

Faculty Benefits Committee Annual Report

September 2015 – August 2016

Committee Members: Wayne Book (CoE-ME, retiree representative), Doug Britton (GTRI-ATAS), Michael Elliott (CoA-City & Regional Planning), Jason Freeman (CoA-Music; chair), Leslie Hall (HR Info System – Staff Appt.), Raquel Lieberman (Chemistry and Biochemistry – Vice Chair), Tommy Little (Facilities – Staff Appt.), Stella Richardson (Library), Kim Harrington (OHR), Decker Onken (student), Michelle Powell (Executive Board Liason).

Below are the most critical issues addressed by the committee in 2015-2016:

- **Parental Leave Policies.** The committee raised concerns that GT's parental leave policies for faculty are inadequate, routinely miscommunicated, and poorly documented – resulting in issues with faculty retention and recruitment and diminishing GT's aspirations to be a family-friendly workplace. The committee partnered with the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Office of Human Resources, and the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs to resolve misunderstandings about various parental leave policies and to author a brief document summarizing all relevant benefits and programs. That document, which was presented to the faculty executive board, is now being disseminated by the Vice Provost's office to HR reps and department chairs. It will also be distributed at new faculty orientation. The faculty benefits committee also continues to explore options for a dedicated paid parental leave program.
- **Health Care Pricing Strategies.** The committee continued to monitor recent changes to the Board of Regents' approach to pricing health care for active employees as well as its transition of retirees to a private health care exchange. The committee is primarily concerned that these changes will make it easier for the Board to make employees and retirees responsible for a greater and greater percentage of health care premiums over time. The committee met with Mark Braunstein, GT's representative on the Board's Total Rewards Steering Committee, and also met with Karin Elliot, the associate vice chancellor for Total Rewards for the Board (via a staff council meeting), to express our concerns about these pricing shifts.
- **Child Care.** The committee continues to receive complaints about the quality of child care at the R Kirk Landon Learning Center and the Children's Campus at Georgia Tech, and both centers remain under-enrolled. The committee forwarded these concerns to Rich Steele, senior director of Auxiliary Services at Georgia Tech, along with a list of GT faculty who had recently withdrawn from the center or were considering leaving. Auxiliary Services recently initiated a 3rd party review of the childcare program; results are pending. Affordability of child care also remains a central concern, particularly for students and staff. The committee also discussed concerns raised by the staff council regarding summer camps. OHR does purchase and provide a metro Atlanta summer camp directory and hosts a summer camp expo each year, but many on-campus summer camp opportunities are not included in that information, and many on-campus summer camps are out of financial reach of many staff and students.
- **One USG.** The Board of Regents continues its efforts to centralize and standardize HR benefits, policies, and systems across all of its campuses, often with little opportunity for input from Georgia Tech. The committee is concerned that, because of the diversity of schools within the USG system, this process does not always account for the unique needs of a top-10 public research university. Moving forward, the committee is interested in coordinating with the other R1 universities in the USG system to determine if there are common concerns and issues these institutions can together raise to the Board of Regents.

No action items.