

Faculty Benefits Committee Annual Report

September 2014 – August 2015

Committee Members: Wayne Book (CoE-ME, retiree representative), Doug Britton (GTRI-ATAS), Michael Elliott (CoA-City & Regional Planning), Jason Freeman (CoA-Music; chair), Amy Herron (Controller's Office – Staff Appt.), Debra Lee (OIT – Staff Appt.), Tommy Little (Facilities – Staff Appt.), David Millard (GTRI-ICL), Stella Richardson (Library), Scott Morris (OHR), Jefferson Losse (student), Michelle Powell (Executive Board Liason).

Below are the key issues addressed by the committee in 2014-2015:

- **Transition to Defined Contribution for USG health plans:** The committee met with leadership from OHR and the BOR to learn about the system's plan, already underway, to transition to a defined-contribution approach to calculating employer contributions towards employee health premiums. This approach reduces financial risk to the USG by defining a fixed employee contribution regardless of which plan the employee chooses. The committee expressed serious concerns about the substantial premium increases employees under many plans are seeing as a result, and also about any possible changes to spousal coverage the BOR may be considering.
- **Retiree health exchange:** The committee also discussed with OHR and the BOR the transition of retirees to a defined-contribution private health care exchange. While the plan gives retirees more choices, the committee echoed the concerns of retirees across the system that it will lead to higher premiums and out-of-pocket expenses.
- **Health Insurance for GRAs:** The committee reviewed plans to offer ACA-compliant health insurance coverage to GRAs and offered guidance and advice to OHR throughout the process.
- **Anthem Data Breach:** The committee reviewed OHR and USG's response to the Anthem data breach and recommended additional ways to effectively communicate with the GT community about the breach.
- **JCCS:** The committee reviewed OHR's strategy regarding the job classification and compensation system for staff, until the departure of the director of OHR temporarily tabled this discussion.
- **Parking:** The committee continued a conversation with the director of parking and transportation about managing parking rates and began to coordinate with the parking/transportation advisory committee (PTAC), putting plans in place for permanent representation on PTAC from the Staff Council.
- **Coordination with the Staff Council:** The committee worked with Staff Council leadership and the Secretary of the Faculty on plans to coordinate the work of the Faculty Benefits Committee with that of the Staff Council's Benefits & Compensation committee and to ensure ongoing communication between the two entities. Corresponding updates to the faculty handbook are forthcoming.
- **Coordination with other entities:** The committee strengthened its relationship with OHR and with Campus Services in an effort to provide more timely and impactful guidance on benefits-related issues facing the campus. The committee continued its dialog with the office of total rewards at the BOR but remains frustrated by the lack of meaningful input from GT into USG benefits decisions and the relative secrecy under which these decisions are made. However, the committee was successful in lobbying the BOR to retain the Blue Cross HMO health plan and in appointing a member of the GT faculty to its Total Rewards Steering Committee.
- **Child Care during travel:** According to the new OMB uniform circular, employees may file for reimbursement for temporary child care expenses incurred during travel funded by federal grants, but only if the institution covers these expenses for all travel. The committee has been exploring next steps along with OSP, but there remain concerns about the potential financial impact to the Institute on travel supported directly by Georgia Tech.

No action items.