New Employee Orientation

Updated Aug. 18, 2011

The University of Saint Mary mission states that we educate students of diverse backgrounds to realize their God-given potential and prepare them for value-centered lives and careers that contribute to the well being of our global society.

A key step toward the fulfillment of that mission is to prepare and educate our faculty and staff to understand the values and purpose of the university, and to give them all of the tools necessary to facilitate the development of our most cherished resource—our students. To that end, USM is committed to staff & faculty development, which begins with an orientation program that gives our new employees a solid grounding in the workings of our institution.

USM recognizes that the orientation needs of our employees differ between faculty and staff and from department to department. But every employee needs a foundation in the basics of working at USM. The design of the orientation session all new employees attend helps meet that need.

The new employee orientation program includes:

- **Spire Guides.** Prior to orientation, all new employees are assigned a Spire Guide—a veteran employee who guides them through their first weeks on the job. Supervisors assign Spire Guides prior to the employee's arrival for first day of work
- **History & Mission.** New employees learn about the history and traditions of the university through a presentation by the director of mission.
- **New Employee Packet.** Employees receive a packet of information that helps facilitate their success as a member of the USM community. The university's public relations director maintains the packet and updates as needed. The packet includes:
    - The Saint Mary Way Guidebook- includes USM client service standards and guidelines for interacting with USM clients.
    - Calendars, covering the academic year, university governance, fine arts, and semester-specific sports
    - Saint Mary A-Z, a quick FAQ-styled document that touches on everything from eating at the dining hall to finding forms on eSpire
    - Campus map
    - Office map
    - Microsoft Outlook Primer
    - The most recent Spireworks, the monthly employee newsletter
    - A copy of the most recent *Aspire*, the alumni magazine
    - USM History & Traditions sheet outlining our key celebrations
    - USM Highlights, a brief look at recent accomplishments of the university and some key university facts and figures
    - Telephone directory
    - USM Organization Chart

    - Voicemail Set-Up Guide
    - Benefits “Quick Points”
    - Branding Standards Guide
    - Printing/Graphics Requests Procedures
    - University Social Media Usage Guide
    - USM Emergency Response Guide
    - TextCaster Sign-Up Info
    - Saint Joseph Dining Hall Lunch Hours, Cost, Where to Purchase Tickets
    - A guide to Downtown Leavenworth and a Leavenworth-area business list
    - Faculty receive a specialized Faculty Pamphlet and checklist that spells out the ongoing faculty orientation plan.

  Marketing staff assist going over the packet contents during the new employee orientation session
- **Information Services.** A representative from IS talks about eSpire, Outlook, and the Help Desk.
- **Employee Resources.** The payroll and benefits coordinator speaks briefly about where to find important forms and benefits information.
- **Business Office Matters.** Orientation facilitator briefs employees on check cashing, mileage reimbursement, tax-exempt certificates and other related issues.
- **FERPA (Family Educational Right and Privacy Act)-**Registrar gives brief overview of what it is and what employees should know about it regarding releasing information about students.
- **Faculty Specific Info.** The veteran faculty designee speaks with the faculty about their ongoing orientation program.

At USM, orientation is an ongoing and organic process. It begins with a new employee orientation session, but doesn’t end there. Saint Mary holds lunch-and-learn sessions throughout the year to cover important topics, and academic department heads offer a four-step process that begins before the new employee’s first day on the job and continues through their annual review.

The New Employee Orientation team offers formal new employee orientation twice a year—once before the start of the Fall Semester, and once shortly before the start of the Spring Semester. The New Employee Orientation team holds special orientation sessions as needed basis throughout the year whenever there are at least four new employees who haven’t been through the formal orientation program.