



Resolution No. 1819-11

A Resolution to Reaffirm the Position of GPC Regarding a Graduate Parental Leave Policy

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** in the 2016-2017 academic year the Graduate Professional Council passed Resolution 1617-16 advocating for parental policies for students at the University of Missouri; and
- WHEREAS,** the General Assembly of that same year passed Resolution 1617-20 to further continue the support for advocacy for parental leave policies and to support the charge of the Task Force on Parenting and Pregnancy Policies, and
- WHEREAS,** the Graduate Professional Council has received no significant updates from this Task Force on Parenting and Pregnancy Policies over the past year; and
- WHEREAS,** there has been significant turnover and reorganization of the University Administration; therefore be it
- RESOLVED,** by vote of the General Assembly here gathered, that the Graduate Professional Council reaffirms its positions regarding graduate leave policies as passed in Resolution 1617-16 and 1617-20, and be it
- RESOLVED,** that a copy of this Resolution will be sent to the appropriate administrator(s) to make each of them aware of the Graduate Professional Council's continued support for a graduate leave policy, and be it
- RESOLVED,** that the Graduate Professional Council officially requests an update from those aforementioned administrators regarding the status of the work of the Task Force on Parenting and Pregnancy Policies, and for an update regarding the status of any forthcoming graduate leave policies.

SUBMITTED,
Executive Board



Resolution No. 1617-16

A Resolution to Advocate for a Parental Policy for All Students and a Parental Leave Policy for Graduate and Professional Students on Assistantship and/ or Fellowship

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HERE GATHERED THAT:

- WHEREAS,** the University of Missouri does not currently have a policy in place to provide protections for students in the event of pregnancy, the birth of a child, or adoption of a child, except for the option to apply for a general medical leave; and
- WHEREAS,** the lack of policy leaves a gray area regarding rights for all students in the event of pregnancy, birth, adoption and other caregiver-related absences, which leaves student-parents to seek their own plans for accommodating these significant life events; and
- WHEREAS,** for graduate-professional students who inhabit dual roles as students and as employees, the lack of a policy leaves their status in both cases unprotected in the event of the birth or adoption of a child, or if they need to care for a family member or partner; and
- WHEREAS,** the average age of graduate-professional students is 34 years old, and most are above the age of 22; and
- WHEREAS,** 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
- WHEREAS,** 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 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,** national funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), among others, have adopted policies to promote career-life balance--a practice that has also been pursued in relation to faculty and postdoctoral grantees; and
- WHEREAS,** these policies (e.g., of NSF and NIH) allow for the funding recipient's host institution to request funds to assist in the granting of a paid leave to a student receiving a fellowship if and only if the host institution has an official family leave policy for students; and
- WHEREAS,** the University of Missouri does not have a clear paid leave policy or program concerning parental or caregiver leave for graduate and professional students who perform the roles



Resolution No. 1617-16

A Resolution to Advocate for a Parental Policy for All Students and a Parental Leave Policy for Graduate and Professional Students on Assistantship and/ or Fellowship

of graduate assistant, teaching assistant, and/or research assistant on an assistantship and/or fellowship, which renders graduate-professional students at Mizzou ineligible for family leave protections and accommodations that would otherwise be accessible from agencies such as NSF and NIH; and

WHEREAS, for the past three fiscal years, the Office of Graduate Studies has advocated for funds from the university's central operating budget to cover a plan for paid parental and caregiver leave program for graduate employees; and

WHEREAS, this proposed plan would allow the graduate or professional student to request a paid semester leave due to the birth or adoption of a child, regardless of gender and would provide a semester of pay at the minimum stipend level in accordance with their FTE appointment; and

WHEREAS, this proposed plan would also allow graduate-professional students on NIH or NSF (or other) grants to access the family leave accommodations offered by those agencies which they do not currently have access to if they are hosted by Mizzou; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Graduate Professional Council advocates for the implementation of a gender neutral policy for all students that concerning the rights of students in cases of pregnancy, adoption, or caregiver-related absences; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a Task Force or Ad Hoc committee be created with the goal of drafting such a student parent and caregiver policy for inclusion in the Collected Rules and Regulations, where this committee shall be comprised of campus stakeholders, including the Office of Graduate Studies, Office of Title IX, and relevant existing committees therein; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the University of Missouri develop a paid parental leave program for graduate and professional who are employed by assistantships and/or fellowships with the university, where this program shall be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies and should be either a direct implementation of the existing proposal made by the Office of Graduate Studies or a very similar model; and be it further



Resolution No. 1617-16

A Resolution to Advocate for a Parental Policy for All Students and a Parental Leave Policy for Graduate and Professional Students on Assistantship and/ or Fellowship

RESOLVED, that pursuant to Resolution 1516-16, a representative of the Graduate Professional Council will communicate significant developments, when appropriate, on the specific matter of a parental leave program for graduate employees in a timely manner to a representative of the Coalition of Graduate Workers, so that the latter's advocacy efforts on the topic avoid redundancy and therefore best serve graduate workers.

SUBMITTED,

Ms. Rachel E. Bauer
President



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



Resolution No. 1617-20

**A Resolution as Continued Advocacy for a Paid Parental or Family Leave Policy
for Graduate and Professional Students**

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