars and workshops that relate to their current positions.

Performance Appraisal

The performance of each full-time unit employee is evaluated at the intervals and in the manner specified in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. The performance of each excluded non-unit employee is evaluated annually, at the conclusion of the spring semester.

Every employee is entitled to review his/her performance evaluation form before it is placed in his/her personnel file. The employee may also respond in writing to the evaluation, and the response will also be included in the personnel file.

Acceptable Use Policy

The Information Technology Department supports computing, networking and information resources for the students, faculty and staff of Fitchburg State College. Access to the College's computer systems and networks owned and operated by FSC imposes certain responsibilities upon users, in accordance with existing FSC policies and local, state and federal law. Users accept the responsibility for utilizing services in ways that are ethical, that demonstrate academic integrity and respect for others who share this resource. This policy is the purview of the Information Technology Department and may be changed periodically to reflect the changing needs of the College. To view the policy in its entirety, please go to www.fsc.edu/it/policies/acceptableuse.html.

Physical Examination Requirements

Prior to employment at the College, all employees shall submit evidence of freedom from tuberculosis, as specified by state law. Maintenance staff is also required to pass a pre-employment physical examination as a condition of employment.

The President or his/her designee may require an employee to submit to a physical exam by a physician appointed by the College whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to others in the College or when a doctor's certificate is needed to verify need for sick leave.

Standards of Conduct

Standards of conduct are guidelines for all employees to follow in order to help create a safe, comfortable and productive work environment that sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students. All staff members are expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. The following paragraphs describe workplace behaviors and the expectations of the Fitchburg State College Administration for its staff.

Respectful Climate

Our hope and expectation is that all employees of Fitchburg State College will contribute to making our working climate one that is characterized by respectful interactions, cooperation among department personnel, open and constructive communication and trust. We will speak kindly with one another and acknowledge each other's talents and skills although we may have different ways of achieving the same goals. We will work collaboratively toward common goals, support one another and accept each other's ideas. We will communicate openly by seeking, giving and receiving feedback, and by sharing information necessary to successfully complete our tasks. We will be prompt in our dealings with one another and above all treat each other as we would want to be treated.

Harassment

Fitchburg State College is committed to providing a work environment free from harassment of any nature including, but not limited to, racial, religious, sexual, age, national origin, ancestral veteran status, disability, or any other type of harassment.

Harassment is unwanted verbal, physical, or visual conduct relating to an individual's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran status or disability.

Staff Protection

The College will act to protect its employees from physical and/or psychological abuse [defined as the intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress]. Any employee who is threatened with harm is to notify the appropriate administrator immediately, and steps will be taken to protect the employee's safety. A written report of any serious incidents shall be given to the President and the Vice President of the area.

Workplace Violence

At Fitchburg State College no employee is expected to tolerate violent actions from other employees, students, faculty, administrators or any person with whom they come into contact throughout their employment. Employees should report any incident of violence to their immediate supervisor, Human Resources, or contact campus police for immediate assistance.

Dress and Personal Appearance

All employees are expected to maintain an appropriate appearance that is neat, professional and meets the standard of suitable business attire as determined by the requirements of the area in which the employee works. In this spirit, jeans, shorts, halter tops, and tee shirts with messages are considered inappropriate dress for the workplace and inconsistent with the behavior we are trying to model for the students of FSC.

Salary Administration

All full-time salaries are administered according to the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement or Board Handbook.

Social Security

Massachusetts state employees do not have Social Security taxes withheld from their earnings. Employees retiring with a state pension who also are eligible for Social Security benefits may have their Social Security benefits reduced by Social Security's windfall elimination provision or government pension offset (www.ssa.gov/pubs/10007.html). Since individual circumstances vary, employees should contact their local Social Security office to find out whether these regulations may affect their Social Security benefits.

Medicare Taxes

Massachusetts State employees hired on or after 04/01/86 have Medicare taxes withheld from their earnings. State employees hired prior to 04/01/86 who have no break in service during their employment with the Commonwealth are exempt from Medicare tax withholding.
(1.45% of gross wages)

Pay Periods

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts payroll information system is called the Human Resources Commonwealth Management System (HR/CMS). All state employees are paid on a biweekly basis through direct deposit only. You will receive a "pay advice" instead of a pay stub. This pay advice provides a wealth of information. It details your payroll tax and deductions as well as accrual information.

Direct Deposit

All employees are required to have their pay deposited into a checking or savings account directly. Optional deductions are available for other savings or loan payments. Contact Human Resources or Payroll for additional information.

Pay Info

Payinfo is a web-based tool for Commonwealth employees to access payroll information through the Internet. Payinfo is accessible using a PC with an Internet connection. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Commonwealth employees now have the flexibility of accessing their payroll information at a time and place convenient to them, whether at home or work. Generally, the current pay period information is updated the day prior to your funds being available.

Payroll Deductions

You must authorize any voluntary payroll deductions by completing and signing the appropriate forms available in the Human Resources Department (HRD) or from the applicable vendor. Deductions may vary in HR/CMS. The chart below details the order in which deductions are taken. The description that will appear on your pay advice for each deduction is listed. This chart also indicates pre-tax and post-tax deductions.

DEDUCTIONS	DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY	FEDERAL TAX	STATE TAX	PAY PERIOD
Federal	Fed Tax	1	N/A	N/A	Every
Medicare	Med Tax	2	N/A	N/A	Every
State Taxes	State Tax	3	N/A	N/A	Every
Retirement	State Ret	4	Pre	Pre (1)	Every
Adjustment to Retirement	Adj Ret	5	Pre	Pre (1)	Every
Alternative Retirement	Alt Ret	6	Pre	Pre (1)	Every
Wage Garnishment	Garnish	7	Post	Post	Every*
Makeup Retirement	Makeup Ret	8	Post	Post	Every
Basic Life Insurance	Life Ins	9	Post	Post	First
Basic Health	Health Ins	10	Pre	Pre	First/second
GIC Optional Life	Life Ins	11	Post	Post	Second
Long Term Disability	Ltd Amt	12	Post	Post	First
Union Dues	Union Due	13	Post	Post	Varies

Agency Fee	Agency Fee	14	Post	Post	Varies
Dependent Care Assistance Program	Dep Care	15	Pre	Pre	Every
Dependent Care Assistance Program	DCAP Fee	16	Post	Post	Every
Tax Shelter Annuity Plan	TSA	17	Pre	Pre	Every
Deferred Compensation	Def Comp	18	Pre	Pre	Every
Savings Bond	Sav Bond	19	Post	Post	Varies
COMECC	COMECC	20	Post	Post	Every
UFUND	UFUND	21	Post	Post	First/second
The first \$2000 in the total of all Retirement contributions is not subject to MA State Tax. *Determined by court order.					

Benefits

The Group Insurance Commission (GIC) was established by the Legislature in 1955 to provide and administer health insurance and other benefits to the Commonwealth's employees and retirees, and their dependents and survivors.

Employees may elect the following benefits at a very nominal cost after two full months of service:

- Health Insurance
- Basic Life Insurance
- Optional Life Insurance
- Long term Disability
- Flexible Spending Account – (Dependant Care/ Health Care Spending)

Eligibility

If you are a full time employee or part-time employee regularly scheduled to work 18.75 hours for Unit I or 20 hours for Unit II or more per week for 52 weeks, you may elect to participate in the commonwealth of Massachusetts Benefit Plans. (Part time employees working less than 52 weeks a year must work at least 22.5 hours or more a week for benefits)

If electing family coverage eligible dependents include:

- Spouse
- Children, including stepchildren who live with you, who are under age 19 or are full time students (up to the age specified by your plan), or
- Children, who exceed the above-age limits, but are unable to care for themselves due to physical or mental disabilities
- You will be required to submit copies of birth certificates for child dependents and a marriage certificate for spouse for health insurance coverage. You will need to provide this information when enrolling in your health benefits.
- New employees must make their benefit elections within ten (10) calendar days of the first day of employment.

Open Enrollment

Open enrollment provides employees an opportunity to review their current elected benefits and make changes to their plans effective July 1. The GIC determines which benefits will be available and provides a detailed summary of new benefits and updated information for open enrollment. Employees may need to meet additional requirements at the time of enrolling or changing these options. (See Human Resources for more details)

Qualifying Event

Employees may add and delete dependents from their plans during the year if they experience a qualifying event.

- You get married, divorced, or legally separated
- The number of your covered dependents changes (e.g., through birth, adoption, death, etc.)
- You or your spouse's employment status changes (qualifying event)
- Your dependent loses dependent status

Health Care Benefit Plans

Employees of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have several health insurance options to choose from. The state provides a selection of Health Maintenance Organizations (HMO), Preferred Provider Options (PPO) and Indemnity Plans. A detailed Benefit Decision Guide is available to employees for a summary of the options and costs. Coverage begins on the first of the month following two full months of service. Employee's pay a share of the premium cost. This is deducted on a pre-tax basis. Employees must elect a plan of insurance within ten days of their hire date. Benefit premiums are deducted a month prior to the coverage start date.

The Pre-Tax Advantage

Employees make contributions towards their benefit coverage with pre-tax dollars. This means you make your contributions before you pay federal or state taxes. Lower taxes means you keep more of what you earn.

Dental Plan

Dental is offered to all union employees at no cost. Each Dental Plan is affiliated with the employee's individual union. Employees are required to wait 6 full calendar months before benefit coverage begin. The plan provides basic services, diagnostic and preventive care and restorative services.

MSCA/APA - The plan offers a choice between a traditional indemnity plan and a managed care plan. The percentage of benefits paid to providers under the managed care option is slightly greater. The provider is MetLife. *(6 mos. waiting period)*

AFSCME - The plan offers both a Closed Plan where employees may choose from a list of participating dentists and an Open Plan where an employee may choose any dentist. Benefits paid under the Open plan are more limited. The provider is the Massachusetts Public Employee Fund. *(6 mos. waiting period)*

Non-Unit / Classified & Professional – The plan offers a choice between traditional indemnity plan and a managed care plan. The percentage of benefits paid to providers under the managed care option is slightly greater. The provider is MetLife. Non Unit employees will incur a minimal cost for dental. These deductions will be taken through a biweekly deduction. *(2 mos. waiting period)*

Vision Plan

All unit and not unit employee are offered a vision plan at no cost; there is a 6 mos. - waiting period for MSCA/APA and AFSCME. Non Unit employees have a two month waiting period and pay a nominal cost for the plan.

(AFSCME)

Members are offered a vision plan at no cost per the union affiliation. There is a six month waiting period. The plan provides a preferred provider option with free examinations and direct payment to the provider. The plan alternatively permits reimbursement (with limitations) to non-member providers.

(APA/MSCA/Non Unit)

Members are offered a vision plan at no cost: through Vision One Eye Care Program. There is a six month waiting period before coverage is effective. Please visit www.metlife.com/mybenefits for detailed information. (Group # 47039)

Elected Benefits

Long Term Disability

Long Term Disability insurance provides up to 50% of base wages for disability due to illness or injury outside of the workplace. An employee must be totally disabled for 90 days in order to receive compensation for LTD. Premiums are based on age and monthly earnings. Please see Benefit Decision Guide for details. (UNUM Provident)

Life Insurance

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts offers a \$5,000 term life insurance policy with double indemnity for \$1.33 per month. This option is automatically elected with all Health Coverage, but may be purchased separately by employees electing to waive health care benefits. Please see Benefit Decision Guide for details. (The Hartford)

Optional Life Insurance

Additional term life insurance may be purchased in \$1,000 increments up to \$1,000 less than eight times their base salary. You may be required to submit evidence of insurability to the insurance company when purchasing Optional Life Insurance. Employees are required to work two full calendar months before insurance is effective. Rates for Optional Life Insurance is based on age and if you are a smoker or non-smoker. Please see Benefit Decision Guide for details.

Dependant Care Account (DCAP- Reimbursement Account)

By reducing the amount of income tax you pay each year, Reimbursement Accounts can effectively reduce your out-of pocket dependent care expenses. Authorized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), this account allows you to set aside money from your pay before taxes are withheld. In other words, you don't pay taxes on this money before it goes into your account. When you submit a claim for eligible expenses, you are reimbursed with tax-free dollars. The Dependent Care Account reimburses you for dependent expenses you incur in order to allow you (or your spouse) to work. When you use this account, you reduce your taxable income, so you pay less in income taxes.

How it works:

- You estimate the amount you will spend on dependent expenses during the upcoming year.
- These deposits to your Dependent Care Account will be taken out biweekly
- When you have an eligible expense, you pay it. Then submit your claim form for reimbursement from your Dependent Care Account.
- This program is a tax qualified plan.
- According to IRS rules, you forfeit any money left in your accounts after you've submitted all your claims for the year. So plan your deposit carefully.

You may specify any amount to be withheld, up to a maximum of \$5,000 per calendar year on a pre-tax basis, to be reimbursed for qualifying dependent care expenses. Please see more detailed account information online at www.myshps.com

Reminder: You must enroll every year in this account

Health Care Spending Accounts (HCSA – Reimbursement Account)

The Health Care Spending Account is a pre tax program to offset medical expenses. This program enables you to pay for non-covered health care expenses on a pre-tax basis. You can use your HCSA to pay for:

- Physician office and prescription drug co-payments.
- Medical deductibles and co-insurance amounts.
- Eyeglasses and contact lenses not covered by your plan.
- Orthodontia and dental benefits not covered by your dental plan.
- Hearing aids and durable medical equipment not covered by your health plan.
- Smoking cessation and exercise classes prescribed by your physician.
- And more.....

For calendar year 2007, participants can contribute \$500 to \$2500 through payroll deductions.

According to IRS rules, you forfeit any money left in your accounts after you've submitted all your claims for the year. So plan your deposit carefully. You must re-enroll every year.

Optional Retirement Programs

MSCA/VP/President/Deans only

The Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) is (401A) retirement pension plan. Only members of the MSCA union as well as senior level administrators may elect this option. The ORP is a defined contribution plan. The election to participate in the ORP must be made within 90 days of hire or the employee will automatically default into state pension system **The election is irrevocable.**

Three companies have been contracted by the Board of Higher Education to assist with individual employee's retirement needs. The employee must select a company to manage his/her retirement account.

LINCOLN – Lincoln Financial Advisor Corporation
TIAA-CREF – Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association
VALIC – Variable Annuity Life Insurance Company

Representatives from each company will be able to assist employees on market strategy and percentage allocations.

Participation in the ORP requires:

- Same contribution by employees as SERS
- The state contributes 5% of employee's salary (% includes all administrative costs, see breakdown of % below)
- Interest rates are determined based on participants investment elections
- Vesting is immediate
- Plan is portable
- Total account value belongs to the participant without regard to years or service.
- **Employees need to monitor all allocations made to their accounts.**

The ORP also features a long-term disability and life insurance component, at no cost to the employee. All administrative costs and premiums are deducted from the State's contribution.

Percentage Breakdown of the 5% match from the State

Administrative Overhead	0.361%
Disability Insurance	0.186%
Group Life Insurance	<u>0.153%</u>
Total Expenditure	0.700%
Commonwealth's Contribution (NET)	4.300%

Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Pension Program

AFSCME, APA, Non-Unit, MSCA

The State Employee Retirement System is administered through the State Board of Retirement. The plan is (401A) retirement pension plan. State employees do not pay F.I.C.A.; therefore, all employees are required to pay a percentage of gross wages towards retirement.

- Contributions are made on a pre-tax basis as of 01/01/88
- Employees hired after 12/31/78 make additional 2% contribution on base wages over \$30,000
- State Employee Retirement System is a (401A) defined benefit plan
- Eligibility for retirement is based upon a minimum vesting schedule requiring completion of:
 - **10 years of creditable service**
 - **and minimum age 55, or**
 - **20 years of creditable service at any age**
- Employees who terminate employment prior to age 55 w/10 or more years of service are eligible to receive a monthly pension at age 55 or later.

Human Resources Website

The Human Resources Website provides links to several relevant websites that may be helpful with your benefits, collective bargaining agreements, forms, policies and elected health benefits and applicable state agencies. You can find our website at www.fsc.edu/humanres.

Scheduled Holidays

Holiday	2008	2009	2010
New Year's Day	January 1	January 1	January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday	January 21	January 19	January 18
President's Day	February 18	February 16	February 15
Evacuation Day	March 17	March 17	March 17
Patriots' Day	April 21	April 20	April 19
Memorial Day** (1)	May 26	May 25	May 31
Bunker Hill Day	June 17	June 17	June 17
Independence Day**	July 4	July 4*	July 4**
Labor Day**	September 1	September 7	September 6
Columbus Day* (2)	October 13	October 12	October 11
Veterans Day* (2)	November 11	November 11	November 11
Thanksgiving Day* (1)	November 27	November 26	November 25
Christmas Day* (1)	December 25	December 25	December 25*

* Under the provisions of Chapter 4, Section 7, Clause Eighteen, legal holidays that fall on a Saturday shall be observed on that day. All offices under the jurisdiction of any department of state government shall be open to the public for business on the Friday preceding any Saturday holiday. However, as many employees as possible should be given that Friday off. Employees assigned to work shall be given an additional day off as the law and applicable collective bargaining agreements allow. Whenever possible, the following Monday shall be used as the alternative day off.

Chapter 30, Section 24A provides for the action to be taken in the case of persons employed by the Commonwealth when any legal holiday falls on a Saturday. In addition, Section 11 of the management and confidential employee rules governing paid leave and other benefits and Collective Bargaining Agreements currently in effect cover this subject.

**A legal holiday shall be observed on the day following when said holiday should occur on Sunday (Chapter 4, Section 7, Clause Eighteen).

Leave Policies

FMLA Statement

An eligible employee may take up to 12 weeks of unpaid family/medical leave within a 12-month period for certain family and medical reasons as specified under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. The 12-month period is measured forward from the first day FMLA leave is taken. An employee is eligible if he/she has worked for Fitchburg State College for at least one year and for at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months. Upon return from FMLA leave employees, other than key employees, must be restored to the same or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

FMLA leave may be used to care for a newborn, adopted, or foster child; to care for a seriously ill parent, child, or spouse; or, because the employee is experiencing a serious medical condition.

FMLA leave is not an additional form of paid leave. An employee is required to substitute any accrued paid personal, vacation, and sick leave for unpaid FMLA LEAVE. An employee is not required to substitute compensatory time for unpaid FMLA leave, but he/she may request to have compensatory time substituted for unpaid FMLA leave. Paid long-term disability and workers' compensation leave run concurrently with FMLA leave. The use of accrued paid leave during an FMLA leave is subject to all the usual collective bargaining agreement stipulations and to college policies that normally apply to requesting and using such leaves. The substitution of accrued paid leave time for unpaid leave time does not extend the 12-week leave period. Employees who do not have appropriate accrued leave available may be granted unpaid FMLA leave.

Employees are required to request such leaves at least thirty days in advance if the need for the leave can be anticipated. Otherwise, they should request the leave as soon as they become aware of the need to take it. Employees should contact the Human Resources Department (HRD) to obtain an FMLA leave request form as much in advance of the requested leave period as possible.

Sick Leave

All full-time, twelve month employees accrue sick leave at the rate of 1.25 days per month, beginning with the first full month of employment. For attendance recording purposes only, this is converted to 4.326 or 4.615 hours per pay period, depending on the employee unit/group. Sick leave accrued during a given pay period is not available for use until that pay period has ended.

Faculty members accrue sick leave at the rate of 3.842 hour per pay period during the academic year, for a total of ten days (75 hours) per academic year.

There is no limit to the amount of sick leave that may be accrued or carried over from one year to the next.

Generally accrued sick leave may be taken when an employee is incapacitated by illness or when the presence of the employee at work may expose other employees to a contagious disease which will jeopardize the health of those employees. Within the limits of each collective bargaining agreement or Board handbook, sick leave may also be used to attend to those relatives and individuals living in the employee household or to keep medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of normal work hours.

APA and MSCA unit employees may join a sick leave bank, as described in their respective collective bargaining agreements. Membership requires the contribution of one or more days of sick leave

Employees who are members of a sick leave bank may draw upon the bank after they have utilized all available leave and have been off the payroll for a specified number of days

Personal Days

Full-time, twelve-month employees are credited with three personal days at the beginning of each calendar year (January 1). Employees who are hired after the beginning of the calendar year are credited with a pro-rated number of days per their collective bargaining agreements.

Personal days may be used for any purpose and employees are asked to give at least 24 hours notice before taking a personal day except in emergency situations. If the need for personal leave is known in advance, a leave request form must be submitted.

Personal days must be used in the calendar year (by December 31) in which they are credited. They may not be carried over to the next calendar year.

Faculty earns one personal day per semester and is allowed to carry their unused day from spring semester to the fall. However, personal day(s) have to be used by December 31.

Vacation Leave

Unit and non-unit classified personnel and professional employees (excluding faculty members) begin to accrue vacation leave with the first pay period of employment. The following are the accrual rates for each employee category.

MSCA Professional Librarians

All members of the bargaining unit who are employed to work a twelve-month work year shall be entitled, during each such year to an annual vacation leave.

Years of Service	Accrual Rate
0-8	6.346 hours per pay period or 22 days/year (165 total hours)
8-16	6.634 hours per pay period or 23 days/year (172.5 total hours)
16-25	7.211 hours per pay period or 25 days/year (187.5 total hours)
25 +	8.653 hours per pay period or 30 days/year (225 total hours)

Professional librarians may carry up to 480 hours (64 days) of vacation leave from one payroll period to the next. Vacation credit in excess of this limit will be converted to sick leave twice a year (April and October).

Unit and Non-Unit Classified Employees

Employees working a 37.5-hour workweek:

Years of Service	Accrual Rate
0-4.5	2.884 hours per pay period or 10 days/year (75 total hours)
4-5-9.5	4.326 hours per pay period or 15 days/year (112.5 total hours)
9-5-19.5	5.769 hours per pay period or 20 days/year (150 total hours)
19.5 +	7.211 hours per pay period or 25 days/year (187.5 total hours)

Unit and non-unit classified employees may carry up to 480 hours (64 days) of vacation leave from one pay period to the next. Vacation leave in excess of this limit will be converted to sick leave twice a year (April and October).

Employees working a 40 hour work week:

Years of Service	Accrual Rate
0-4.5	3.076 hours per pay period or 10 days/year (80 total hours)
4.5-9.5	4.615 hours per pay period or 15 days/year (120 total hours)
9.5-19.5	6.153 hours per pay period or 20 days/year (160 total hours)
19.5 +	7.692 hours per pay period or 25 days/year (200 total hours)

Unit and non-unit classified employees may carry up to 512 hours (64 days) of vacation leave from one pay period to the next. Vacation leave in excess of this limit will be converted to sick leave twice a year (October and April).

APA Unit Administrators

Years of Service	Accrual Rate
0-1	5.769 hours per pay period or 20 days/year (150 total hours)
1-8	6.346 hours per pay period or 22 days/year (165 total hours)
8-16	6.634 hours per pay period or 23 days/year (172.5 total hours)
16-25	7.211 hours per pay period or 25 days/year (187.5 total hours)
25+	8.653 hours per pay period or 30 days/year (225 total hours)

Unit professionals may carry up to 480 hours (64 days) of vacation leave from one pay period to the next. Vacation leave in excess of the maximum will be converted to sick leave twice a year (April and October).

Non-Unit Professional (Administrators)

Years of Service	Accrual Rate
0-8	6.346 hours per pay period or 22 days/year (165 total hours)
8-16	6.634 hours per pay period or 23 days/year (172.5 total hours)
16-25	7.211 hours per pay period or 25 days/year (187.5 total hours)
25+	8.653 hours per pay period or 30 days/year (225 total hours)

Non-unit professionals may carry up to 480 hours (64 days) of vacation leave from one pay period to the next. Vacation leave in excess of the maximum will be converted to sick leave twice a year (April and October).

Miscellaneous Benefit Information

- Tuition Benefits for State Employees/union rules apply.
- 10% discount at College Bookstore.
- Use of College Library and materials.
- Use of resident dining facility (Holmes Dining Hall) or commuter café (Campus Center)
- The FSC recreation center is available to all staff at no cost. Please contact the Recreation Center at extension 3683 for further details regarding fitness programs.
- The Fitchburg Civic Center offers off-site parking to college employees. We offer a free shuttle bus service to the campus. Employees must obtain a blue valid hang tag so they may park in the campus parking lots.
- Fitchburg State College offers a variety of cultural and activity programs through the Cultural Affairs. Employees are welcome to attend any show and programs. Please visit the Box Office for tickets or in the Cultural Affairs Office.

Jury Duty and Court Appearance

Jury duty leave is provided to those employees who are requested to serve jury duty or summoned to appear in court. Employees who receive a subpoena or summons should report it to their supervisor immediately so that arrangements can be made to cover their work, if necessary. The College will provide paid leave for the period of jury service, if the time of the duty conflicts with the employees' regular work schedules. Employees are required to provide a copy of the payment received from the court to their supervisor.

Military Leave

Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements should consult their respective agreements for information about their rights and responsibilities applicable to military leaves of absence. Generally speaking, two weeks paid leave is available for reservists' annual tour of duty. Military orders must be provided to Human Resources prior to the leave period.

For non-unit employees, Fitchburg State College will comply with the requirements of state law and the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994. These laws prohibit discrimination against those serving in the military, reserve or National Guard. Leave is generally unpaid; however upon request to Human Resources, employees may draw upon accrued paid leave or vacation time.

After the period of service is over, reemployment without loss of benefits, status or pay is provided for under certain conditions. These conditions include:

- The employee must not have been dishonorably discharged.
- The employee must present proof that he or she has satisfactorily completed service.
- The employee must request reinstatement within a timeframe specified by law.

Fitchburg State College is not obligated to reinstate employees whenever circumstances have changed to make it "impossible or unreasonable" for it to rehire the employee following his/her uniformed service. Nor is FSC required to make accommodations for service related disabilities when such efforts would impose "undue hardship".

GENERAL POLICIES

Attendance, Hours of Work and Punctuality

All employees are expected to report to work on a regular and punctual basis. The length of the work week is specified in collective bargaining agreements and Board handbooks.

For administrators, librarians and classified employees, specific work hours are determined by managers and supervisors in each department in consultation with each employee. Most administrative offices are required to be open from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m., and work schedules should be planned accordingly. Faculty work hours are determined by class schedules and contract provisions.

Inclement Weather or Emergency Closings

In instances where the college is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency situations only “essential” personnel are required to report to work. Those individuals who are essential will be notified that they have been so designated by their supervisors. On rare occasions, however, an emergency may arise where an employee who previously had not been designated as essential may be required to report to work. Any staff member who is required to report to work when classes have been canceled or the college has been closed will be granted compensatory time (AFSCME) or flexible scheduling (APA). Announcements regarding the cancellation of classes or the closing of the college are broadcast over local television and radio stations.

Drug Free Workplace

Federal Law specifies that Colleges who are the recipients of federal funds must meet the requirements of the drug-free workplace act of 1988. In order to meet these requirements in compliance with this act, the state and the College has adopted the following policy:

Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 Policy

In order to comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, Pub. L. No. 100-690, 5151-5160 applicants for federally funded grants and contracts are required to certify that they have made a good faith effort to maintain a drug free workplace in accordance with the following policy.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94 C, establishes five "classes" of drugs as controlled substances. These classes include, but are not limited to such substances as heroin, cocaine, LSD, marijuana and opium based drugs. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance by Fitchburg State College employees is prohibited on any premises occupied or controlled by the college. No employee will report to work while under the influence of illegal drugs. Any employee determined to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal.

In order to comply with the federal law, Fitchburg State College requires that an employee notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. Notice shall go to the Human Resources Department. Fitchburg State College will notify any federal contracting agency within ten (10) days of having received notice that an employee engaged in the performance of such contract has had any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace. Fitchburg State College will impose assistance or rehabilitation program by any employee who is so convicted within thirty days of receiving notice of such conviction.

Each employee is notified that, as a condition of employment, he/she must abide by the policy and notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such convictions. Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to warnings, suspensions, participation in a drug assistant rehabilitation program, or termination.

Fitchburg State College will assist with confidential referrals to substance abuse, assistance or rehabilitation programs as well as sponsor on-campus educational and training programs in order to insure that all employees of the college are aware of the issues regarding drug use/abuse in the workplace. Contact the Human Resources Department for more information.

Fitchburg State College shall provide every employee with the information listed above.

Smoking in the Workplace

The College promotes a healthy work environment for its employees. In compliance with Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H, the buildings and grounds will be designated as a smoke-free environment. Employees, students, and visitors are restricted from using any tobacco product, including smoking or chewing, within school buildings, the school facilities, or on school buses. Fitchburg State College accepts this law as binding upon its students and employees as well as visitors to our school and buildings.

On the Job Injuries/Worker's Compensation

Worker's Compensation is mandated under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 152. The law provides for compensation to employees for on the job injuries and covers both medical costs and loss of income. If you are injured at work, you must see a Human Resources representative to complete the online Injury Report. The Human Resources representative will provide you with information regarding workers compensation and contact information. Please report all workplace injuries within 24 hours of the occurrence.

It is important that employees comply with providing notice to ensure immediate medical attention. Without an injury report on file, the employee may be denied reimbursement for medical treatment.

Should medical attention be required, the Department of Public Safety will provide assistance to college Health Services or Health Alliance Hospital. The prevention of injuries is the responsibility of every member of the college community. Please report any conditions that you believe to be unsafe to your supervisor.

Right-to-Know

The College is committed to protecting its employees from recognized hazards in the workplace. The main federal law covering issues of workplace safety is the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970 [OSHA]. Massachusetts has its own law called the Right-to-Know Law. It is the College's responsibility to generally provide a workplace that is free of dangers that could physically harm an employee.

Under the Massachusetts Right to Know Law and the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard you are entitled to receive information about the toxic substances that are used or stored in your workplace. This information is available to you in the form of a Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) - a technical fact sheet that describes the health effects and safe uses of the toxic products on the job. The MSDS is written by the product manufacturer who must give it to the College. In turn, the College must provide the MSDS to you, your union, or your doctor on request.

If you feel your work area is unsafe, make your supervisor aware of the potential danger and allow him/her to correct the problem. You may also contact the college's safety officer, Joanne Soczek at extension 3756.

An employee, who believes he or she has been discharged, disciplined or discriminated against by the College for exercising rights granted under the Law, has one hundred-eighty days to file a complaint with the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industries. A copy of the verified complaint must be sent to the College at the same time by certified mail. Employee's rights are further defined under Chapter IIIF of the Massachusetts General Laws and the Code of Massachusetts Regulations 441 CMR 21.00. For additional information you may call: the Emergency Response/Right-To-Know Program or the Bureau of Environmental Health Assessment at 617-624-5757.

Conscientious Employees

State law prohibits the College from taking any “retaliatory action” against an employee who engages in any of the following activities.

1. Disclosing to supervisor or public body an activity, policy or practice that the employee reasonably believes is in violation of law or that the employee reasonably believes poses a risk to public health, safety or the environment.
2. Providing information to or testifying before any public body conducting an investigation, hearing or inquiry into any violation of law or any activity, policy or practice which the employee reasonably believes poses a risk.
3. Objecting to or refusing to participate in any activity, policy or practice that the employee reasonably believes is in violation of a law or poses a risk to public health or the environment.

It is the employee’s responsibility to bring the activity, policy, or practice in question to the attention of his/her supervisor by written notice and afford the College reasonable opportunity to correct the activity, policy or practice.

Employee Discipline

Employees may be subject to disciplinary action if they violate college policy or contract provisions. Specific disciplinary procedures are described in the applicable collective bargaining agreement or Board handbook.

Grievance and Complaints

All employees have the right to file a grievance or an appeal if they believe that the college administration has violated a contract provision or a policy. Specific details on grievance procedures are contained in each respective collective bargaining agreement.

Use of College Equipment

Use of Telephones

College telephones are intended to be used for business purposes. While occasional and necessary brief local personal calls are permitted, employees are expected to limit such use.

Use of College Facilities

Cafeteria

The Commuter Cafeteria is located on the ground floor of the Hammond Campus Center. It is open only when classes are in session. The cafeteria is operated by an independent contractor. Holmes Dining Hall is available for employees use also. To take advantage of the meal plan offered by Chartwells, visit their office in Holmes or call 978-345-2551 for more information.

Library

The Hammond Library is located on North Street. Employees may check out books and other materials from the library by presenting their college employee identification cards.

Bookstore

The bookstore is located on the main floor of the Hammond Campus Center. Employees receive a 10% discount on textbook and on a variety of other items. The bookstore is operated by an independent contractor.

Lost and Found

Items found on campus should be turned in to the Campus Police Department in Russell Towers. Lost items should also be reported to the Campus Police at extension 3110.

Health Services

Health Services is located in the Anthony Building and provides assistance in emergency situations and first response. This office can be reached at extension 3216. The Campus Police respond to emergencies by calling 3111.

Recreation Services

The Recreation Center is located on North Street. The varied recreational opportunities offered are available to FSC students, faculty, staff and alumni, as well as citizens in the surrounding community. The hours of operation vary seasonally. Fees are charged for the use of the services provided. Membership is required. For information about employee rates, they may be reached at extension 3566.

Campus Mail

The Mailroom is located on the bottom floor of the Hammond Building. The campus mail is picked up and delivered daily to administrative and academic departments. The mail service is not to be used for personal mailings.

Campus Crime Awareness and Security

Reports of illegal or criminal activity can be made by telephone [978-665-3111], by using emergency call boxes located throughout the campus, or in person at the Campus Police Office, located in the lower level of the Russell Tower's residence hall. All members of the college community are encouraged to promptly and accurately report all crimes to Campus Police.

In accordance with the Campus Crime Awareness and Security Act, crime report statistics for the campus and adjacent neighborhood are reported on an annual basis. Brochures summarizing the statistical data are distributed throughout the campus and are available on line at the college's website www.fsc.edu.

Children and Pets in the Workplace

Although the College supports employees in balancing work lives and family lives, we must ask that employees find appropriate childcare arrangements rather than bringing children to work. Unfortunately, the College is not equipped to handle children, nor do we believe that the office is the appropriate place to entertain children. We understand that occasionally, there may be a situation where you do not have daycare and you cannot be absent from work. On these rare occasions, speak with your supervisor to request permission to bring your child to the workplace.

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION

Resignations

Classified employees are asked to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice when they resign from their positions at the college. Professional administrators are asked to provide one month's notice and faculty members are asked to give a full semester of notice, if possible. An appointment with the benefits administrator should be arranged during the last scheduled work week.

In order to receive a refund of retirement contributions, an application for a refund must be completed upon termination.

Under the provisions of COBRA (The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986), employees who leave their positions may continue health and dental insurance coverage at their own expense (full premium plus a small administrative fee) for a period of time. Details of this option are provided to employees by HRD during the scheduled appointment.

Retirements

Employees are asked to provide the college with written notice of their intentions to retire from state employment as much in advance as possible. Request is made because of the need to begin searches as early as possible and to plan for the substantial costs to the college that result from retirement provisions such as vacation leave payments and sick leave buy backs. (Specific notice is required under each collective bargaining agreement or Board handbook to be eligible for sick leave buy back.)

Retiring employees should schedule an appointment with the State Retirement Board several months before the retirement date. A retirement counselor will explain the various retirement options and provide an estimate of the retirement benefit the employee will receive.

An appointment with HR should also be scheduled to review plans for continuing insurance coverage, to obtain an estimate of sick leave buy back and, if applicable, vacation leave payoff, and to discuss other retirement-related issues

Reductions in Force [Retrenchments]

If a reduction in the workforce occurs due to fiscal exigencies, reorganization or program changes, the reduction will be administered in accordance with all applicable collective bargaining agreements and Board handbooks.

An appointment with HR will be scheduled for each employee who is affected by a reduction-in-force. Options for continuing insurance coverage under the provisions of COBRA and procedures for obtaining retirement contribution refunds will be explained at that time. Estimates of final pay may also be provided.

Involuntary Separations

Employees who leave college service on an involuntary basis may apply for a refund of retirement contributions and may also be eligible to continue health insurance at their own expense under the provisions of the COBRA law. An appointment with the benefits administrator in HR should be scheduled as soon as notice of termination is received.

Employee Handbook Receipt

This is to confirm my receipt of the Employee Handbook of guidelines related to Fitchburg State College's personnel policies and procedures.

I understand that I am responsible for reading and understanding the information within and that if I have any questions; I am to contact the Human Resources Department. I understand the Employee Handbook is not an employment contract and that it provides an overview of the College's employment policies or procedures as reported in the Handbook. I understand further that I can expect to be informed of any changes promptly.

September 1, 2007

Employee Handbook Date of Publication

Signature

Date

Print Name

Version 6. September 1, 2007