

# Faculty Benefits Committee Meeting - August 18, 2016

9:30-11:30 AM Petit Institute Bldg., Room 1316

## Minutes

**Attendees:** Doug Britton (Secretary), David Brown, Cathy Carpenter, Jason Freeman, Darrell Gray (Staff Council Representative), Raquel Lieberman (Chair), Stella Richardson.

**Administrative:** The minutes from the April 27, 2016 meeting were approved unanimously.

**Committee Business:** Jason Freeman made a motion to nominate Raquel Lieberman as the Chair, Doug Britton seconded, all approved. Raquel Lieberman nominated Doug Britton as Secretary, and Jason seconded, and all approved.

The committee is required to make a presentation to the Faculty Senate on committee activities for FY16, and since both Jason Freeman (past chair) and Raquel Lieberman (current chair) have conflicts, Doug Britton was asked to make the presentation. Britton was to receive the written summary of committee activities from Freeman.

## Continuing Business:

### Retiree Email for Life

Retirees are being offered the opportunity to forward email from their GT addresses, but they will no longer be able to access their GT email accounts directly. Jason Freeman brought up the topic, and discussion followed. The general committee consensus is that this has not been a major issue for retirees given the communication and outreach by OIT (see minutes from 2016/04/27). Decision was made to not take any action on this item at this time.

### Faculty Leave Benefits Documentation

Discussion continued on the document that the committee generated and provided to Susan Cozzens in the Provosts office. Summary of the discussions included

- The document has been generated and finalized
- The primary objective of this document is to provide consistent and accurate information for use during faculty orientation as a resource for faculty longer term
- The committee never received the count of 9-month faculty who do not accrue benefits
- Susan Cozzens said that the Provost's Office is using the document, distributing to school chairs, and for onboarding, etc.
- The committee felt it was a good sign that the other groups within the institution are taking ownership of this process/document
- Jason Freeman asked if the committee should advocate for a separate leave policy for 9-month faculty – discussion followed, but no immediate decision or action was articulated – the previous HR Rep on the committee was going to look into budget implications for this idea, but nothing was delivered prior to their departure
- Jason Freeman also mentioned that he has still not received an answer on why there is an age limit on adoption leave – He has asked multiple times and has simply not received a reply

While there are no specific action items for this topic, the committee will continue to monitor the use of the document and attempt to capture any of the outstanding data items that remain unanswered.

#### Summer Camp Procedures

As a continuation of the previous meetings discussion, the committee discussed the implications of summer camps that may or may not be approved by Georgia Tech and who may or may not have completed the appropriate training. Candice Bovian is the contact for summer camps coordination and management. Some preliminary probing by committee members indicated that most camps are in compliance and following the campus procedures. This item will be considered closed at this time.

#### Balance of Teaching/Research given Enrollment Growth

The committee briefly discussed some of the challenges associated with the growth in enrollment, class sizes, and the balance between teaching and research expectations. One issue is that as the enrollment grows, the associated teaching loads increase, however colleges are not necessarily hiring more faculty to teach these courses. As a result, faculty are expected to just absorb the additional teaching load, while still maintaining a full research program. In addition, competition for research funds from national/federal sources has increased significantly, making it very difficult on faculty who often have 9-month appointments, and must recruit summer coverage through research. No specific action item was identified.

#### Transitioning from Full-time Faculty to Retirement

The committee discussed a potential issue that may arise over the 10-15 years, as the bulk of the faculty retiring shift from those primarily participating in the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) to those participating in the Optional Retire Program (RP). The TRS retirement system has some built-in incentives to retire (fixed monthly income, adjusted bi-annually for inflation, etc.), and remaining fully employed can financially have either a neutral or potentially negative impact. In TRS faculty have access to full benefits after 30 years of service regardless of age, or can opt to retire after 25 years of service with a penalty. As a result, most faculty in TRS opt to retire, claim full benefits and then sometimes return in an emeritus or adjunct status if they desire to continue being involved with Georgia Tech. However, with ORP, faculty are fully dependent on the performance of their personal retirement savings stock portfolio, which in recent years has not seen significant growth. As a result, with the ORP system, there are no incentives to retire, which could lead to faculty waiting much later to retire, and tying up faculty positions for the colleges and departments. This could lead to our most expensive faculty sticking around longer, becoming potentially less productive, and occupying faculty positions that otherwise cannot be filled.

The committee discussed how this might cause significant financial strains on the university, as well as limit ability to recruit new faculty further exacerbating the teaching/research balance given the enrollment growth. Other institutions are apparently offering incentives for early retirement as a means of addressing this looming challenge. Apparently, the Univ. of IL, Champaign Urbana has offered a one year buy-out for faculty willing to retire early. Georgia Tech does not have any options at this time. The committee did not identify any immediate action items for this topic.

#### On-campus Childcare Survey

Rich Steele in Auxiliary Services has contracted with a daycare consultant to review the two Daycare facilities and operations on campus. This external review is currently underway, and involves discussions with current parents, past parents, potential parents who didn't enroll, etc. One of the goals is to understand why there is a discrepancy between the internal surveys conducted by the current vendor, Bright Horizons, and the general perception of these centers by the broader campus communities.

Some of the challenges discussed by the committee include:

- The high cost is above other similar daycare centers in the area
- Staff members cannot really afford it, and as a result do not
- The lack of differential in cost for non-GT, providing little incentive for GT parents to consider it
- The tradeoffs between cost and locations

The committee felt that in most of the cases the reputation of the centers depend on the vendor's leadership, both locally at the center and at the corporate level above. If the consultant's recommendation is to release the external vendor and run the centers internally, there was question as to whether Georgia Tech would be willing to pursue this option. Jason Freeman suggested that the committee wait and review the external consultant's report, and then decide on any actions, such as supporting any recommended changes if appropriate. No other immediate action items were identified for this topic.

#### Update from HR

No HR representative was available to attend this meeting. The past HR representative, Brandon Conkle, has taken a new position at another university. Raquel Lieberman was going to work with HR to identify who the new HR representative to the committee should be.

#### Discussion of the Committee Objectives and Membership

Raquel Lieberman reviewed the mission and objectives for the committee, and opened the floor for new topics that should be considered by the committee. Discussion on the mission of this committee and possible new actions/topics included:

- The committee's obligation to review programs and provide feedback
- The committee might have an opportunity to have a voice with the new Chancellor
- Might be worth to meet with counterparts at other Research Institutions to discuss areas of common interest
- Members would like for the committee to be relevant and contribute to the benefits process.
- In the past, some of the leadership in HR, while willing to meet individually with the chair, have been hesitant to meet with the full committee – some surmised that maybe a result of the formal nature of the committee with official minutes etc.
- The suggestion was made to consider including a representative from the Provosts office as standing member of the committee

Raquel Lieberman had invited Mark Braunstein, currently the GT representative on the BOR health services committee, to participate on this committee, but he wasn't sure if he could participate. Jason Freeman pointed out that it was through a BOR visit last year that the committee realized there was no GT representative on this committee, and he was able to get Mark appointed to the committee.

### **New Business**

There were no new items presented for consideration at the next meeting.

Continuing business items for follow-up include:

1. Monitor the use of the Family Leave document to ensure adequate dissemination
2. Wait for the report from the External Daycare Consultant and reconsider potential committee action at that time

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned around 11AM.