



Building a great place to work

The report of the President's Task Force on
FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES



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Executive Summary

In spring 2012, Executive Vice Presidents Steven G. Swant and Rafael L. Bras constituted a task force and charged the group with 1) studying and assessing the environment in which Georgia Tech supports the family responsibilities of our employees; 2) conducting a review and inventory of current programs and identifying possible gaps; and 3) making recommendations regarding the continuation, modification, and addition of activities and policies to enhance the Institute's family-friendly culture. The task force is chaired by the Institute's most senior human resources and diversity officers and composed of faculty from a variety of disciplines, senior-level administrators, and a graduate student.

The focus on assessing and ultimately establishing family-friendly policies for Georgia Tech is one of many means to an end, to wit, building a great place to work. Over the past four years, Georgia Tech has walked a difficult path insofar as our employees are concerned. This institution is a key driver of economic development and plays a key role in advancing the body of scientific, engineering, and other scholarly knowledge. We stand at the forefront of research that supports and advances the interests of the United States. Yet as a state entity we have contended with the same directive issued to other state agencies: withhold pay increases. A substantial amount of relevant scholarly literature has been devoted to showing that compensation is not the primary factor driving employee engagement. But it is also clear that lack of pay increases over extended periods of time can negatively affect employee morale and erode the sense that Georgia Tech is a great place to work.

The focus of this task force, from the beginning, has been to identify factors that contribute to making our institution a great place to work. Employee pay is important, but so are many other factors. We also feel that programmatic investments, while critically important, should not be the sole focus of efforts to create a great place to work. Rather, the first emphasis should be on the establishment of standards and expectations, definition of policies, and unification of practices. All levels of the Institute—colleges, schools, and administrative units—must work together to maximize the value of investments that we make. It does us less good as an organization to invest in programs if our supervisors and managers (including faculty leaders) are not committed to involving those they supervise.

Great places to work begin with environments that foster and develop trust between an employee and his or her supervisor (a term that can have a variety of meanings within the academe). Trust is also built through visible recognition of life demands and a demonstration of support on the part of the organization in helping each individual to balance the coequally important—and frequently competing—goals of excellence in the workplace and commitment to individual lives and families, however they may be defined. The critical importance of direct supervisor involvement and a visible demonstration of support became key areas of focus in our

deliberations, and they are the impetus behind the creation of what we refer to as *the seven foci*:

Focus 1: Connect communities and increase camaraderie.

Focus 2: Develop the people who work at Tech.

Focus 3: Facilitate the transition of new faculty, staff, graduate students, and their families into the Institute.

Focus 4: Assist with work-life demands.

Focus 5: Help faculty and staff balance family care responsibilities.

Focus 6: Promote financial security.

Focus 7: Encourage healthy life choices.

A table showing the seven foci, what we perceived to be significant challenges in the focus areas, and our recommendations to address them, can be found on pages seven and eight. For insight into the thought processes and discussions that led to the development of the seven foci, refer to Appendix 1. In total, we offer fifteen recommendations intended to help create a great place to work. The recommendations are presented in an order consistent with the seven foci, not in priority order. We believe that all of the fifteen recommendations contribute as parts of a whole:

1. Create a searchable, dynamic, central clearinghouse of Institute (Georgia Tech, unit, and department) and outside community, volunteer, and engagement opportunities.
2. Establish a shared, well-communicated, and visibly supported expectation of staff supervisors, including faculty who supervise graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
3. Reevaluate and redesign the faculty evaluation process to incentivize faculty to broaden their impacts on society.
4. Expand opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to grow beyond their specific disciplines.
5. Standardize and clarify existing policies and practices across colleges and units to address professional development and research leave opportunities.
6. Create a comprehensive relocation support program for faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and senior staff.
7. Redesign employee orientation programs to deliver immediate impact and facilitate connections between the Institute, unit, and department orientation components.
8. Create a progressive catalog of leave options for faculty and staff.
9. Standardize existing leave policies and practices across colleges and units to address maternity, paternity, adoption, bereavement, and other family care roles and responsibilities.
10. Invest in the production of total benefits statements.

11. Invest in new family care programs (e.g., elder, spouse/partner, etc.).
12. Expand investment in child care to support those with unique child-care needs (e.g., providing off hours support and support during critical periods such as finals, etc.).
13. Expand benefits coverage to include domestic and same-sex partners.
14. Expand voluntary benefits programs.
15. Invest in the creation of a formal wellness program and a set of incentives for healthy living.

Our present fiscal environment creates significant competition for already scarce financial resources. In some areas the path may be rife with political obstacles. Although it is expressed differently at various levels, the question put to each of us is essentially the same: *what am I willing to do to ensure a great place to work?* This question is just as appropriate for our executive leadership, who may need to make difficult choices in order to provide the resources necessary to enhance the Institute's family-friendly culture, as it is for each front-line supervisor who must utilize the examples and investments in earnest to foster employee engagement.

We recognize that it would be nearly impossible for the Institute to act on all fifteen recommendations simultaneously. In fulfilling the charge given to the task force by the Institute's executives, we have distilled possibilities numbering in the hundreds into an actionable roadmap. We believe it is more reasonable to expect action to be taken in measured and achievable steps over time rather than expecting immediate progress on all fronts. Although we believe that we have laid a solid foundation, there is much more work that can be done relative to each recommendation. Our suggestions, after consideration by Institute leadership, are 1) that appropriate campus experts be appointed to delve deeper into each of the fifteen actions recommended in this report; 2) that they conduct a full review of the social, legal, and economic costs and benefits, and 3) that a specific implementation plan be created for each of the recommendations.

Although not a ranking, Figure 1 provides the task force's perception of the relative impact and visibility of each recommendation. The marker size indicates the perceived time required to fully implement the recommendation (larger circle = longer time required). A full-sized version of Figure 1 can be found in Appendix 1.

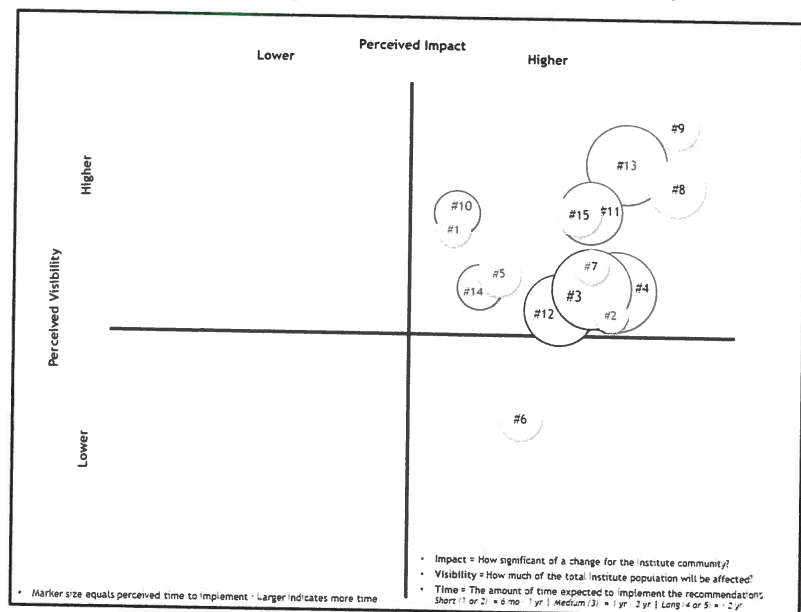


Figure 1

The Task Force Charge and Process

In spring 2012, Executive Vice Presidents Steven G. Swant and Rafael L. Bras constituted a task force to review Georgia Tech activities, programs, policies, and practices that promote a balance between work, school, and family responsibilities for our faculty, staff, and students. “Family” was defined as the members of employees’ households and those individuals with whom they share their lives. The charge given to the task force was to:

1. study and assess Georgia Tech’s current environment to support the family responsibilities of our employees;
2. conduct a review and inventory of current programs and identify gaps; and
3. make recommendations regarding the continuation, modification, and addition of activities and policies to enhance the family-friendly culture of the Institute while working within the context of limited resources.

Task force membership

- Archie W. Ervin, Vice President for Institute Diversity (Co-chair)
- M. Scott Morris, Chief Human Resources Officer (Co-chair)
- Bettina F. Cothran, Professor, Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts (Modern Languages)
- Kim D. Harrington, Director, Student Center
- Amy E. LaViers, Graduate Student, College of Engineering (ECE)
- Wing Suet Li, Professor, College of Sciences (Mathematics)
- Warren L. Page, Senior Director, Facilities and Operations
- Christopher J. Rozell, Assistant Professor, College of Engineering (ECE)
- Darlene J. Wright, Director, Employee Benefits
- JulieAnne Williamson, Assistant Vice President, Administration and Finance (ex-officio)
- Jennifer Herazy, Assistant Provost (ex-officio)

Task force activities

The task force convened on February 15, 2012. We began by compiling data and other relevant information about policies, programs, and activities currently offered by the Institute that support a healthy, productive work-life balance and by reviewing employee benefit programs, leave programs, and recreational and volunteer/community-building opportunities. We conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses/limitations, opportunities, and threats) analysis of all identified policies and programs that promote work-life balance and support for family responsibilities.

We met with deans and academic affairs leaders, consulted with faculty and University System of Georgia Board of Regents staff for background and context of policy areas. Each member of the task force assumed responsibility to conduct comparative research in the

established areas of interest. A wide array of issues related to family-friendly policies was researched to determine best practices around the nation, with special attention paid to our peer institutions.

Building a great place to work

The focus on assessing and ultimately establishing family-friendly policies for the Georgia Institute of Technology is one of many means to an end, to wit, building a great place to work. As such, we recognized the advantage of considering—from the beginning—factors that constitute a great place to work rather than simply considering desirable programs and investments. These factors, taken together, create a compelling proposition for those currently associated with the Institute to agree emphatically that they work in a great environment. This employment proposition contributes to our brand and increases our ability to attract the caliber of talent—both faculty and staff—that facilitates our advance toward the Institute’s vision: defining the technological research university of the twenty-first century.

While the term *a great place to work* has become popular recently, the concept dates to much earlier research and scholarship. Renewed attention was brought to the subject in 1990 with the publication of Robert Levering’s *A Great Place to Work: What Makes Some Employers So Good (And Most So Bad)*. In this book, Levering used interviews and anecdotes from his early *best employers* research to reveal the essential ingredients for creating a great workplace. It was Levering’s book and his early work that gave rise to *Fortune*’s 100 Best Companies to Work For list and new interest from other publications, such as *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, in identifying and publicizing organizations whose activities differentiate them as exceptional employers.

It is clear that programmatic investment, while critically important, should not be the first focus. Rather, the emphasis should be on the establishment of standards and expectations, definition of policies, and unification of practices. In total, this amounts to a focus on communicating the importance the Institute places on supporting our faculty and staff and leadership by example across a variety of areas.

Great places to work begin with environments structured to foster trust between employees and their supervisors. While successive interpersonal interactions weigh heavily, trust is also built through recognition of life’s demands and demonstrated support from organizations to help employees balance the equal but often competing goals of workplace excellence and family responsibilities. These meta-areas not only comprise our recommendations but offer a framework for the future of the conversation begun through this task force. Taken collectively, the seven foci are this task force’s answer to the question *what would a good organization do to become a great place to work?*

It is important to note that in recent years Georgia Tech has sometimes struggled with employee compensation. Though the Institute plays a large role in advancing scientific, engineering, and other scholarly bodies of knowledge, it is also a state entity and therefore has

had to contend with the state directive to withhold pay increases. While research shows that compensation is not the primary driver of employee engagement, it is also clear that lack of fair compensation most certainly erodes the sense that Georgia Tech is a great place to work.

Beyond this task force: Advancing the recommendations

The subjects addressed in this report are complex, and although on its face the report seems a straightforward proposition, building a great workplace requires simultaneous efforts at the Institute, unit, department, and individual supervisor levels. Our present fiscal environment creates significant competition for already scarce financial resources. In some areas the path may be rife with political obstacles. Although it is expressed differently at various levels, the question put to each of us is essentially the same: *what am I willing to do to ensure a great place to work?*

We recognize that it would be nearly impossible for the Institute to act on all fifteen recommendations simultaneously. In fulfilling the charge given to us by the Institute's executives, we have distilled possibilities numbering in the hundreds into an actionable roadmap. We believe it would be more reasonable to expect action to be taken in measured and achievable steps over time rather than expecting immediate progress on all fronts. Although we believe that we have laid a solid foundation, there is much more work that can be done relative to each recommendation. It is our suggestion that, after consideration by Institute leadership, appropriate campus experts be appointed to delve deeper into each of the fifteen actions recommended in this report; conduct a full review of the social, legal, and economic costs and benefits; and create a specific implementation plan.

Summary of Perceived Challenges and Recommendations

Focus	Perceived Challenge(s)	Recommendation(s)
<p>Connect communities and increase camaraderie</p>	<p>We lack an available, easy-to-use, and comprehensive method for connecting people with engagement opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a searchable, dynamic, central clearinghouse of Institute (Georgia Tech, unit, and department) and outside community, volunteer, and engagement opportunities.
<p>Develop the people who work at Tech</p>	<p>We lack a shared understanding of the qualities that make supervisors successful and a paradigm of supervision for those who supervise staff at all levels.</p> <p>The present faculty evaluation process may miss opportunities to incentivize faculty to broaden their impacts on society and the goals articulated in Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan.</p> <p>We miss opportunities to broadly develop graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who work at Tech.</p> <p>There is significant variance in the understanding of and operating practices surrounding professional development leaves.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Establish a shared, well-communicated, and visibly supported expectation of staff supervisors, including faculty who supervise graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. 3. Reevaluate and redesign the faculty evaluation process to incentivize faculty to broaden their impacts on society. 4. Expand opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to grow beyond their specific disciplines. 5. Standardize and clarify existing policies and practices across colleges and units to address professional development and research leave opportunities.
<p>Facilitate the transition of new faculty, staff, graduate students, and their families into the Institute</p>	<p>We miss opportunities to engage a candidate's family members during the recruitment process and hence increase opportunities to secure key hires.</p> <p>We lack a comprehensive approach for relocating and transitioning new hires.</p> <p>Current Institute-level orientations—for faculty, staff, and graduate students—do not adequately prepare participants to succeed at Tech.</p> <p>We tend not to view orientation as part of a system of preparation that cascades from Institute to unit to department to job levels.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Create a comprehensive relocation support program for faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and senior staff. 7. Redesign employee orientation programs to deliver immediate impact and facilitate connections between the Institute, unit, and department orientation components.

Focus	Perceived Challenge(s)	Recommendation(s)
<p>Assist with work-life demands</p>	<p>We tend to lag behind our peers and aspirant peers in certain aspects of leave programs.</p> <p>Our approach to faculty and staff leave programs is not standard across the Institute.¹</p> <p>Faculty and staff may not fully understand the value of the benefits offered them.</p>	<p>8. Create a progressive catalog of leave options for faculty and staff.</p> <p>9. Standardize existing leave policies and practices across colleges and units to address maternity, paternity, adoption, bereavement, and other family care roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>10. Invest in the production of total benefits statements.</p>
<p>Help faculty and staff balance family care responsibilities</p>	<p>Our child-care programs address only a single aspect of child-care needs and consequently we lack a comprehensive set of programs for family care.</p>	<p>11. Invest in new family care programs (e.g., elder, spouse/partner, etc.).</p> <p>12. Expand investment in child care to support those with unique child-care needs (e.g., providing off hours support and support during critical periods such as finals, etc.).</p>
<p>Promote financial security</p>	<p>Compared to our peers, the University System of Georgia view of family is not progressive and may compromise our ability to remain competitive against other top-tier universities.</p> <p>We are missing opportunities to offer additional programs to faculty and staff at no cost to the Institute.</p>	<p>13. Expand benefits coverage to include domestic and same-sex partners.</p> <p>14. Expand voluntary benefits programs.</p>
<p>Encourage healthy life choices</p>	<p>We lack a comprehensive approach to faculty and staff wellness and consequently may suffer higher health-care costs.</p>	<p>15. Invest in the creation of a formal wellness program and a set of incentives for healthy living.</p>

¹ Traditional vacation and sick leave programs are well established, but we do not have a commonly understood and comprehensive approach to other leave programs.

The Recommendations

Recommendation 1

Addresses Focus 1:
Connect communities
and increase
camaraderie.

Recommendation:

Create a searchable, dynamic, central clearinghouse of Institute (Georgia Tech, unit, and department) and outside community, volunteer, and engagement opportunities.

The perceived challenge

We lack an available, easy-to-use, and comprehensive method for connecting people with engagement opportunities. Georgia Tech offers a wide array of opportunities for community involvement, on and off campus, but we lack a central and comprehensive clearinghouse and an easy-to-use method for connecting people with these engagement opportunities.

Perceived needs

The challenge for Georgia Tech lies not in the fact that there aren't good examples of community engagement activities but rather that we do not have a comprehensive, Institute-level approach to engaging our faculty, staff, and graduate students. By leveraging the resources of Georgia Tech and city contacts, Community Relations can assist communities with their mission of improving the quality of life for residents. Through job fairs, technology assistance, entrepreneurial consulting, crime reduction, and asset mapping, Community Relations can aid communities that are experiencing renewal and revitalization.

Selected examples from inside Georgia Tech

The Office of Leadership & Civic Engagement promotes civic responsibility and service-learning by encouraging student involvement in meaningful and reciprocal service to the community. As a unit of the Division of Student Affairs, the Office of Leadership & Civic Engagement sustains the Institute's motto of "Progress and Service" by serving as a resource for community service and civic engagement initiatives at Georgia Tech. The Office of Community Service volunteer opportunities database serves as resource for members of the Georgia Tech community seeking to engage in reciprocal service with the community outside of Georgia Tech.²

The Office of Government and Community Relations community outreach unit, Community Relations, is focused on building upon Georgia Tech's motto of "Progress and Service" by helping students increase civic responsibility to improve local neighborhoods and K-12 schools and providing a liaison to Metro Atlanta government entities to enhance Georgia Tech's operations. Community Relations works closely with local neighborhood organizations, nonprofit groups, and governmental entities to help improve and empower various communities.

² For additional information, please visit <http://service.gatech.edu>.

Selected examples from outside of Georgia Tech

Emory University³

- Emory's main volunteer network on campus, Volunteer Emory, was founded in 1980 by two Emory undergraduates and connects members of the university community with service opportunities throughout the year.
- Volunteer Emory supports more than 20 student-led volunteer programs that operate on at least a weekly basis during the school year.

Cornell University⁴

- Cornell's Public Service Center is a service organization connecting Cornell students, faculty, and alumni with community organizations. Founded in 1991, the mission of the Public Service Center is to champion the conviction that the Cornell University experience confirms service as essential to active citizenship.
- A service-learning approach enhances and reinforces academic learning with practical experiences, strengthens civic values and moral character, and responds to community needs. Service-learning fosters service to others, community development and empowerment, and reciprocal learning through participants' social and educational interactions.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology⁵

- As part of the Division of Student Life, MIT's Public Service Center provides a central point of communication and support for the outreach and humanitarian efforts of the MIT community.

Michigan State University⁶

- MSU has taken the lead in helping to foster a national discussion about what it means for an institution to meet its responsibilities to both the public and scholarship through engagement with its University Outreach and Engagement resource.

³ http://osls.emory.edu/volunteer_emory

⁴ www.psc.cornell.edu

⁵ <http://web.mit.edu/mitpsc>

⁶ <http://outreach.msu.edu/default.aspx>

Some likely implementation activities

1. Adopt the *Societal Engagement and Impact: Roadmap and Action Plan* presented by Ellen Zagura, Professor and Chair, School of Computer Science, and Bob Thomas, Professor of the Practice, Scheller College of Business. This report suggests that Tech create a “coherent one-stop shop for students and external partners who seek engagement and impact.”⁷
2. Invest in the development and maintenance of the searchable Web database, including purchasing appropriate technology and services and involving experts from Communications & Marketing and the Office of Information Technology.
3. Charge the Offices of Government & Community Relations, Human Resources, and Community Service to collaborate in the creation of a site design, resource requirements, and an ongoing strategy to maintain data freshness of volunteer and engagement opportunities.
4. Direct Georgia Tech departments and units to offer content updates on department and division initiatives and activities (e.g., G.T.I.F., Flicks on Fifth, Faculty and Staff intramural leagues, etc.).
5. Direct that units and departments move away from maintaining information on their respective websites in lieu of contributing to the Institute’s clearinghouse of engagement and volunteerism opportunities and that they link to the Web resource from their websites.
6. Invest in the ongoing marketing and communication of the online volunteerism and engagement resource to the Georgia Tech community.

⁷ www.gatech.edu/vision/projects/service-learning-legacy-project

Recommendation 2

Addresses Focus 2:
Develop the people
who work at Tech.

Recommendation:

Establish a shared, well-communicated, and visibly supported expectation of staff supervisors, including faculty who supervise graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

The perceived challenge

We lack a shared understanding of the qualities that make supervisors successful and a paradigm of supervision for those who supervise staff at all levels. It appears that many individuals are selected for management and supervisory positions based on their length of tenure or their quality of work performed in individual contributor roles rather than as a result of successful completion of supervisor training or demonstration of the behaviors associated with exemplary management and leadership. Consequently, we lack a Tech brand of leadership and supervision.

Perceived needs

Goal 5, Strategy 2 of Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan⁸ directs the Georgia Tech community to implement a performance-based management system. Naturally, there are many components that must work together to deliver this system, but all of them are built upon solid and effective relationships between supervisors and employees and a shared understanding about the expectations that we have for our workforce. To borrow from the Strategic Business and Operations Framework, we must "anticipate change and shape the future."⁹ We accept the following to be true:

- A strong working relationship and high levels of trust between a supervisor¹⁰ and his or her employees *reduce costs and increase individual productivity*.
- The increased productivity may in turn *reduce the need to add additional personnel*, thus preserving scarce resources for mission-based priorities.¹¹
- When strong working relationships exist, *grievances are reduced*. This in turn *reduces the costs associated with workplace investigations*.¹²
- A study by the Mayo Clinic found that positive working relationships between supervisors and employees are a *significant contributor to reduced workplace stress*,¹³ which is a major factor in absenteeism.

⁸ www.gatech.edu/vision/sites/gatech.edu.vision/files/Georgia_Tech_Strategic_Plan.pdf

⁹ http://sbof.gatech.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/SBOF-Framework-Document_20120710v8_5GPs_.pdf

¹⁰ Although the term can have varied meanings in the academe, in this report, *supervisor* indicates any individual—staff or faculty—with responsibility for directing the work of another person.

¹¹ This idea relates to the Strategic Business and Operations Framework value *Innovation—Push boundaries*.

¹² This idea relates to the Strategic Business and Operations Framework value *Community—Demonstrate mutual respect among faculty, staff, and students*.

¹³ June 9, 2011, Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER).

According to a recent study by Gallup, world-class organizations (e.g., those that outperform in their markets, have great safety records, and exhibit low employee turnover, among other things) have engaged employee/disengaged employee ratios of about 9.57:1, as opposed to a disappointing 1.83:1 for average organizations. It is clear that, as the researchers put it, “The world’s top-performing organizations understand that employee engagement is a force that drives performance outcomes.” Actively engaged employees tend to perceive their work environment more positively. Gallup research has found that how leaders manage employees can significantly influence engagement and disengagement in the workplace, which in turn influence bottom-line results and workers’ health and wellbeing.¹⁴ The Gallup research also indicates that actively disengaged workers cost American companies an estimated \$300 billion annually in lost productivity alone. Since an undisputed connection has been made between both employee performance and engagement and the activities and actions of the employee’s direct supervisor, our efforts to grow and develop our workforce should begin with an effort to grow and develop our supervisors.

Some likely implementation activities

1. Engage senior-level administrators in the development of behavioral competencies that the Institute will expect of each supervisor (the Office of Human Resources should facilitate this discussion).
2. Relative to the expectations and behaviors identified in item #1, charge the Office of Human Resources with leading an effort to achieve the following goals:
 - a. Create a measurement mechanism that will help identify gaps between current manager and supervisor behaviors and the desired behaviors.
 - b. Develop a comprehensive training program that will set forth these expectations, clarify roles, improve key management competencies (leadership, continuous improvement, performance management, partnership and collaboration, etc.), and contribute significantly to increased productivity and institutional results.
 - c. Redesign the performance planning (i.e., goal setting) and performance evaluation processes appropriate to each unique audience, incorporating the desired behaviors and expectations into the processes.
 - d. Align supervisor selection, development, and rewards and recognition activities to support and achieve the defined expectations.
3. Challenge executive and senior-level managers¹⁵ to incorporate the behaviors into efforts to manage their respective organizations. (We perceive leadership by example to be critical to the success of this recommendation.)
4. As efforts to define supervisor competencies and behaviors progress, engage senior-level administrators in an effort to characterize and describe the workforce we are seeking to build.

¹⁴ For a summary of the report see www.gallup.com/poll/148883/engaged-workers-report-twice-job-creation.aspx

¹⁵ In this report, *senior-level manager* implies associate vice president or associate dean and above.

Recommendation 3

Addresses Focus 2:
Develop the people
who work at Tech.

Recommendation:

Reevaluate and redesign the faculty evaluation process to incentivize faculty to broaden their impacts on society.

The perceived challenge

The present faculty evaluation process may miss opportunities to incentivize faculty to broaden their impacts on society. Moreover, the current evaluation process that centers on the Research-Teaching-Service model does not align the professional interests of individual faculty with Georgia Tech's Strategic Plan.

Perceived needs

From the Georgia Tech Strategic Plan, it is clear that we want to move beyond our current status of being a leader in research to having a prominent leadership role in providing “interdisciplinary education through flexible, student-focused curricula” and use “information technologies to pursue new types of collaborations, explorations, and complex problem solving.”¹⁶ To accomplish this, we need to reformulate the faculty evaluation criteria.

This recommendation asks for a culture change. Even though changing the faculty evaluation process has little monetary cost, it is well known that culture changes are difficult to accomplish. There may even be an allergic reaction to intellectual merit/broader impact ideas by some faculty. At first, most likely people will equate research to intellectual merit and teaching and services to broader impact. However, as people are engaged in taking more risk to perform potentially transformative research and more innovative teaching and instruction, at least an argument can be made that there is intellectual merit in it, and that will encourage people to expend their roles. At the same time, people will also look at the relevance of their research in a larger context.

Selected example from outside of Georgia Tech

In the past two decades, the National Science Foundation has been using intellectual merit and broader impact as the two criteria to evaluate the projects that are submitted for funding requests; therefore, we feel that these two criteria have been well tested and that using them will be one step to improve our current evaluation system for faculty, though definitely this will not and should not be the final step.

By looking at one's contributions in terms of intellectual merit and broader impact, potentially transformative research, innovative teaching and instruction, and the ever more important outreach activities, including services to society in general, will be more easily

¹⁶ www.gatech.edu/vision/sites/gatech.edu.vision/files/Georgia_Tech_Strategic_Plan.pdf

recognized. By changing the categories, there is a chance to change the university culture, to make teaching/instruction and services more appreciated.

Some likely implementation activities

1. Set clear strategic objectives for the change at the executive level, but allow the specific implementations to be discussed and thought out clearly at the college level.
2. Charge a faculty task force (led by a dean) to outline the part of the evaluation criteria specific to each college—recognizing the unique characteristic and culture of each. The need for flexibility and the possibility of nuanced evaluations should be taken seriously.
3. Evaluation is only part of the equation to motivate the faculty—other sources of recognition should also be investigated. Recognition should not be limited to monetary awards.
4. Focus evaluation criteria on the annual evaluation of faculty activities rather than on promotion and tenure reviews. We recommend incorporating into performance evaluations more comprehensive standards that reflect more accurately the Institute’s strategic goals.
5. Evaluate faculty performance not only from a mere immediate-task-oriented angle but also from a long-term-impact angle. We recommend a flexible model for faculty annual performance evaluation that in some instances can be implemented by addressing contributions in two components: intellectual merit and broader impact.
6. Consider the intellectual diversity of our people, allow for different career paths beyond the current research/administration ladder, and award the unique contributions that faculty may bring to the institution, in particular those toward fulfilling the Institute’s strategic goals.



Recommendation 4

Addresses Focus 2:
Develop the people
who work at Tech.

Recommendation:

Expand opportunities for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to grow beyond their specific disciplines.

The perceived challenge

We miss opportunities to broadly develop graduate students and postdoctoral fellows who work at Tech. Graduate students and postdoctoral fellows come to the Institute seeking a very specific competence in their field of research. New graduate students enroll in a narrow set of technical courses and hope to find a previously unexplored area of research to make their own domain. Postdoctoral fellows come to the Institute already having that expertise over a domain. Both populations spend 100 percent of their time working for the Institute on these narrow domains. Yet it is the goal of Georgia Tech to place these employees in permanent positions outside of the Institute, making this population of employees a unique group of temporary employees.

Perceived needs

Efforts need to be made to prepare graduate students and postdoctoral fellows for jobs outside of the Institute, in industry and academia, where more well-rounded candidates may better succeed. In brief, academic institutions require polished “job talks,” grant-writing skills, teaching experience, and the capability to work in interdisciplinary groups. Similarly, jobs in industry rely heavily on presentation skills, writing competency, and communication in and out of technical fields. Currently, there are dedicated resources (i.e., the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, CETL) to address the need for the development of writing, presentation, and teaching. However, there is no mechanism through which an intrepid graduate student or postdoctoral fellow can earn recognition for honing skills outside of basic communication and their field of expertise. Further, the Institute can do better to encourage students to take advantage of the resources CETL provides.

Georgia Tech and peer institutions such as MIT and Princeton have large interdisciplinary centers for energy research where engineers, social scientists, and economists work toward solutions for the global energy crisis alongside top firms in the energy industry. Electrical engineers specializing in smart-grid technology may do well to study how electricity became so ubiquitous before they attempt to revolutionize its use. The cost of implementing such a program would be minimal, as it would take advantage of the wealth of courses already offered at the Institute. However, barriers do exist: issues with course capacity, program standards, and management of students in the program need to be addressed. Nevertheless, with an additional piece of paper to take away from Tech (the certificate itself), students and postdoctoral fellows would be incentivized to take more courses outside their areas of expertise and leave the Institute

armed with one more advantage in their job searches. Producing this type of well-rounded student would bolster Tech's already impressive technical reputation.

Some likely implementation activities

1. At the direction of the Provost, convene a committee of academic administrators and faculty members to evaluate the best places to enact this recommendation and to expand upon it.
2. Demonstrate visible executive leadership and support for the idea of well-rounded graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
3. Create a certificate program designed to recognize significant study in an area outside a graduate student's major or a postdoctoral fellow's department (sanction and incentivize interdisciplinary study at the Institute). Such an opportunity would afford students and postdoctoral fellows motivation to complete multiple courses outside their silos of research, thus preparing them for work at interdisciplinary research centers, consulting firms, and technology companies.
4. Develop a leadership development program focused on communication, collaboration, and interdisciplinary partnership.

Recommendation 5

Addresses Focus 2:

Develop the people who work at Tech.

Recommendation:

Standardize and clarify existing policies and practices across colleges and units to address professional development and research leave opportunities.

The perceived challenge

There is significant variance in the understanding of and operating practices surrounding professional development leaves.

Perceived need

In general, among academic institutions, professional development leave is an area where practices vary widely by academic unit within the Institute. Based upon a meeting with Georgia Tech deans, the task force found that colleges do support faculty leave for academic development on a case-by-case basis. However, this approach to professional development leave support inevitably results in inequities, as faculty members of different colleges do not have equal access to such leave due to the differences in resources available to each college. Larger colleges will have more flexibility to provide this type of leave support versus smaller colleges. Professional development leave is typically granted for the purpose of growing or developing knowledge, skills, or abilities, with the intent of enhancing the individual's ability to contribute to the work of the college, unit, or department. It is granted as a privilege, rather than right, which should result in minimal disruption of institutional programs and no additional cost to the school or university. It is not granted automatically on the basis of years of service and tenure status.

Clarifying and making transparent the processes for obtaining professional development leave in each unit would help to alleviate the ambiguities and uncertainties surrounding this issue.

Selected examples from outside of Georgia Tech

Colorado University¹⁷

- Faculty fellowships are highly competitive awards that CU-Boulder grants to its faculty. Fellowship applications consist of a clear research plan to be conducted over a specified time period, with defined objectives upon which recipients report at the end of the grant period.

¹⁷ <https://facultyaffairs.colorado.edu/faculty/leaves-1/faculty-fellowship>

University of Virginia¹⁸

- UVA has created a “Sesqui” Leave under which each school of the university may administer a periodic program of academic leaves, often referred to as *Sesquicentennial Associate ships*. These are competitive awards for which faculty become eligible after a stated duration of service since the last leave. The purpose of a Sesqui Leave is to help faculty invigorate their research and teaching activities.

Some likely implementation activities

1. Codify existing Institute procedures for applying for professional development leave support (paid and nonpaid) and publish them in the Faculty Handbook and personnel Policy Manuals.
2. Utilize funding from grant overhead receipts to establish Institute funding to augment college-level resources to expand the number of faculty and staff who can be supported annually.

¹⁸ www.virginia.edu/provost/docs_policies/leaves.html

Recommendation 6

Addresses Focus 3:

Facilitate the transition of new faculty, staff, graduate students, and their families into the Institute.

Recommendation:

Create a comprehensive relocation support program for faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and senior staff.

The perceived challenge

Today, more than ever, there is a global arms race for the best and brightest talent. Yet we seem to fail to use all of the tools available to us to secure strategic hires. This is true for both faculty and staff positions. While we may do a good job in the recruitment of those we wish to attract to key roles, we miss opportunities to engage a candidate's family members during the recruitment process. This may mean that we are missing opportunities to secure key advocates who may privately encourage our target hire to seize upon the opportunity presented to him or her. Although each individual will weigh a variety of factors in contemplation of an opportunity at Georgia Tech, it is not unreasonable to believe that a decision to accept an offer is likely easier if the individual believes that his or her family will want to be in the Atlanta area and that—as much as possible—the transition will be relatively easy. We also lack a comprehensive approach for relocating and transitioning new hires.

Perceived needs

Georgia Tech has an established relocation spending program.¹⁹ What we believe to be missing are services that support this relocation policy and resources dedicated to helping prospective final candidates and new hires take advantage of the policy. Although there will naturally be a variety of differences in recruitment processes across academic and support units, an opportunity exists regarding final candidates for a more uniform and planned approach.

Finalist faculty and strategic administrator candidates

- We need standardized practices for final recruitment activities that allow for variation and addition at the unit and department level but allow Tech to capitalize on our employment brand and create a consistent experience.

Spouses or partners of finalist faculty and strategic administrator candidates

- We should actively recruit the spouses or partners of our target hires. When a strategic hire is interviewing, we should invest in engaging the candidate's family members. The better the family's perception of Atlanta, the Institute, the experience, and the opportunity, the better our chances of securing top-level talent.

All new hires

- There should be a single point of contact to assist with the transition (especially for new hires transitioning into the Atlanta area).

¹⁹ www.admin-fin.gatech.edu/human/benefits/061600.html

Relocation packages

- We need increased clarity about level-specific guidelines for spending on relocation packages.

Some likely implementation activities

3. Recognize that opinions formed during the transitional stage of employment can be long lasting and impactful to the individual's perception of the Institute and the quality of our workplace.
4. Understand relocation practices currently in place. Distill a set of minimum standards and recommended practices for use Institute-wide.
5. Capture economies of scale and standardize quality by placing a full-time relocation coordinator in the Office of Human Resources. It would be this individual's responsibility to streamline and facilitate the transition of new hires, including:
 - a. acting as a single point of contact for any and all matters related to the transition,
 - b. coordinating department resources,
 - c. ordering materials (facilities access, technical setup, etc.),
 - d. coordinating relocation service vendors,
 - e. answering benefits-related questions, and
 - f. preparing the new faculty, staff, or graduate student for orientation.
6. Develop appropriate reports that can be used by departments to understand the status of activities associated with the department's new hire.
7. Develop a spouse/partner engagement program and process. Activities might include the following:
 - a. A pre-visit contact to welcome the spouse/partner and prepare for the visit.
 - b. Tours of special community points of interest, neighborhoods of interest, Institute locations and facilities, etc.
 - c. Introductions to key faculty and staff.
 - d. Dinner with a senior-level administrator (might be faculty or staff) for the spouse/partner and candidate or for the spouse/partner alone if the department is hosting the candidate as a part of the interview.
 - e. A package of information for the spouse/partner to take with him or her.

Recommendation 7

Addresses Focus 3:
Facilitate the transition of new faculty, staff, graduate students, and their families into the Institute.

Recommendation:

Redesign employee orientation programs to deliver immediate impact and facilitate connections between the Institute, unit, and department orientation components.

The perceived challenge

We tend not to view orientation as part of a system of preparation that cascades from Institute to unit to department to job levels. Current Institute-level orientations—for faculty, staff, and graduate students—do not adequately prepare participants to succeed at Tech.

Perceived needs

The Office of Human Resources offers a half-day New Employee Orientation session every two weeks and provides new faculty and staff with general information about the Institute. Several departments offer orientation and other support programs for new hires, but there appear to be few connections between the curricula for the Institute orientation and the department and unit orientations.

Despite the fact that current programs (at the Institute level and at the department or unit level) are good, the purpose of orientation is to elevate a new employee to a high level of productivity in the shortest amount of time possible. According to Carnegie Mellon University’s “The Business Case for Valuing New Employee Orientation,”²⁰ such orientations are valuable because they:

- *facilitate organizational effectiveness* by shaping employee involvement in university culture and facilitating an introduction to anticipated managerial practices (thus increasing mutual understanding of university expectations and minimizing conflict);
- *facilitate human resource management*, improving retention, speed to proficiency, and employee morale; and
- *improve productivity and creativity* by connecting the employee’s activities to the university’s strategic plan, which leads to increased willingness to welcome change.

Tech’s current New Employee Orientation program needs to move beyond completion of the administrative details and toward a multidimensional model that prepares the new employee to succeed while reducing trial-and-error learning. Unit and department-level orientation programs need to build upon the foundation laid during the Institute’s orientation but must remain a part of the whole. In short, our paradigm of orientation and onboarding must be that there are many

²⁰ www.cmu.edu/hr/recruit_staff/forms/NewOrientationValue.pdf

parts of a single system. Orientation at each level should work as *part of a whole* to achieve the outcomes that we desire as an Institution.

Examples from outside of Georgia Tech

University of South Florida²¹

- USF launched a university-wide onboarding process in 2010 that is designed to increase employee engagement, increase employee retention, and accelerate new hires' time to productivity.
- New staff and administration employees have a common start date and spend their first two days of work in "Welcome to USF," a new program designed to highlight the culture of discovery, engagement, achievement, and collaboration that makes USF a great place to work. The day-and-a-half session features learning opportunities and information sharing and includes a message from the president as well as engaging conversations with university leadership, students, and student success council members, with a focus on the current vision, mission, and goals of USF.
- After completing the welcome session, onboarding continues with department orientation and regular follow-up activities throughout the new employee's first year. The university's Human Resources department has designed a comprehensive, easy-to-follow program for the departments.

The University of Iowa²²

- The University of Iowa boasts a six-phase onboarding process with periodic check-ins at 30, 60, 90, and 270 days of employment.

Johns Hopkins University²³

- New employees are paired with a buddy for the first year. This buddy has a structured program to provide optimal support to the new employee.

²¹ <http://usfweb2.usf.edu/human-resources/Talent-Management/on-boarding/index.asp>

²² www.uiowa.edu/hr/onboardui

²³ www.hopkinsmedicine.org/jhhr/OrganizationDevelopmentandTraining/Leadership/onboarding

Some likely implementation activities

1. Use a well-researched process to develop a shared definition of “first year productivity and connectivity.” This activity will have natural similarities and differences for each target population: faculty, staff, and graduate students.
2. Direct that the Office of Human Resources and the Vice Provost of Graduate Education and Faculty Affairs collaborate to better orient postdoctoral fellows.
3. Create a template and toolkit that can be used by departments to build appropriate and supportive college/unit and department orientations.
4. Understand the resources necessary to redesign the Institute’s New Employee Orientation program and the Faculty Orientation program so that they deliver the newly defined “first year productivity and connectivity.”

Recommendations 8 and 9

Address Focus 4:
Assist with work-life
demands.

Recommendations:

Create a progressive catalog of leave options for faculty and staff.
Standardize existing leave policies and practices across colleges and units to address maternity, paternity, adoption, bereavement, and other family care roles and responsibilities.

The perceived challenge

We tend to lag behind our peers and aspirant peers in certain aspects of leave programs. Our approach to faculty and staff leave programs is not standard across the Institute.

Perceived needs

Traditional vacation and sick leaves are well established, but we do not have a commonly understood and comprehensive approach to other leaves. Georgia Tech currently offers vacation, sick, holiday, and other leaves of absence for eligible regular, full-time, or part-time faculty and staff. Additional leaves include court duty with pay, military leave with pay (up to eighteen days per federal fiscal year) or military leave without pay, organ donation leave with pay (up to thirty days), bone marrow donation leave with pay (up to seven days), and blood donation leave with pay (eight hours per year or two hours per donation, up to four times per year). Donated sick leave is relatively new and is certainly a value-added benefit.

Selected examples from outside of Georgia Tech²⁴

California Institute of Technology²⁵

- Eligible employees may take up to three days off with pay. In their discussion of the leave, the term *immediate family* includes domestic partners.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology²⁶

- MIT grants eight weeks of paid maternity leave for childbirth and recovery under its sick and extended sick leave program.

University of Minnesota²⁷

- Male graduate assistants and postdoctoral associate employees may take up to two weeks leave with pay related to the birth or adoption of a child. Parental leave provisions as provided under this policy are applicable to registered same-sex domestic partner relationships.

²⁴ For specific details see Appendix 3.

²⁵ <http://cit.hr.caltech.edu/policies/PM/pm15-5.pdf>

²⁶ <http://hrweb.mit.edu/fmla/what-fmla/overview-leaves#mmla>

²⁷ www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Leaves/PARENTALLEAVE.html

Some likely implementation activities

1. Advocate amending Board of Regents guidelines to augment existing family care leave policies.
2. Create a progressive catalog of leave options for faculty and staff.
3. Standardize policies and practices across colleges and units (e.g., maternity, paternity, adoption, bereavement, family care, compensatory, research and professional development leave, etc.).

Recommendation 10

Addresses Focus 4:
Assist with work-life
demands.

Our Recommendation:

Invest in the production of total benefits statements.

The perceived challenge

Faculty and staff may not fully understand the value of the benefits offered them.

Perceived needs

A total benefits statement is a document that outlines the full benefits package an employee is entitled to receive from an organization, including salary, the employer-contributed portions of health plans (medical, dental, vision, etc.), and child-care subsidies. It may also highlight training and voluntary benefits to which the individual might not otherwise have access. Total benefits statements can be used to reinforce the communication of less tangible benefits such as work-life programs and flexible work arrangements. The statement is personalized to each employee. Typically, organizations use total benefits statements to attract, motivate, and retain employees; to reinforce what sets them apart from other organizations; to raise awareness and appreciation by focusing attention on the benefits offered; and to reduce the cost of benefits administration by providing an employee self-service tool that results in fewer phone calls, thereby enabling Human Resources to focus on more strategic initiatives.²⁸

Selected example from outside of Georgia Tech

Duke University invested an additional \$25 million in 2012 to cover the increased cost of benefits such as health insurance, retirement savings, professional development opportunities, and wellness programs. In order to help faculty and staff understand their benefits and the value of the investment Duke is making in them, Duke—like other universities—has begun the creation and distribution of total benefits statements.²⁹

Some likely implementation activities

1. Direct the Offices of Human Resources and Information Technology to collaborate in the production of total benefits statements.
2. Engage a consultant to assist with the first-year transition into producing these statements (educate us about likely pitfalls, assist with technical implementations within PeopleSoft, etc.).
3. Study and prepare for the production and mailing costs of the statements. (Best practice is to distribute via U.S. mail to employees' home addresses.)

²⁸ See Appendix 4 for an example of a total benefits statement.

²⁹ <http://ondemand.duke.edu/video/21746/understanding-your-personal-be>

Recommendations 11 and 12

Address Focus 5:

Help faculty and staff balance family care responsibilities.

Recommendations:

Invest in new family care programs (e.g., elder, spouse/partner, etc.).

Expand investment in child care to support those with unique child-care needs (e.g., providing off hours support and support during critical periods such as finals, etc.).

The perceived challenge

Our child-care programs address only a single aspect of child-care needs and consequently we lack a comprehensive set of programs for family care.

Perceived needs

The summer camp database provided by the Office of Human Resources gets very high utilization (more than 3,000 hits in six weeks). We believe this offers some insight into needs that extend beyond traditional morning-to-afternoon child care. While the Georgia Tech child-care centers are a great option for some, our employees' family situations are all unique. Because we are operating child-care facilities in a metropolitan area, the cost of services at Georgia Tech facilities is more than many of our employees can afford. Additionally, some employees need and/or prefer to choose child care near their homes. Since many have extended family that assist with drop off and pick up, expanding the ways that we provide family care would provide a benefit to help meet the needs of a broader Georgia Tech.

Some likely implementation activities

1. Identify metro Atlanta child-care centers and negotiate discounts for Georgia Tech employees. (employer discounts typically range from 5 percent to 10 percent).
2. Identify an Information Technology resource to create a work-life webpage and identify a content owner (a new Work-Life position).
3. Invest in the creation of a summer camp expo and bring in local summer camp representatives to talk to Georgia Tech employees about the various options.
4. Invest in the creation and maintenance of a Family Care section of the Office of Human Resources website—in effect creating a clearinghouse of information that would contain: decision support tools for purchasing family care, and information and links to external providers and related websites (e.g., care.com and sittercity.com).
5. Implement an employee-student babysitting network to help with a variety of babysitting needs (including evening care, back-up care, etc.).
6. Identify and prepare for costs associated with the ongoing marketing of the new resources.
7. Invest in the creation of an annual family care survey that can assist us in ensuring that our investments match our employees' interests and needs and that the quality of the existing investments remains high.

Recommendation 13

Addresses Focus 6:
Promote financial
security.

Recommendation:

Expand benefits coverage to include domestic and same-sex partners.

The perceived challenge

Compared to our peers, the University System of Georgia view of family is not progressive and may compromise our ability to remain competitive against other top-tier universities.

Perceived needs

Some University System of Georgia (USG) institutions offer some domestic partner benefits for the programs that are totally funded by employee contributions (Georgia Tech currently offers some domestic partner benefits, such as dental, vision, and voluntary life insurance).

For the system-wide programs that involve the use of direct state monies, the USG does not permit offering domestic partner benefits. The decision not to offer these benefits for state-funded plans is based on the fact that the state no longer recognizes common-law marriages (1996 Georgia Act 1021) and does not recognize domestic partners.

Offering full benefits to domestic partners would bring the Institute into closer alignment with the official nondiscrimination policy of the Institute, which reads:

The Georgia Institute of Technology is committed to affirmative implementation of equal employment opportunity in education and employment. The Institute does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status in the administration of admissions policies, educational policies, employment policies, or any other Institute-governed programs and activities. The Institute's nondiscrimination policy applies to every member of the Institute community.³⁰

Because benefits are a substantial part of a compensation package, individuals in domestic partner relationships essentially receive less compensation than their married peers. Moreover, because health insurance costs are typically lowest when obtained through an employer, and individuals are not guaranteed to be eligible for particular insurance plans, additional financial compensation to the employee cannot be considered equivalent to health insurance. It should be noted that even if full benefits are offered, employees receiving domestic partner benefits will still receive less compensation, as they will be responsible for federal taxes on the amount of employer contributions to the partner's benefits.

Offering domestic partner benefits is critical in recruiting and retaining the most qualified employees; a lack of benefits puts Georgia Tech at a competitive disadvantage compared to our

³⁰ www.policylibrary.gatech.edu/37.1-policy-nondiscrimination-and-affirmative-action

peer institutions and threatens the Institute's ability to maintain and improve its position as a national and global leader. Because most peer institutions do offer domestic partner benefits, it is unlikely that the most highly qualified individuals who happen to be in domestic partnerships would opt to be employed by Georgia Tech if they could receive such benefits elsewhere. Although there are individuals currently employed by Georgia Tech who are in domestic partnerships, the lack of benefits adds stress to the family situation, limiting a partner's ability to be self-employed, stay at home to care for children or family, take time off for short- or long-term illness, go to school full time to improve his or her education, etc. Such stresses can impact the productivity of an employee as well as provide an impetus to seek employment elsewhere.

Selected examples from outside of Georgia Tech

Faculty members at the University of Georgia are (again) requesting that university leaders extend benefits, such as health insurance, to domestic partners. The University Council's Human Resources Committee recently voted unanimously in favor of the request. The same council passed resolutions calling for the Board of Regents to approve benefits in 2002, 2005, and 2007.

Emory University offers a range of benefits to same-sex domestic partners of employees.³¹

Some likely implementation activities

It is not clear that domestic partner benefits are disallowed by the state legislature, as some benefits to domestic partners are already offered, such as dental, vision, and voluntary life insurance. The Georgia Supreme Court overturned a challenge to the City of Atlanta's domestic partner benefits program, and the Georgia General Assembly passed a bill in 2005 specifically authorizing local governments to offer domestic partner benefits.

It may be that state-derived funding, which constitutes less than 17 percent of the Georgia Tech budget, may not be used for domestic partner benefits, but extramural research funding specifically provides monies for fringe benefits. Moreover, the same rate is charged to all employees funded by research grants regardless of whether they are single, married, in a domestic partnership, or actually receiving benefits for a spouse or children. Therefore, a pool of money already exists that is specifically for providing fringe benefits to employees and that is not tied to the level of benefit offered to the specific individual funded by a specific source. Further, it should be noted that the rate of participation across both private and public sectors when offering domestic partner benefits is 1 to 2 percent; therefore, the financial impact should be low.

³¹ <http://hr.emory.edu/eu072712/benefits/helpfulinformation/samesexbenefits/index.html>

Recommendation 14

Addresses Focus 6:
Promote financial
security.

Recommendation:

Expand voluntary benefits programs.

The perceived challenge

We are missing opportunities to offer additional programs to faculty and staff at no cost to the institute.

Perceived needs

A comprehensive approach to providing employee benefits requires that we regularly review our voluntary benefits packages and consistently add to the type and quantity of offered packages. Implementation of additional voluntary benefits emphasizes Tech's commitment to offer a very competitive and highly desirable voluntary benefits package. Since voluntary benefits are paid for by employees, there are no hard costs to Tech. These types of programs are frequently implemented by both private and public institutions and help build a competitive and attractive benefits package. Awareness of such programs will help increase the value of the overall total benefits package and aid in our efforts to be an employer of choice.

Some likely implementation activities

1. Conduct a survey to measure employee satisfaction with voluntary benefit programs. (This could be integrated into a broader survey as described in the implementation activities list for Recommendations 11 and 12.)
2. Invest in the deployment of new voluntary benefits (e.g., group legal, Purchasing Power, etc.).
3. Expand communication of voluntary benefits.
 - a. Improve faculty and staff understanding of the availability of these benefits through lunch and learn sessions, seminars, and webinars.
 - i. Topics might include the importance of fund diversification, retirement planning, wellness, and work-life options.
 - ii. Create an annual event calendar and roll out these events to Georgia Tech employees.
 - b. Increase focus on retirement plans.
 - i. Improve communications regarding the availability of one-on-one consultations with our three financial providers (TIAA CREF, Valic, and Fidelity).
 - ii. Increase communications about our supplemental retirement plans and the differences between the plans.
 - iii. Promote the retirement plan tools available with each of our financial institutions.

Recommendation 15

Addresses Focus 7:
Encourage healthy
life choices.

Recommendation:

Invest in the creation of a formal wellness program and a set of incentives for healthy living.

The perceived challenge

We lack a comprehensive approach to faculty and staff wellness and consequently may suffer higher health-care costs.

Perceived needs

It has been shown that investment in helping employees adopt wellness behaviors causes a reduction in medical premiums. Incentives are proven to increase participation dramatically and should be carefully designed. Such incentive programs may keep catastrophic claims from being incurred due to prevention through such programs, save or improve the quality of life for our employees, and prevent expensive claims from occurring. This in turn tends to reduce costs to the system and individual employees. A wellness program would help make Tech a better place to work because it demonstrates the Institute's commitment to the importance of employee health. A successful wellness program helps create a more supportive and enjoyable work environment and reduces absenteeism and presenteeism.³² More than 50 percent of our peer institutions have such programs in place already.

Some likely implementation activities

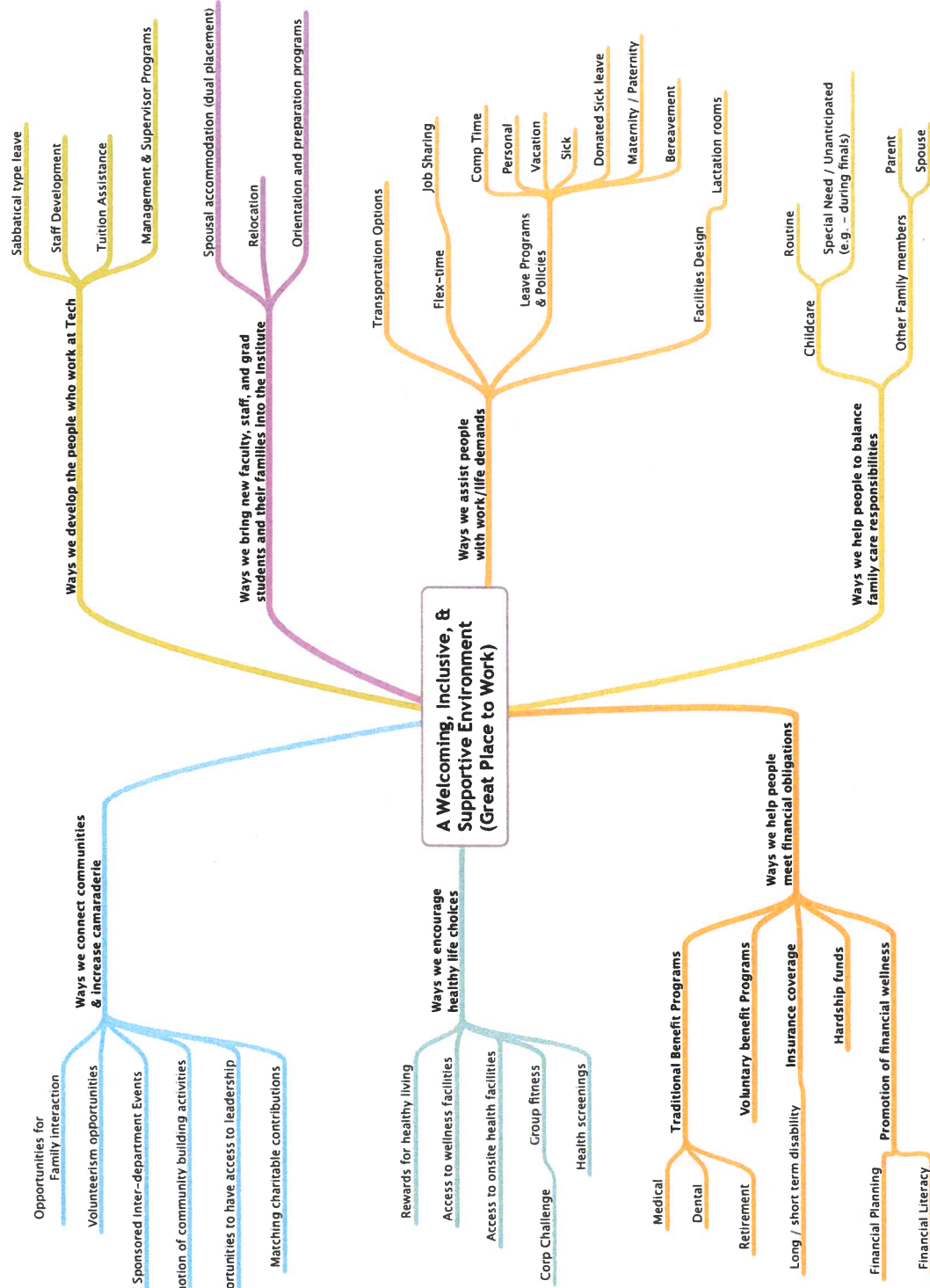
1. Charge a cross-functional committee to specifically study building a system wellness program (including members of the Faculty Benefits Committee, the Office of Human Resources, and the Decision Support Group).
2. Develop a long-term strategy including institutional targets for key health factors and financial incentives (e.g., get your annual physical and get \$100 off your annual premium).
3. Invest in the creation of a wellness section on the Office of Human Resources website that includes wellness resources; tools currently provided by Blue Cross Blue Shield and Kaiser, etc.; and events on campus, etc.
4. Invest in an on-site biometric screening vendor (the University System of Georgia receives \$100K per year from Blue Cross Blue Shield to support wellness).
5. Implement metrics to measure program success and help drive our future decisions related to the wellness strategy.

³² Defined as the act of attending work while sick.

Appendices

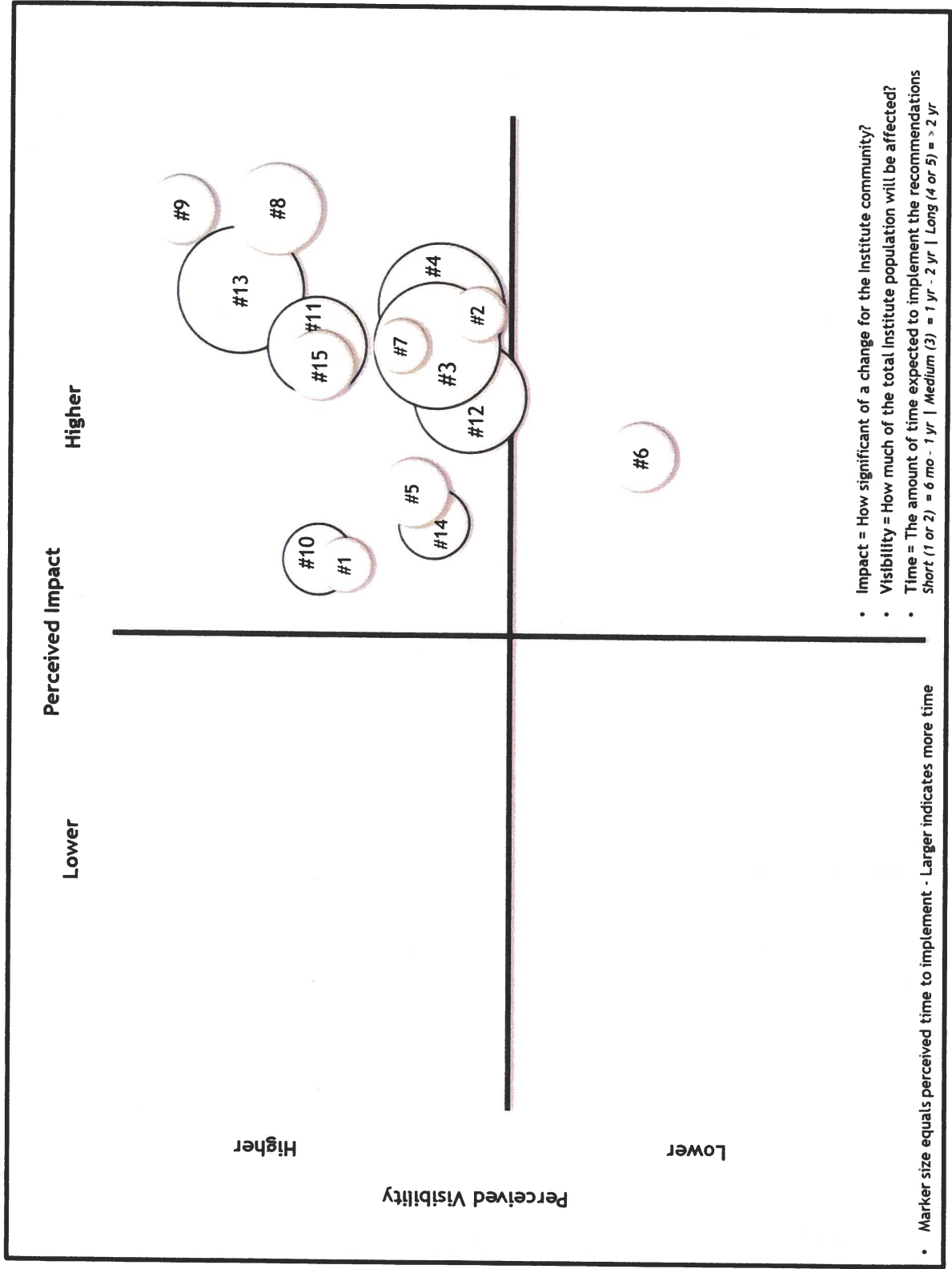
Appendix 1: Foundations of the seven foci

We began by hypothesizing the things that might be found in a welcoming, inclusive, and supportive work environment. These elements were grouped into meta-areas. These became the framework for our investigation of programs and initiatives outside of Georgia Tech as well as points of comparison for existing Institute programs.



Appendix 2: Impact and visibility matrix

The diagram below is not intended to rank or order the recommendations but merely to present the task force's collective sense of the impact, visibility, and amount of time that would be required to implement each. The size of the marker indicates the expected time to implement.



- Impact = How significant of a change for the Institute community?
- Visibility = How much of the total Institute population will be affected?
- Time = The amount of time expected to implement the recommendations
Short (1 or 2) = 6 mo - 1 yr | Medium (3) = 1 yr - 2 yr | Long (4 or 5) = 2 yr

- Marker size equals perceived time to implement - Larger indicates more time

Appendix 3: Comparison of Georgia Tech employee benefits to those of our peers

Institution	Employee Assistance Program										Domestic partner medical	Total "Y"	% of Total	Total "N"	% of Total
	On-site child care center	Childcare discounts with local providers	Back-up childcare	Elder care resources	Summer Camps on-Site	Employee Assistance Program (EAP) (beyond counseling)	Child or elder care events	Group legal coverage	Wellness programs with incentives	Adoption assistance					
University of California - Los Angeles	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	10	90.9%	1	9.1%
Emory University	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
University of Washington	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
University of Florida	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
John Hopkins University	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
University of California - Berkeley	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
North Carolina State University	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	9	81.8%	2	18.2%
California Institute of Technology	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	8	72.7%	3	27.3%
University of Michigan - Ann Arbor	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	8	72.7%	3	27.3%
Purdue University - Main Campus	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	8	72.7%	3	27.3%
Stanford University	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	8	72.7%	3	27.3%
University of Texas at Austin	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	7	63.6%	4	36.4%
Texas A&M University	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	7	63.6%	4	36.4%
Carnegie Mellon University	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	6	54.5%	5	45.5%
Cornell University	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6	54.5%	5	45.5%
Northwestern University	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	6	54.5%	5	45.5%
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5	45.5%	6	54.5%
Pennsylvania State University	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	5	45.5%	6	54.5%
University of Illinois - Champaign	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	4	36.4%	7	63.6%
Georgia Tech	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	3	27.3%	1	9.1%
TOTAL "Y"	16	4	10	15	19	16	7	9	19	11	17				
% of total	84.2%	21.1%	52.6%	78.9%	100.0%	84.2%	36.8%	47.4%	100.0%	57.9%	89.5%				
TOTAL "N"	3	15	9	4	0	3	12	10	0	8	2				
% of total	15.8%	78.9%	42.1%	21.1%	0.0%	15.8%	63.2%	52.6%	0.0%	42.1%	10.5%				

Examples from outside of Georgia Tech
California Institute of Technology

Type	Details
Bereavement Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible employees may take up to three days off with pay. • If special circumstances warrant, such as extended travel, employees may request up to two additional days off for a maximum five days off with pay. • For purposes of bereavement leave, the term <i>immediate family</i> includes the employee's spouse or domestic partner, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, parents, stepparents, grandparents, great-grandparents, siblings, a spouse's or domestic partner's children, parents, grandparents, and any other person living in the employee's household.³³
Medical Disability Related to Pregnancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caltech provides up to four months of leave to female employees who are medically disabled due to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.³⁴
Maternity Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caltech supports paid leave for female graduate students who anticipate giving birth or who have just delivered a child. All female graduate students who meet these criteria are eligible for 1) six weeks of paid leave (and are excused from their regular duties) during which they will continue to receive support, 2) leave with continued access to Caltech facilities and housing, and 3) a total of one year of medical leave, with the ability to retrain health insurance benefits, if necessary.³⁵
Bonding Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All female and male graduate students who have welcomed a new child are 1) eligible for six weeks of unpaid bonding leave during the first year with continued access to Caltech facilities and housing and 2) excused from their regular duties and able to retain their health insurance.³⁵

³³ <http://cit.hr.caltech.edu/policies/PM/pm15-5.pdf>

³⁴ <http://cit.hr.caltech.edu/policies/PM/pm26.pdf>

³⁵ www.hr.caltech.edu/parenting/grad_maternity_leave.pdf

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Type	Details
<p>Bereavement Leave</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the event of a death in an employee’s family, the employee may be granted up to five days of paid leave. In unusual circumstances, additional time (paid or unpaid) may be granted at the discretion of the supervisor with the advice of the Human Resource Officer. • A day of bereavement leave is based on the standard workday the employee would have worked on the day taken for bereavement. • For the purposes of this policy, <i>family</i> includes one’s immediate or extended family as well as the families of domestic partners, stepfamilies, and other family relationships.³⁶
<p>Maternity Leave</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIT grants eight weeks of paid maternity leave under its sick and extended sick leave program for childbirth and recovery. For other pregnancy-related absences, such as for a miscarriage or a temporary disability associated with pregnancy, or for absences beyond the eight weeks following childbirth, paid time off is available if the employee provides medical documentation from a physician showing that she has a health condition and is unable to work.³⁷

³⁶ <http://hrweb.mit.edu/policy/4-9>

³⁷ <http://hrweb.mit.edu/fmla/what-fmla/overview-leaves#mmla>

<p>Parental Leave</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A female graduate assistant or postdoctoral associate employee may take up to six weeks paid leave related to the birth of a child and up to two weeks paid leave related to the adoption of a child. • A male graduate assistant or postdoctoral associate employee may take up to two weeks paid leave related to the birth or adoption of a child. • Departments may choose to adopt a policy for professionals-in-training classifications that do not have access to the parental leave as covered under this policy. For female professionals-in-training, this provision may provide for up to six weeks paid leave related to the birth of a child and up to two weeks paid leave related to adoption of a child. Male professionals-in-training may be provided up to two weeks paid leave related to the birth or adoption of a child. • Parental leave provisions as provided under this policy are applicable to registered same-sex domestic partner relationships.³⁸
<p>Religious Holidays</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excused absences for observance of religious holidays are permitted for faculty, academic professional and administrative, civil service, graduate assistant, and student employees. • Administrators/supervisors will make reasonable accommodations for an employee's time away from work for such purposes to the extent practical in the consideration of business needs. • Planned absences for such requests may be taken as paid vacation leave, if applicable; as time off without pay; or as equivalent time worked at a time and manner agreed upon by the employee and the responsible supervisor.³⁹

³⁸ www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Leaves/PARENTALLEAVE.html

³⁹ www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/hr/Leaves/RELIGIOUSHOLIDAYS.html

Harvard University

Type	Details
Parental Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth and adoptive mothers and fathers (primary caregivers) may take four weeks paid leave.⁴⁰

University of Virginia

Type	Details
Parental Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birth and adoptive mothers and fathers (primary caregivers) may take four weeks paid leave.
Disaster Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVA provides up to eighty hours of paid leave for employees to perform emergency services during times of a state and/or national disaster. • UVA permits paid leave for employees who are victims of a state and/or national disaster. The university provides pay only for leave; there is no pay for expenses incurred by the employee in recovering from the personal effects of a disaster.⁴¹
Compensatory Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UVA offers compensatory leave to provide employees with paid leave as compensation for working beyond their normal scheduled hours but not actually working more than forty hours in a workweek. Compensatory leave is earned on an hour-for-hour basis and expires twelve months from the date it was earned.⁴²
School Assistance and Volunteer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The university provides paid leave for volunteer services and school assistance for up to sixteen hours in any leave year. An additional eight hours may be allowed for full-time employees serving with a volunteer fire department or rescue squad.⁴³

⁴⁰ <http://employment.harvard.edu/benefits/perks/timeoff.shtml>

⁴¹ www.hr.virginia.edu/uploads/documents/media/Procedure_1_Emergency_Disaster_Leave_2_3_.pdf

⁴² www.hr.virginia.edu/hr-for-you/university-staff/university-staff-policies-and-procedures/university-staff-leave-policies-and-procedures/compensatory-leave/

⁴³ www.hr.virginia.edu/uploads/documents/media/School_and_Volunteer.pdf

University of California System

Type	Details
Military Spouse/Domestic Partner Leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employee who is a spouse or domestic partner of a member of the Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves may take this leave during a qualified leave period when the employee's spouse or domestic partner is on leave from a period of military conflict. A <i>qualified leave period</i> for this type of leave means the period during which the qualified member is on leave from deployment during a period of military conflict. An eligible employee will be entitled to up to a maximum of ten days of unpaid leave during a qualified leave period.⁴⁴
School Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An employee who is the parent, guardian, or grandparent with custody of a child in grades kindergarten through twelve or a child attending a licensed day-care facility may take off up to forty hours per calendar year (but no more than eight hours in any one calendar month) to participate in activities of the school or licensed day-care facility. The employee must provide reasonable notice and may elect to substitute accrued vacation leave (or paid time off, if applicable) and/or compensatory time off for this purpose.⁴⁵

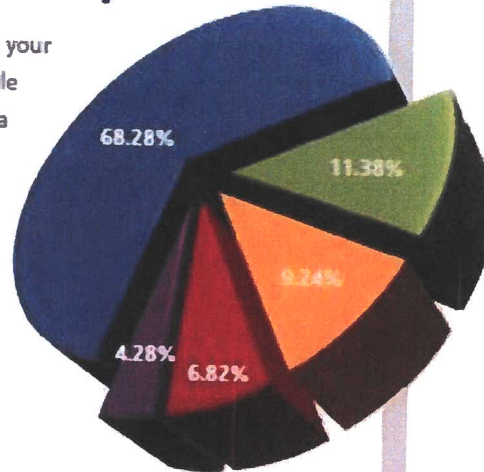
⁴⁴ atyourservice.ucop.edu/employees/policies_employee_labor_relations/personnel_policies/spp2210_absence.pdf

⁴⁵ atyourservice.ucop.edu/employees/policies_employee_labor_relations/personnel_policies/spp2210_absence.pdf

Appendix 4: An example of a total benefits statement⁴⁶

Your benefits: A big piece of the pie

Your benefits play a major role in your total compensation. As this sample chart shows, they can amount to a sizeable piece of the pie.



Jane Doe

(hourly paid employee, availing herself of tuition benefits)

Salary: \$25,500.80

Total Benefits: \$11,846.57

Total Compensation: \$37,347.37

Annual Salary \$25,500.80

This represents the annual salary for your benefits-primary job; this includes paid time off for the seven University holidays, vacation pay, or Paid Time Off.

Health Care Program \$4,250.40

This figure reflects University contributions to your health care and dental plans—plus any incentives paid for Well-U programs.

Other Benefits \$3,453.60

The University also contributes towards various other programs, including life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, long-term disability, home ownership program, tuition waiver/reimbursement, etc.

Government-Regulated Benefits \$2,545.70

The University contributes—on your behalf and based on your gross earnings—money to several federal programs, including Social Security, Medicare, Workers' Compensation, etc.

Retirement Program \$1,596.86

After two years of service, the University contributes 6.2 percent of your base salary, up to a breakpoint, on your behalf. For any salary beyond that breakpoint, up to the IRS limit, the University contributes 10.5 percent.

⁴⁶ www.rochester.edu/currents/V39/N07/bennies.html