

UNIVERSITY BENEFITS COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2022 – 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Via Teams

Present: Liz Guess, Chris McCord, John Boswell, Terry Borg, Kevin Reynolds, Ellen Hamrick, and Kate Cady

Absent: Nancy Petges, Dan Pedersen, and Phillip Torgerson

I) Old Business

- A) John Boswell was elected Chair of the committee. Kate Cady agreed to serve as secretary for this meeting with hope that we might rotate notetaking duties for the rest of the semester.
- B) Bereavement and parental leave discussion ensued. In the fall, the committee gathered information about bereavement leaves and FMLA leaves from peer universities after the U of Illinois' recent increase in bereavement leave to 5 days. No action will be taken, but thoughts to consider for the future include increasing bereavement leave to have a potentially low cost way to stand out as more generous for recruitment purposes as well as considering adding leave for attending funerals of co-workers or friends. The data collected may be of use to this committee or others in the future.

Pursue any changes to bereavement leave?: Y 1/N 4/abstain 1

Pursue any changes to parental/FMLA leave: Y 0/N 5/abstain 1

The committee will discuss how to publicize bereavement leave webpage so employees know they have this benefit.

- C) Discussing the purview of the Benefits Committee was tabled for a future meeting

II) Constituent Reports

- a. Annuitants Association – Terry Borg: no report
- b. SPS – no report
- c. Operating Staff and Civil Service—Ellen Hamrick: no report
- d. Faculty – Kate Cady, Chris McCord: no report

e. Provost's Office – Kevin Reynolds: no report

f. Human Resources – Liz Guess had a few items to report:

*note changes in COVID protocols: 10 day quarantine changed to 5 days, “up-to-date” means a booster plus full course of initial vaccine(s), vaccinated employees now being tested

*new IL rule to reduce the FMLA benefit requirement to 1000 hours worked in a year took effect this month

*there are a few other bills HR is watching

*Liz Guess was recently elected to serve on the SURS Members Advisory Committee (SURSMAC) Executive Committee.

At some point during the constituent reports, John Boswell asked if the new work from home policy is considered a benefit. Discussion ensued, and the question was answered in the affirmative. Details about providing feedback before the policy is finalized were discussed. It was suggested that NIU use the policy for recruitment.

III) New Business - None

IV) Announcements – Next meeting will be February 3, 2022

V) Adjournment