

Benefits Committee Meeting Minutes  
January 27, 2016, 9:30-11 am  
OHR 214

**Present:** David Brown (new staff council chair), Brandon Conkle (HR representative), Michael Elliott, Jason Freeman (chair), Tommy Little (out-going staff council representative), Michelle Powell, Stella Richardson (Secretary)  
**Absent:** Wayne Book, Doug Britton, Raquel Lieberman

**Administrative:**

The December 1, 2015 minutes were approved without revisions.

**Updates:**

**Leave Policies**

- a. **Donated sick leave policy – use for FMLA** – Brandon stated that USG policy has a contradiction within it that needs to be clarified. In one section it includes use of donated leave for FMLA but excludes it in another. Georgia Tech has over 24,000 donated sick leave hours. We won't lose these hours under current policy but may in the future. In the short term there is no separate maternity/paternity leave policy. The committee reviewed the latest iteration of the USG policy ([http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/shared\\_sick\\_leave\\_program](http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/shared_sick_leave_program)), which seems to have eliminated any uncertainty: donated sick leave can be used “for the period of time deemed medically necessary by a health care professional which is typically the six weeks immediately following childbirth for normal delivery, without any complications.” Because this is the same period typically covered by STD, this policy is likely to have little practical benefit to most employees.
- b. **NSF definitions of family-friendly policies** – According to Michelle, the NSF leaves it up to institution to define this. Michelle will send information she has gathered to committee.
- c. **Improved communication / documentation from OHR** – Jason requested an opportunity to review draft communications from Athena. The committee suggested that the faculty affairs office be brought into the conversation. Brandon suggested inviting Karin Elliot along with an administrator from faculty affairs. The committee agreed.
- d. **Treating 9 month faculty as 12 month employees** – Brandon stated that this is being discussed at the USG level to be included as part of the One USG policy. Jason asked about the implications of such a

policy. Brandon stated that the current discussions suggest making it an option for 9-month faculty to have their salary and benefits prorated over 12 months. Because the summer pay would not be tied to an ability to work over the summer months, the committee suggested that this would have little effect on disability coverage for 9-month faculty over the summer.

- e. **Next steps / timeline / strategy / who to involve** – Jason stated that he has reviewed peer institutions on leave policies for tenure track faculty and sees policies that are not much different from ours. UC Berkeley has received Sloan foundation money to support their family friendly policies (see <http://ucfamilyedge.berkeley.edu/initiatives.html>). The committee suggested that we try to build a case internally with examples of how the lack of a separate maternity leave policy adversely affects recruiting efforts, and consider advocating for dedicated funds to support a separate 12-week paid leave program as a development priority for GT.

## 2. Updates from Staff Council

**New leadership** –Tommy's term expired on 12/31/2015. He chose not to run again. David Brown is the new chair of Compensation and Benefits. He will select a second person to attend our meetings. The agenda from the last staff council will continue. The council will hold office hours at the CRC for Q&A sessions. Tommy stated that a new JCCS scale will probably roll out in 2017. Jason asked David to include him on email invites for staff council meetings, etc. Tommy will continue to attend our meetings for a little while to help David's transition onto the committee.

- 3. **Child care centers update** – Raquel and Jason have met with Rich Steele to discuss continuing parent concerns at the centers. Steele said that he has only received good reports about the schools and is not aware of dissatisfaction from staff and faculty. Raquel has assembled a group of faculty who have recently pulled their kids out of the centers, or are considering doing so, because of ongoing issues. The annual parents' survey from Bright Horizons is currently taking place.
- 4. **OHR updates** – Brandon stated that enrollment issues are being dealt with since first deductions are now showing up on paychecks. We are not currently able to get good statistics for Tech retirees from the Aon exchange. Individual institutions only have access to aggregated information. Most retirees have enrolled for prescription only plans. The Tech Human Resources office arranged for a representative from the USG to attend the Silver Jackets meeting that was held on January 8<sup>th</sup>. It was not as widely

attended as last one. Communication with retirees is mainly through Silver Jackets. GT has approximately 5000 retirees.

Tuition assistance programs (TAP & STRAP) have operated at a deficit for a number of years. There is a fixed allocation of foundation money that is used to fund these programs. TAP is a tuition waiver and STRAP is a reimbursement that is funded by Tech.

5. The additional discussion items listed below were tabled until the next meeting.
  - a. Balance of Teaching / Research Responsibilities / Enrollment Growth
  - b. Transition from Full-time Faculty to Retirement