

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FACULTY AND ACADEMIC STAFF BENEFITS
(Final; Information)

FB.26.05 2025-2026 Annual Report of the Senate Committee on Faculty and Academic Staff Benefits

This report summarizes the activities of the Senate Committee on Faculty and Academic Staff Benefits (FB) during the 2025-2026 academic year. FB held four meetings during the fall 2025 semester (September 16, October 14, November 18, December 9) and four meetings during the spring 2026 semester (February 3, March 3, April 7, April 28). More detailed information is provided in the minutes of those meetings.

FB received relevant updates from *ex officio* members including representatives from State Universities Retirement System Members Advisory Committee, University Payroll and Benefits, Office of the Provost, Faculty/Staff Assistance & Well-Being Services, Human Resources, UIUC Chapter of the State Universities Annuitants Association, and Council of Academic Professionals.

I. ITEMS REMOVED FROM THE AGENDA

FB.23.02, Healthcare Benefits and Insurance Costs

This topic of concern led to communications between FB and administrators at Carle Health via the Office of Community and Government Relations. Although last year's discussion was mutually useful (see FB.25.03), during this Senate year this channel has been fruitless and unresponsive. Almost three years since Carle Administration proposed placing two employee representatives from FB on their Patient and Family Advisory Council, they still have not done so.

As a result, FB has removed FB.23.02 from the agenda since it has evolved. Note this removal does not imply that healthcare benefits or insurance costs are not important. They are among the many benefits topics that are always relevant to FB.

FB.25.01, Salary Increase Schedule Discrepancy

FB received confirmation that the Policy and Rules for Civil Service Staff, Rule 5.131 (Open Range Pay Plan/Annual Range Review) will be revised to make the salary increase start date more consistent for all employee groups. Although the policy's revision has not been finalized, the salary increase for civil service employees was made effective on 08/16/2025.

FB was later informed that a similar adjustment is planned for August 2026 if the UI System Policy has still not been officially revised to correct this issue permanently. FB determined that the issue is effectively resolved, so it was removed from the agenda on 04/07/2026.

FB.26.04, Ninth Senate Review Commission Request for Committee Feedback from the Senate Committee on Faculty and Academic Staff Benefits

A request from the Ninth Senate Review Commission (SR9) was received to provide feedback on FB's charge, composition, and function. The chair collected and merged individual committee members' feedback into one response document. FB discussed the topic and responses, then sent the report to SR9 on 03/16/2026.

II. ITEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE

FB.22.02, Discussion on the Current State of Faculty and Staff Salaries

In recent years, FB has been provided summary reports by the Office of the Provost. In September, Mette shared that FB could expect the Faculty Data Report later in the fall semester. When asked about the status later in the year, Mette explained that the Office of the Provost and the Division of Management Information (DMI) were creating a new report tool for salary data, which they intend to be more informative and automated. However, this has delayed new data from being reviewed this year. Salaries of academic staff are a core employment benefit and thus an ongoing annual topic. FB considered removing this item from the agenda but decided to leave it on the agenda as a reminder that the reporting process itself is in flux, so early next year FB will need to review the tool or process as well as the updated salary data.

FB.26.01, Multi-Year Contracts for Specialized Faculty

In recent years, the Senate Committee on General University Policy (GP) has been tasked with monitoring the status of Multi-Year Contracts (MYC), particularly the "cap" ratio specified in *Statutes*, Article X, Section 1.a. GP receives an annual summary report from the Office of the Provost.

Chair Weible raised the topic noting that FB has had no discussion of MYCs for several years, yet contract terms, durations, and related policies (e.g. notice of non-reappointments) are clearly important to the "*benefits and conditions of employment*" of academic employees [phrase from FB's charge]. To be clear, no one in FB has suggested taking over GP's monitoring role. Weible later created a very rough draft concept proposing the integration and standardization of some current policies that differ radically across categories of academic staff. That draft and purpose was too confusing to some members, so the topic has been on hold awaiting a fresh rewrite.

FB.26.02, Proposed Revision to the Statutes, Article IX, Section 7a – Sabbatical Leaves and Unpaid Leaves of Absence for Members of the Faculty (ST-90)

A request from the Senate Committee on University Statutes and Senate Procedures (SP) was received to provide feedback on the proposed revision to the *Statutes*, Article IX, Section 7a (ST-90) which would allow specialized faculty the opportunity to apply for sabbatical leave. FB discussed ST-90 at several meetings, with first brief mention at the 10/14/2025 meeting. Preliminary feedback was sent to SP on 11/21/2025. At the 04/07/2026 meeting, William Bernhard, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, gave a presentation regarding the possible impact if sabbatical leave was extended to specialized faculty.

FB.26.03, Review of Differences in Academic Professional and Professional Civil Service Benefits

Schlaack shared that the Council of Academic Professionals (CAP) had discussed and compiled a list of differences between the employment benefits of academic professional (AP) employees and professional civil service employees. The University's trend in recent years of shifting many former AP positions into civil service professional positions has caused increased attention and awareness of those differences among employees. FB asked if the list itself could be shared, and it was.

Chair Weible has been increasing FB's time and focus this year toward identifying any gaps or inequities in benefits that could be improved through committee action. Accordingly, the list of differences Schlaack shared has been "pinned" to the agenda since it includes several benefits topics that merit further discussion by FB, some of which may lead to specific proposals or other methods of advocacy for academic employees in our charge.

FACULTY AND ACADEMIC STAFF BENEFITS

John Weible, Chair
Jesse Couture
Rudolf Haken
Mike Hirschi
Hongye Liu
Angela Lyons
Kristen Rhebergen
Will Sander
Denise Burger, *ex officio*
Mark McGiles, *ex officio*
Jessica Mette, *ex officio*
Chris Ochs, *ex officio*
Katie Ross, *ex officio*
William Schlaack, *ex officio*
H.F. Williamson, *ex officio*