PROPOSED RESOLUTION FOR A REVISED PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY FOR 9-MONTH FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Whereas, the fourth pillar of The University of Alabama’s strategic plan is to provide opportunities and resources that promote work-life balance and enhance the recruitment and retention of outstanding faculty and staff; and

Whereas, parental leave policies have been found to improve morale, productivity, recruitment and retention rates\(^1\); and

Whereas, studies have found that fathers who take time off after a birth are more involved in their child’s care during early childhood\(^2\), and that there is a positive correlation between leave taken and income of mothers; and

Whereas, discrepancies in leave implementation disadvantage some faculty\(^3\) as well as provide challenges for effective family planning; and

Whereas, a policy that is not limited by gender or sexual orientation is in line with The University of Alabama’s mission to create an accepting and inclusive work environment;

Therefore, be it resolved by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that the University is encouraged to adopt the following policies regarding parental leave for 9-month full-time faculty members:

Policy for Parental Leave for 9-month Full-time Faculty Members

Those eligible for paid parental leave are 9-month full-time faculty members who are tenured or tenure-track, or those faculty with a renewable contract status who have given or are going to give birth to a child/children, or become a parent of a newly born, fostered or adopted child/children, or who are recovering from miscarriage, abortion, or any pregnancy or childbirth related health outcomes. Colleges will provide eight weeks of paid leave provided the child is born, fostered or adopted during the academic year or less than eight weeks prior to the beginning of the academic year, but this time can be extended if needed by the faculty member. This policy does not apply to temporary faculty, part-time faculty, graduate assistants, or post-doctoral associates.

The following policy is intended for deans, department heads/chairs, and center/institute directors in implementing the paid parental leave policy for faculty members.

- This policy is only for 9-month faculty members who do not earn sick or annual leave.
- Leave is granted to cover the time necessary for the medical recovery period as defined by the individual’s health provider and/or to provide time for initial bonding with a newborn, fostered or adopted child. Under usual circumstances this time is eight weeks of paid leave. Unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave (FML) Act still applies, which means that the faculty member(s) can take additional unpaid time of up to 12 weeks as needed, as long as the FML is granted.
- Leave runs concurrently with FML. If eight weeks are insufficient, the faculty member who has been approved for FML can request an additional four weeks as unpaid leave.
• After the eight weeks of paid leave and in either the semester in which the 8 weeks of leave is being taken or the subsequent semester, the faculty member will be relieved of classroom and online teaching and on-campus obligations. Faculty members on such a modified duties status may, should they wish, fulfill their other professional responsibilities during the period of modified duties, including those responsibilities for which the faculty member is uniquely qualified, such as advising doctoral candidates and managing ongoing research projects. Except under extraordinary circumstances and as approved by the provost, no faculty member will be relieved of teaching responsibilities for both the fall and spring semesters. No faculty member will have teaching, administrative, research, or service expectations increased in subsequent terms as a result of his/her/their choosing to take family leave. The semester of modified duties may be concurrent with or following the paid leave period. For example, if the child is born, fostered or adopted on October 15, the faculty member may use paid leave through the end of the fall semester and receive modified duties for the spring semester. If the child is born, fostered or adopted during the summer term in which paid leave does not apply, the faculty member will receive modified duties for the fall semester.

Procedures for Requesting Leave

• As soon as possible, the faculty member(s) should notify his/her/their department chair/heaed and dean of the due date/arrival date/adoption date and request assistance in planning a workload that accommodates the parental leave.
• The department chair/head, in agreement with the faculty member, should propose a workload that accommodates the semester of modified duties.
• This plan will be sent to the dean for review and commentary and then forwarded to the provost for final approval. All faculty leaves must be approved by the provost under the provisions in the Faculty Handbook.
• Simultaneously, the faculty member should follow the FML approval process through their benefits partner in Human Resources. Faculty members who are not FML-eligible still must go through this process to provide the documentation required for the provost to approve the requested leave. The FML process must be initiated at least 30 days prior to the anticipated date that the faculty member will begin the leave. No leave can be approved by the provost until the faculty member has been approved for leave through the FML process.
• Faculty members and their supervisors must document leave time, and colleges/schools should initiate a conversion to unpaid status if the faculty member does not return to work at the end of the approved paid leave period and/or FMLA period, unless subsequent medical complications or other complications following childbirth exist, which would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

1The National Bureau of Economic Research https://www.nber.org/papers/w23069
Passed unanimously, with two abstention, by the University of Alabama Faculty Senate on February 19, 2019.