

Minutes: Meeting of the Faculty Senate Benefits and Professional Development Committee  
01/31/18 (held in SMC 720)

In attendance: Gregory Kaplan (Committee Chair), Beauvais Lyons (UT Faculty Senate President), Stefanie Benjamin, Celeste Carruthers, Pedro Tomás

The meeting was called to order at 4.00 PM

1. Update on the University of Memphis Approved Motion on Ability to Withdraw Retirement Plan Funds (which was approved by the Benefits Committee and the UT Faculty Senate in the fall of 2017).

President Lyons updated the committee on a video conference held on January 24, which involved representatives from the State of Tennessee Office of the Treasurer as well as representatives from colleges and universities from across the state. During the meeting, the components of proposed state legislation concerning the withdrawal of funds for ORP participants to annuitize. The Benefits and Professional Development Committee concurred with President Lyons that a component of the proposed legislation, which would eliminate the obligation placed on the State of Tennessee to enlist two or more companies as sponsors of ORP plans, may not be in the best interest of ORP participants. The Committee raised an issue with the potential lack of competition between or among plans that might result from the elimination of this obligation. There was consensus that, if UT were to only enlist one company as a sponsor, fees for ORP participants might increase.

2. PPL (Paid Parental Leave)

The committee continued a discussion that began last fall (2017) concerning the possible enactment by UT of a policy regarding PPL. Topics that were once again considered included the current policy regarding parental leave (UT HR0338-Family and Medical Leave), how a PPL policy might affect the tenure clock, whether Departments should have their own policies or whether there should be a university-wide policy, how such a policy might apply to faculty with dual appointments, and whether the Committee would be considering a policy for both staff and faculty and for both nine- and twelve-month employees.

Kaplan suggested that the Committee take a look at the following web site from the University of Arizona, <https://hr.arizona.edu/employees-affiliates/leaves/paid-parental-leave>, which appears to possess a policy that the Committee might want to use as a model for a possible UT policy.

The Committee concurred that it would be valuable to review UT HR policies concerning leaves, and Kaplan will provide such a review to the Committee at its next meeting (date/time TBA). Kaplan will also contact Mary Lucal, the Associate Vice Chancellor of HR, and report to the Committee.

The Committee also discussed how a PPL policy might affect the tenure clock. This issue will continue to be discussed by the Committee. In particular, future discussion will explore whether a PPL recommendation for the Faculty Handbook is necessary.

The Committee reached a consensus with respect to the issues of staff/faculty and nine-/twelve- month employees, namely, that, insofar as 12-month faculty/staff already possess leave time, it would be more efficacious to begin considering the implementation of a PPL policy for these employees of UT before moving on to nine-month employees.

With respect to the issue of a PPL policy for faculty with dual appointments, Carruthers kindly agreed to collect information and pass it along to the Committee. This information will be discussed at the next Committee meeting (date/time TBA).

The meeting was adjourned at 4.37 pm  
Respectfully submitted,  
Gregory Kaplan, 02/1/18