Executive Summary

Staff Senate conducted a survey in March of 2012 to gain an understanding of the need for MSU Classified Employees to supplement their salaries in order to meet “basic” needs, defined as being housing and groceries for example. Similar surveys were conducted in 2004, 2006, and 2008. Results for 2012 are similar to those of previous years. The 2012 survey differed from the surveys of previous years in that the survey was distributed to all 1,120 classified employees rather than taking a random sample. We received 536 responses (47%) and as a result of the strong response and high degree of correlation with norming questions we have a high degree of confidence that the results are reflective of the whole.

Over 75% of MSU Classified Employees responding (405) found it necessary to supplement their salaries in order to meet basic financial needs (defined as being housing and groceries for example).

36% (195) of MSU Classified Employees responding work one or more jobs in addition to their MSU job in order to meet their basic financial needs.

7.6% (41) of MSU Classified Employees responding rely on public assistance programs such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – formerly the Food Stamp Program), WIC (Women Infants and Children-Food and Nutrition Services), LIEAP (Low-Income Energy Assistance Program) and the Gallatin Valley Food Bank in order to provide for their basic needs.

Summary of Open Comments

The open comments of respondents indicate a general support of MSU and a dedication to the jobs they hold. While benefits such as health insurance were generally appreciated it was noted that the increasing cost of health insurance has resulted in lower take home pay. The requirement for employees to pay for parking continues to be viewed negatively by employees and there continues to be a call to be able to be paid twice monthly.

Conclusion

A substantial majority of MSU classified employees supplement their salaries in order to meet their basic needs. MSU has not made any significant progress in the past eight years in adjusting factors that cause classified employees to need to supplement wages earned at MSU in order to provide for their basic needs.