

TO: Fr. Timothy R. Lannon, S.J., President

FROM: Gintaras Duda, Ph.D, Benefits Committee Chair
Michele Starzyk, Committee on the Status of Women Chair

SUBJECT: Paid Parental Leave Proposal

DATE: April 12, 2012

On March 17, 2010, the Benefits Committee and the Committee on the Status of Women stood before President's Cabinet and proposed a paid parental leave policy. Post Strategic Program Prioritization and administrative changes, we respectfully submit the current enclosed proposal for your review and consideration.

Our committees have spent a great deal of time compiling a proposal that allows administration a choice in implementation, to allow for compliance with university priorities. It should be noted however, that while we submit three options for consideration, we strongly endorse the four week paid parental leave for all new birth and adoptive parents. This policy would operationalize our university mission, which states that our core values include the "importance of family life". Additionally, a four week paid leave is in line with your email to our community calling for our continued support of the family and is comparable to that offered by peer institutions.

The Benefits Committee and the Committee on the Status of Women have received tremendous support for this initiative from individuals and entities across campus. The Staff Advisory Council, Women in Medicine and Science, Faculty and Academic Councils have all voted to endorse this proposal and advance it for your consideration. Additionally, Tara McGuire, the university's new budget director, has communicated with our work groups that this policy would be budget neutral.

However, it has come to our attention that several versions of this proposed policy are being preemptively implemented around the university. While we appreciate the enthusiasm surrounding this justice initiative and the acknowledgement that paid parental leave is desperately needed, we are concerned that without a formal adoption from your Cabinet, the proposal will be implemented in a variety of manners which will only create further inconsistencies throughout the university. Additionally, Jeff Branstetter, Associate Vice President for Human Resources, has expressed concern that a haphazard and inconsistent implementation of the policy could leave the university open to potential litigation.

For example, we have been made aware of one dean currently interpreting and implementing this proposal, not yet policy, in a manner inconsistent with the spirit of the

authors. Our committees' intention in not authoring specific language in regards to faculty was to respect shared governance. This would allow administrators to enlist faculty input, through bodies such as Faculty Senate and Academic Council, to create a flexible, yet consistent interpretation of four paid weeks leave for faculty members. We hope that this conversation can still occur so that inconsistencies in interpretation do not further divide our community.

Please accept our enclosures as our official submission of this proposal for consideration by the university. We would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you or your leadership team may have.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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Benefits Committee Chair
Associate Professor of Physics

Michele Starzyk
Committee on the Status of Women Chair
Assistant Vice President for Student Life