

Benefits and Professional Development Committee
April 18, 2022 – Meeting Minutes

Present: Andrew Griffith, Anne Ho, Laurie Knox, Stephanie Madison

Absent: Brad Case, Jeremy Chandler, Tony Estep, Elena Shpak, Liz Teston, Forbes Walker

Updates on our annual goals

- Follow up on family leave policy implementation, especially as it applies to teaching faculty. How are units actually implementing it?
 - Lou replied to our email, and it seems like the update did not go out to the Deans and Department Heads list. He will ask the Provost about informing all faculty.
 - We will see if the Faculty Senate can send an update to all faculty at the end of the semester that has important updates from each committee.
 - Laurie is going to draft a message about where to find the updated policy that could be included in Tennessee Today.

- Meet with HR about what benefits are available to all categories of faculty and staff.
 - Overall, we have accomplished this goal. HR's website is being updated.
 - HR said that offer letters are not required to include the statement that health insurance benefits do not begin for at least one month after their start date.
 - Staff do receive a separate email that has links to all of the benefits information.
 - Full-time faculty do have a statement about this in their appointment letter.
 - It seems like certain visas do require insurance on day one of employment.
 - Employees or departments can purchase the UT Student Health Insurance to cover the gap in coverage.
 - The Center for Global Engagement does work with all new international employees and provides them with the necessary information.

- Educate ourselves on and then document kinks and problems that people are facing in actually taking advantage of benefits, maybe create a faculty-wiki on how to navigate issues.
 - Lou suggested that we use the Caucuses to collect that feedback.
 - We had a discussion about how each caucus functions. Some caucuses meet monthly and then send the information to departments or back to Faculty Senate. Other caucuses are only used to find faculty to run for Faculty Senate.
 - Perhaps next year, there could be more guidance on how each caucus should function.

- Explore how professional development policies apply to all categories of faculty and staff.
 - We will revisit next year.