

**Senate Benefits and Welfare Committee
University of Pittsburgh
Minutes of October 10, 2023 – online meeting via Zoom**

Attendees:

Lovett, Laura; Judy Callan; Coldren, Angela; Glynn, Nancy W; Tammeka Banks; Ann Mitchell; Melissa Kluchurosky; Lindsay Rodzwick; Tashbook, Linda; Overton, Sanai A; Levine, Marty L; Newhill, Christina; Irene Kane; Morel, Penelope A; Velankar, Sachin; R. Donald Hoffman; Young, Kate; Rapchak, Marcia; Kear, Robin L.

Guest Speaker: Kate Young

Minutes taken by: Linda Tashbook

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION TO TAKE
<p>Committee Business</p>	<p>Welcome new members Carma Repcheck - elected Marcia Rapchak – elected Chantelle Anthony – College of General Studies Sanai Overton – Student Government Board Iven Schmidt – Graduate and Professional Student Government Stanley Seah – University of Pittsburgh Post Doctoral Association -- Graduate Students’ Health Insurance In mid-August, graduate student employees were informed that their health insurance costs would increase exponentially—by 400-600% according to a petition from graduate student workers. (Note that premiums went down, but out of pocket co-payment costs increased. There is a total cap on individual student’s or covered family members’ out of pocket medical costs of \$4,200. So, if a graduate student has a hospitalization that would cost \$10,000 out of pocket, they are only required to pay \$4,200.) The grad student workers presented that petition to the Vice Provost for Graduate Studies and then the University established the “Pitt Student Health Insurance Medical Hardship Assistance Fund ...to assist students covered by Pitt’s student health insurance plan who are impacted by recent health insurance changes and face financial hardships due to medical costs for services.” The university also established a Student Employee Health Insurance Task Force which is co-chaired by Carla Panzella (from the Provost’s office) and Melissa</p>	<p>Here are the facts about student health insurance plans, in case you want to point co-workers to the rates and coverage: https://www.hr.pitt.edu/students/student-health-plans</p>

	<p>Kluchurosky (from the Benefits office). Laura Lovett represents the Benefits and Welfare Committee on that Task Force and presented a full report of issues that the Task Force will take up: Some grad students selected Pitt, in part, because of the previously inexpensive health insurance. Students with chronic illness, disabilities, dependents, and those in need of gender affirming care are most affected by the increased out-of-pocket costs. There is a call for an increase in the University-provided Student Health Insurance Stipend. Laura noted that the Benefits office talks about not increasing undergrad student health insurance costs in the past nine years and not increasing graduate students' health insurance costs in last twenty years, without also addressing the stipend. Melissa responded that the stipend is a function of the Provost's chain of command, not the Benefits Office.</p> <p>World Mental Health Day</p> <p>Since today is World Mental Health Day, I will remind you all that this Senate committee has a task force called the Mental Wellness Task Force which hosts a monthly Family Support Group and a Mental Wellness Book Club and. The Family and Friends Support Group is a lunch hour- bring your own brown bag opportunity for faculty and staff to talk about their ongoing experiences with folks who live with mental illness. Our next Mental Wellness Book Club meeting will be on December 5 at Room 310 in the WPU. Bill Ankrom from the Task Force and Gretchen Young from Life Solutions will co-host the discussion of <u>Success: How to Achieve Your Goals</u>. If any of you, as members of the Benefits and Welfare Committee would like to join the Mental Wellness Task Force, please send email to tashbook@pitt.edu.</p> <p>Wellness Activity: Tree Trek on the Oakland Campus</p> <p>Anyone seeking to take a break, breathe deeply, enjoy nature, or get some exercise should consider walking through the Oakland Campus Tree Trek. This is a one-mile self- guided tour of seventeen species of trees that grow between the William Pitt Union and the Heinz Chapel. It was developed by Mark Adrian, Jason Beal, Samantha Chan, Stefanie Coburn, and Patty Himmelright in the Business and Operations Emerging Leaders Program.</p>	<p>Here is the calendar note for the next meeting of the Family and Friends Support Group.</p> <p>https://calendar.pitt.edu/event/mental_wellness_taskforce_family_and_friends_support_group_7044</p> <div data-bbox="1073 1425 1516 1648" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Details about the trees and the route are online at https://www.sustainable.pitt.edu/campus-tree-trek/</p> </div>
Benefits Office Report	<p>https://www.hr.pitt.edu/current-employees/work-life-balance/wellness-for-life/wellness-incentives -- Wellness incentives</p>	<p>Please remind colleagues that they can get vaccines on campus at the Vaccination and Health Connection</p>

	<p>https://www.hr.pitt.edu/news/fall-2023-flu-shot-clinics - flu shot clinics</p>	<p>Hub and that, along with vaccines, there are lots of healthy activities for which Pitt faculty and staff can earn financial credit that can be applied toward copayments for medical treatment and pharmacy purchases. Here is the full list of Wellness activities for which you can earn financial credit. Plans are underway to arrange biometric screenings at the Vaccine Hub.</p> <p>Also, this is a good time of year to remind co-workers about Pitt’s drop-in clinic, The My Health at Work Center, at the Medical Arts Building.</p> <p>https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/MyHealthWorkPittClinicScheduling@upmchs.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/</p>
<p>Presentation</p>	<p>Planning to Retire from Pitt. Guest presenter: Kate Young.</p> <p>Retiree status makes you eligible to participate in the University’s retiree group health insurance. Your age plus your years of service at the University of Pittsburgh are added together to determine your eligibility. The sum of your age plus years of service must equal 85 in order for you to participate in this group health insurance. You can still retire from Pitt if you don’t have 85 points; you will just need to arrange your own Medicare supplement or advantage coverage.</p> <p>Tools to read and use as you plan to retire from Pitt are online at https://www.hr.pitt.edu/retirees/helpful-tools. These include a checklist of tasks to handle in the year leading up to your retirement.</p> <p>https://www.hr.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/StepsTowardRetirementChecklist.pdf an overview of Medicare and Social Security benefits, explanations of pre- age 65 and post- age 65 benefits, the Defined Dollar Benefit (DDB) credits paid by the University for retirees, and much more.</p>	<p>Please advise co-workers to watch this video about retiree benefits and arrange individual retirement planning meetings with the Benefits office by calling 833-852-2210 or by submitting an inquiry online. It is very important for each prospective retiree to have one of these individual meetings to talk about their specific options. Here is the main page about retiring from Pitt.</p> <p>https://www.hr.pitt.edu/retirees</p>