

Plan for Pitt 2025

Workshop Notes

Date: Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Participants: Benefits and Welfare Committee of the University Senate

Exercise: Members of the Benefits and Welfare Committee of the University Senate engaged in a group discussion about where we (Pitt) wants to be in five years, and what it will take to get there. Some consideration was also given to how the ideas related to the six goals of the Plan for Pitt.

- Increase (staff) salaries
 - To remain competitive
 - To retain people
- Flexibility in working (for staff)
 - Flexibility in hours, or a compressed week
 - Options for remote work or job sharing
- Better IT functioning
 - Smooth roll out of products
 - Fix issues, not just provide notification that the issue exists
 - Greater consideration of end-user experience (i.e. make sure it works for those who ultimately use systems – ex. HR systems – not just that it meets the functional need)
- More options around compensation
 - Ex. trading increase vacation time for an increase in pay (for both staff and faculty)
- Reduce class distinctions between faculty and staff
 - For example, the FMLA policies are different between the two groups
 - Staff submit weekly time cards, and staff do not.
- Simplify/expedite recruitment process for hiring staff (currently takes six months)
- Position Pitt to quickly address emerging issues (ex. Corona Virus) – for greater research recognition
 - Requires research promotion/coordination
 - Relates to scholarly impact/media visibility
- Post-doctoral associates and post-doctoral scholars should be one personnel category with the same benefits for each group.
- Standardize and clarify status of visitors on campus (especially international) – i.e. do they have library privileges, can they ride the bus, etc.
- More (and better) child care options
 - Including summer options for school-aged children
- Recreation and exercise facilities for staff and faculty
 - That are centrally located
 - That include racket ball facilities
 - Allow access to the new rec center?
- Staff should start with some available sick time upon employment
 - Increase options for donating sick time
 - When max out on sick time, shouldn't lose it (i.e. could go into a donation bank)

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- Allow Oakland residents to use Pitt buses (especially if Pitt busses have replaced Port Authority busses in their neighborhoods).
- Improve transportation into Oakland to feasibly reduce reliance on driving personal vehicles and parking.
 - Clarify parking given new construction – will parking be available in the future?
 - Option to swap/transfer parking lots of if you move to a new building.
- Regularly offer early retirement programs
- Improve food options – better, healthier, less expensive
 - Maybe a cafeteria style location for faculty and staff
- Improve pedestrian safety in Oakland
 - Pedestrian education
 - Ease ability for pedestrians to navigate the campus
 - Virtual map has been helpful to visitors – develop the ability to make a “personal virtual map” to share with individuals who are coming to campus.
 - Better signage (on roads and buildings)
 - Sign fatigue is real, so explore other options, ex. color coding the sidewalk.
- Traffic lights timed for pedestrian traffic (not just vehicular). For example, extend crossing time as classes are letting out.
 - More green arrows (to reduce the Pittsburgh left)
 - Closing the campus to cars significantly beautified Western Michigan’s campus – could we add a beltway around the campus?
- Increase possibilities for auditing classes as a form of professional development
 - It should be free to audit.
 - Current process is ad hoc (ex. ask the faculty member), however, would be nice if the process was more formalized.
- Increase max payout of unused sick time upon retirement.
- “Cafeteria style” benefits. Ex. if you’re not using your tuition benefit, want ability to swap it for something else.
- Consider ability to donate benefits (sick time, tuition benefit)
 - Could tuition benefits be donated to schools to use as scholarships?