Closed for Winter Break - The university will be closed for Winter Break from December 23 through January 1. December 27, 30 and 31 should be recorded as paid time off on your timesheet. Departments and clinics that provide patient care or 24-hour service may observe a different schedule as determined by your department. Contact your manager with questions about your winter break schedule. Click here for details (www.hr.ou.edu/benefits/LeaveHolidays.asp). OU will reopen January 2, 2014.

Update to Retirement Plan Participation Rules
The Board of Regents approved an update to OU’s retirement plan participation rules in their December 5 meeting. Beginning January 1, 2014, benefits eligible hourly employees under age 28 will become full participants in the university's OU Contributory Retirement Plan. The previous minimum age and years of employment requirements have been eliminated. Benefits and plan rules remain the same for all participants.

This update was recommended in a recent review of OU’s retirement plans. The change will help OU maintain a regionally competitive benefits program assisting the university's recruiting, hiring, and employee retention efforts.

Current employees that become eligible for this new benefit will receive more information in the coming weeks. No action is required at this time. Retirement savings benefits will begin for these individuals in January.

The university makes contributions to a retirement savings account on behalf of benefits eligible hourly-paid and salaried employees. Click here to review information about the plans (http://hr.ou.edu/benefits/retirementplans/NewEmps.asp).

Medical Insurance Summaries – Click here to find summaries that can help you better understand your medical insurance (http://bit.ly/2014Summaries). They are provided as part of the Affordable Care Act. Review them alongside the BlueCross Plan Guide to get a full understanding of your medical insurance (http://bit.ly/2014Guide).

Have you moved in the last year? Help mail from OU and the insurance companies find you. Take a moment to update your address in Self-Service (www.hr.ou.edu/SelfServiceIntroduction.asp). Your annual W-2 tax form will also be sent to this postal mailing address in January.
**Performance Review Assistance for Managers** - Interested in making performance evaluations a positive career development tool for you and your employees? Human Resources is here to help. We’ll partner with you to review principles and processes that can turn this review period into the first part of an annual performance management cycle. This important cycle helps build careers and strengthen teams.

Review helpful guides and forms on the HR website ([www.hr.ou.edu/managers/Perfmgmt.asp](http://www.hr.ou.edu/managers/Perfmgmt.asp)). Contact Learning and Development for customized on-site training or Employee Relations for one-on-one help ([www.hr.ou.edu/contact.asp](http://www.hr.ou.edu/contact.asp)). **REMINDER:** Supervisors should submit the Performance Evaluation Summary Report to Human Resources by March 31.

**Early Pay Distribution in December** - The December paycheck for monthly-paid employees will be available on Friday, December 20. Biweekly-paid employees in Norman will be paid for the pay period ending December 13 on Friday, December 27. Paper paychecks in Norman cannot be picked up on December 27 because the Payroll Distribution office is closed December 23 - January 1. If you usually pickup your paycheck in Norman, the first available day to do so is Thursday, January 2.

**Payroll Deductions Look Different?** Deductions on your paycheck will change in January. Your paycheck in January will reflect the 2014 insurance premiums and any plan changes you made during Benefits Enrollment in November. If you have any questions about rates or plans, please contact Human Resources ([www.hr.ou.edu/directory.asp](http://www.hr.ou.edu/directory.asp)).

**Worried about that fever?** BlueCross members can call the free 24-hour BlueCross Nurseline to speak to a registered nurse day or night in English or Spanish about your health concerns. Get your questions answered. Call 1-800-299-0274.

**Save Money on Holiday Shopping** - Use the OU Employee Discount Program to find great offers including 25% or more off Harlem Globetrotters tickets, 15% off at CZ Jewels and great deals on fashion and décor from Antique Garden. Check out all the discounts here ([www.hr.ou.edu/edp/](http://www.hr.ou.edu/edp/)).

**Who’s New in HR?** Click here to meet HR’s new employees and see whose responsibilities have changed ([http://hr.ou.edu/news/Employees12122013.asp](http://hr.ou.edu/news/Employees12122013.asp)).