



Resolution No. 1617-20
A Resolution as Continued Advocacy for a Paid Parental or Family Leave Policy
for Graduate and Professional Students

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** in February of this year, this legislative body passed a Resolution 1617-16, advocating for parental policies for students at the University of Missouri; and
- WHEREAS,** this resolution also called for the formation of a Chancellor's Task Force to look into this issue, and thus the Task Force on Parenting and Pregnancy Policies was formed in March of 2017, co-chaired by Associate Professor of Nursing Tina Bloom and GPC President Rachel Bauer; and
- WHEREAS,** the charge of this task force is to 1) “the development of a proposed policy addressing leave for graduate and undergraduate pregnant and parenting students,” 2) “creation of a central website for students, faculty and staff describing existing pregnant and parenting policies, practices, and resources in clear language and linking to relevant resources,” and, after these two are met, 3) identifying additional areas “for improving inclusion of and equity for pregnant and parenting members of our community;” and
- WHEREAS,** while excited and optimistic of the work of this task force due to the dedication of students, faculty, and staff to create and centralize MU policies concerning pregnancy, birth or adoption of a child, and other caregiver responsibilities, it must be highlighted that a paid parental leave policy for graduate and professional students on assistantship and/or fellowship would go a long way in improving overall career-life balance; and
- WHEREAS,** although the implementation of a new policy can take months, if not multiple semesters, to take effect, serious conversations concerning the logistics of a paid leave policy for graduate-professional students on assistantship and/or fellowship can begin sooner, especially given the Office of Graduate Studies’ interest in this issue for the past several years; and
- WHEREAS,** as stated in Resolution 1617-17, “according to data collected from AETNA for the years 2013-2016, the Student Health Insurance plan provider, approximately 40-45 maternity claims are made each year by a student or by a dependent on the university’s student plan; and [...] many of these are graduate-professional students who are forced to arrange their own accommodations for class and work responsibilities such as taking time off of



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class and forgoing paid assistantship and fellowship appointments and even returning to work and their studies just days after the birth or adoption of a child”; and

WHEREAS, a paid leave policy would give clear expectations to departments and colleges concerning amount of leave, payment during leave, and release from duties in order to help to eliminate some of the uncertainty surrounding pay and employment status for graduate and professional students who give birth to or adopt a child(ren); and

WHEREAS, as valuable contributors to the MU workforce, graduate and professional students on assistantship and/or fellowship should be supported with a paid leave program; be it

RESOLVED, by vote of the General Assembly here gathered, that the Graduate Professional Council supports the charge of the newly formed Task Force on Parenting and Pregnancy Policies, and be it

RESOLVED, that this body also calls for the formation of a paid leave program for graduate and professional students on assistantship or fellowship, briefly detailed in Resolution 1617-17, to be formed with consultation from the Office of Graduate Studies.

SUBMITTED,

Ms. Rachel E. Bauer

President

Mr. Doug Valentine

Departmental Representative from Sociology