

**Annual Report of
Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee, 2016-2017**

1. Benefits and Leaves of Absence – The committee had several discussions about the option of a paid parental leave benefit to USPS and A&P employees at UCF. The topic was broadened to inquire about sick leave, tuition waiver, parental leave, and other benefits.
 - a. Information provided by the Office of Legal Counsel and HR indicated that all employees have access to leave programs depending upon slight variations in type of employment.
 - b. A subcommittee is continuing to gather information about types of benefits that exist at other similar academic institutions.

2. 403b changes – Representatives of HR provided details about updates concerning the changes to the optional 403b plan. Beginning April 21, 2017, all employees can choose from Fidelity, TIAA, or VALIC to oversee contributions to individual retirement accounts.
 - a. The changes reduced the total providers to three remaining providers in this plan with a more streamlined investment menu. The rationale for the changes was discussed, e.g., the reduction of higher fees which reportedly addressed the economies of scale. It was noted that information and advice from the Capital Trust firm would assist client decision-making to compare fees and options. Additionally, a discussion took place concerning the concerns of several participants about the reduction of options. Nevertheless, participants may opt for a self-directed brokerage menu available for those desiring to have more direct control of their investments. HR representatives have provided presentations about the changes to several academic entities and will provide more upon request.
 - b. Human Resources announced that it will start the process of completing an ITN (Intent to Negotiate) for insurance brokerage services specific to supplemental employee benefits. The committee was tasked to identify any gaps in our benefits structure for suggestions on benefits to be included in the future ITN. The committee also proposed review and possible changes to the current available dental coverage plans.
 - c. A remaining concern was voiced regarding how to more effectively communicate potential changes and decision to individuals prior to such specific revisions in the investment options in order to anticipate concerns. Proactive communication efforts were urged with individuals who might not have been alerted to the deadline for final decision.

3. Communicating benefits to employees – Several discussions took place concerning the best mechanisms to communicate benefits information to the UCF community.
 - a. See Item 7b. Improving/Increasing Communication of Benefits, Opportunities, etc. to faculty and staff

4. Reduced Retirement Contributions – The committee discussed whether or not the required 3% ORP employee contributions (2011) might be rescinded—previously no employee contribution was required. Concern was voiced in terms of its impact upon staff in the lower pay ranges. Inquiries to the faculty senate, and state-level ACFS regarding the possibility of rescinding the cost and increasing the employer's contribution back to the original levels. Findings indicate that this is a state-wide benefit, the only changes would be a legislative decision.

5. Health and Wellness Programs – The committee was updated regarding the availability of employee wellness programs at UCF. HR identified programs in collaboration with the health insurance plan as well as the Health and Wellness Resources website. Interest was expressed in exploring other wellness initiatives (i.e. group fitness, dedicated exercise facilities for faculty and staff, biometric screenings, incentives for attaining wellness goals, stress management, etc.) Improved availability at less or no cost of current wellness facilities to all UCF personnel was encouraged.
6. Committee Logistics – meetings and assignments
 - a. The committee and HR agreed that advanced scheduling by use of a Doodle Poll would help ensure greater participation of faculty, staff and other personnel would be used for all committee meetings.
 - b. The committee elected a member to the Staff Sick Leave Pool Karen Kent-Walsh, and Ida Cook to serve as Secretary to the Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee. A subcommittee was established to explore varieties of benefits and leave at other academic institutions.
7. Future Topics for Committee Consideration –
 - a. Dental Plan Options – Citing less than positive feedback from faculty and staff users, the Human Resources department requested permission (ITN) from the UCF purchasing department to obtain bids on dental and other supplemental policies.
 - b. Improving/Increasing Communication of Benefits, opportunities, etc. to faculty and staff –The need for creating communication and interaction opportunities and approaches to share and promote interaction between faculty/staff is encouraged. Subject information is not limited to administrative information but should include access to opportunities for the arts, athletics, etc. Among the suggestions were use of technology/internet platforms and/or different locations/ facilities for monthly or weekly get-togethers, further discussion and exploration is required.
8. Committee Membership: The committee recommends that representation of an A&P employee be included as a member on the Faculty and Staff Benefits committee to enable their input to discussion and decisions. The mechanism for election to become determined by the Faculty Senate in revision to the Faculty Constitution (possible rotation between colleges might be an option).

The committee met four times (twice during Fall semester and twice during Spring semester):
September 26, 2016, December 6, 2016, January 31, 2017, and April 10, 2017.

Respectfully submitted:

Edwin N. Torres, Chair
Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee
May 15, 2017