

Benefits Committee Meeting Minutes—Draft--

February 24, 2016, 9:30-11 am

OHR 214

Present: Wayne Book, David Brown (Staff Council Chair), Brandon Conkle (HR representative), Michael Elliot, Jason Freeman (Chair), Stella Richardson (Secretary), Raquel Lieberman, Michelle Powell

Administrative: The minutes from the January 24, 2016 meeting were approved without changes.

Updates:

Leave Policies – updates, strategies, next steps

Maternity/paternity leave: Raquel and Jason have met with Susan Cozzens in the Provost's office to discuss this issue. The office is aware of it and agree that there is no clear path to take. Susan thinks that the committee is on the right track by working on this issue. She likes the suggestion of finding a donor to undercut the costs of a dedicated leave benefit. She is also interested in whether we can get data on cost to endow or underwrite benefit costs. Michelle reminded the committee that staff have other options like vacation accruals that faculty don't have. Brandon is pulling some numbers specific to faculty so data can be shared with the provost's office.

Brandon stated that the BOR has talked about amending the sick leave policy but have to consider cost control. Mike interjected with a question of whether or not we are talking about maternity or paternity leave or both. Jason added that if we're looking at both it would probably double the cost. Mike said that he thinks there needs to be extensive consideration for how to get a good estimate of cost based on salary, age, etc. Brandon said they would probably look at medians and then do a standard deviation. Brandon will try to get figures within a couple of weeks.

The short term goal is to better communicate what benefits currently exist. Susan has offered to help with communications. The committee needs to decide whether to invest time to work with the Provost's office and the Office of Human Resources to collect and structure information. Raquel stated that her college (of Science) has a brochure with high level information. Many did not know it exists.

Jason asked what information needs to be put into a communications document. The consensus was to use Raquel's document as a starting point. The goal is to develop a good document to share with others (associate deans, vice provosts office, HR, etc.) for feedback, then turn it over to communications officer.

ACTIONS: Designated committee members will write up a paragraph for each area. Brandon will handle Short-Term Disability and FMLA. Raquel will take Active Service Modified Duties (ASDM). Jason will adapt the sick leave text. Michelle will adapt what's on the brochure regarding extending probationary period for tenure and how it relates to 9-month faculty. There may need to be some distinction between 9 and 12 month faculty. Michael will review and document leave with pay options and what happens over the summer for 9 month faculty.

The committee debated at length the appropriate scope of the document, and reached consensus that as a first step, it should focus on academic faculty and specifically on maternity/paternity leave

options – the committee can consider expanding later, or creating parallel documents for different employee groups and work/life balance issues. The primary audience for the document is faculty who are expecting a child, along with the school chairs, HR administrators, and others who currently advise these faculty on available benefits. A secondary audience is faculty candidates who specifically request information on family leave policies.

Sabbatical leave was discussed – term not used anymore – the committee decided to leave this out of the current document because it is out of scope to this narrow focus.

Jason stated that our takeaway from this discussion is that it is important to put this information in a document so faculty are aware of these benefits. He will create a google doc draft that everyone can use to include information.

Update from Staff Council- David reported that the council are in the process of setting up committees. Invitations have been sent out for others to join. They are working with HR to set up a class on how to structure their office in CRC.

Child care centers update-Raquel stated that there are no new updates. The outcome from the meeting with Rich Steele was to make a list of unhappy faculty. That was done and the list was passed along to him. So far there has been no follow-up from him. Brandon added that Julie Elion is reviewing this issue from the staff side.

OHR updates—Brandon reported that the Board of Regents has delayed implementation of One USG at Georgia Tech.

Balance of Teaching / Research Responsibilities / Enrollment Growth-This item was tabled until the next meeting.

b. Transition from Full-time Faculty to Retirement- Wayne stated that this was a simple transition for him. The emeritus faculty benefit has many options to continue some sort of work at GT. He sees this as a positive. Some emeritus faculty teach classes but the pay isn't great – the ability to continue doing research is the main draw from Wayne's perspective. The committee discussed the changing balance between TRS and ORP and debated how that will affect faculty incentives to retire. Wayne agreed to gather more information from Silver Jackets and report back at a future meeting.