

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### UNIVERSITY HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

#### **Who determines the holiday/closing schedule for the University?**

The Chancellor approves the University holidays and closing schedule, based on input from the executive officers, as well as human resources, facilities, and academic affairs. Human Resources typically drafts various options and recommendations for consideration.

#### **How many holidays are provided to University employees each year?**

Just like other employees of the State, University employees receive either 11 or 12 holidays each year, depending on what day of the week Christmas falls.

This practice started in 1995. Before that, State employees received 11 holidays each year. In 1995, when the State legislators provided only a “minimal” (2%) salary increase for state employees, they also added an extra holiday in certain years. So now, in years when Christmas falls on a Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, employees receive 12 holidays. If Christmas falls on a Sunday, Monday, Friday, or Saturday, there are 11 holidays. The breakdown for 2009-2013 is as follows:

2009	11 holidays
2010	11 holidays
2011	11 holidays
2012	12 holidays
2013	12 holidays

#### **Do NC State employees get the same holidays as employees at other agencies and universities in the State of North Carolina?**

Yes. NC State employees get exactly the same total number of holidays as employees at all other state agencies and universities. Each campus of the University System, however, designates the specific days it observes as holidays, which can vary based on their academic calendar and other institution-specific factors.

#### **There are no “floating” holidays in 2009-2013. Did we lose a holiday?**

No. Those years include the same total number of holidays as always and the same as all other State employees receive.

### **Why was the floating holiday discontinued?**

Most other agencies and campuses have never designated any of their holidays as a “floating holiday”. This was something that NC State chose to do in recent years.

The floating holiday had positives and negatives. While it gave employees some flexibility in scheduling, supervisor approval was still required to use the floating holiday, just as it is for annual leave. Each year, several hundred employees neglected to use the floating holiday (even after repeated reminders), and, unlike annual leave, the holiday could not be carried over to the next year.

By designating all of the holidays in 2009 and 2010, the University is able to close for a 3-day weekend for Independence Day (July 4 falls on a Saturday in 2009 and on a Sunday in 2010). In 2011, by designating all of the holidays, employees will not need to take ANY of their own leave during the extended winter break.

### **Will the University continue the winter closing practice?**

Yes. For the foreseeable future, the University’s administration has decided to continue the practice of closing the University at a time when students are gone and most faculty and staff are already taking time off. The University saves hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy savings each year by doing so. This makes sense financially – as well as in our efforts to be a more “green” eco-conscious organization.

### **Is NC State the only UNC campus that closes for winter break?**

No. Several other campuses in the system have observed this practice for many years.

### **Couldn’t the University simply close for the winter break and designate those extra days off as additional holidays for employees?**

No, the State of North Carolina Legislature establishes the allowable number of holidays, and the University does not have the authority to add more holidays.

### **Will the University ever be able to offer more holidays to cover the winter break?**

Maybe. The UNC System is proposing legislation that may provide future opportunities to develop more autonomy for personnel-related programs to better meet our institutional needs. The ability to designate more holidays in the future could be a possibility if UNC gains that authority.

### **What happens to recently hired employees who haven't earned enough leave time to cover a winter break closing?**

Statistics show that relatively few leave-earning employees are hired in December. In such situations, departments may consult with Human Resources for recommendations and options. In some cases, for example, and depending on departmental needs and resources, employees may be able to work extra time during the period leading up to the break in order to use accrued comp time during the closing. Contact Employment Services for more information.

### **What if employees do not have leave to cover these days?**

Employees must plan ahead in order to have the necessary leave days to cover the absence. Employees who are hired in time to earn leave for December 2009 will have one day of vacation to use to cover the closing. State policy requires leave to be balanced at the end of the calendar year so employees who do not have leave to cover the absence will have their pay reduced for the hours that are needed.

### **What types of leave can employees use to cover the closing days?**

Employees can use annual leave, bonus leave, or accrued compensatory time to cover the closing day absences. Additional information on leave can be found at [www7.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/hrim/leave.asp](http://www7.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/hrim/leave.asp). The web leave system can be accessed at [www7.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/hrim/webleave.asp](http://www7.acs.ncsu.edu/hr/hrim/webleave.asp).

### **Will some departments be open on days that are designated as holidays and closings?**

Yes, some departments have essential work that must be done (related to animal care, research, safety, etc.). Employees who work in these areas should note that the university will be lowering thermostats in some buildings over the holiday/closing period and should dress accordingly.

### **If employees want to work on days that the University is closed, can they do this instead of using their leave?**

The intent is for the University to be closed so it is not the employee's choice to work or not. Supervisors, however, can require employees to work to perform essential functions.

### **Can employees be required to work on holidays? Do they get extra pay?**

Yes, supervisors can require employees to work on holidays. If they do so, SPA employees are paid holiday premium pay (an additional 1/2 of their regular rate) as well as given hour for hour comp time up to 8 hours.

**Can employees get additional pay for working on closings?**

No, however, these employees will retain the leave they would have had to use if they had not worked during the closing.

Example: Employee works 8 hours on December 29 that is designated as a holiday and 8 hours on December 30 that is designated as a closing. The employee would be paid holiday premium pay for the hours worked on December 29 and receive 8 hours of compensatory time. The employee would be paid regular pay for the hours worked on December 30 and does not use any leave for that day (no additional entry needed for payroll).

**Who can provide additional information?**

Employment Services can be contacted at 515-2135.

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