

ANNUAL REPORT

Faculty/Staff Welfare Committee

**University of North Alabama
Florence, Alabama**

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Date submitted

Submitted to: Dr. Lauren Killen
Chair, Shared Governance Executive Committee

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA

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2025-2026

I. Executive Summary

The Faculty/Staff Welfare (FSW) Committee reviewed several university policies this year as part of a regular review cycle. It also provided feedback on two documents: the *Interim Discrimination and Harassment Policy* and *Interim Title IX Procedure*. Finally, a report was prepared in response to a tasking from the Shared Governance Executive Committee (SGEC) to review how Faculty Handbook policy 3.13 has been implemented across campus.

II. The Committee's Charge (from the Shared Governance Document)

1. To review and make recommendations on matters relating to faculty and staff welfare, including compensation, benefits, health and safety, and quality and equity of work issues
2. To communicate its deliberations and findings to the President, and after discussion with the President, to the university community
3. To handle any proposals the committee may make affecting university policy according to section C.2 "Shared Governance Procedure for Policy Change Recommendations"
4. To submit a final written report electronically by the first day of the fall semester to the Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs with a copy sent to the Chair of the SGEC

III. The Committee met on the following dates:

9/23/25 and 1/7/26

The committee also conducted business electronically to more efficiently address certain tasks assigned by the SGEC.

IV. What were the Committee's actions and accomplishments this year relative to each of the items of the charge?

Charge 1:

- The committee's most challenging and extensive work this year involved conducting a review of the implementation of Faculty Handbook policy 3.13, which covers Birth Recovery Leave and Parental Leave. The tasking specifically asked the committee to offer recommendations for consistent application of the policy as well as a

compensation plan for “other departmental faculty who cover courses for the faculty member taking leave”. Actions taken to complete this review included the development and dissemination of two surveys to gather perspectives on the policy’s implementation from department chairs and faculty that took leave within the last few years. Committee members also collected information from their colleagues and campus leaders and shared their recommendations during two face-to-face committee meetings. A final report was submitted on January 8th.

- The FSW Committee examined several policies up for review as part of the 3-year review cycle to include: *Drug & Alcohol, Private and Government Aircraft, Nondiscrimination Statement, Consensual Relationships, and Workplace Threats and Violence*. Committee members offered feedback on a shared spreadsheet and noted whether (1) the policies are still relevant and don’t need updating or (2) if changes are needed (prompting further review). This information was used to generate final recommendations for the SGEC.
- The FSW Committee also reviewed and offered feedback on the *Interim Discrimination and Harassment Policy* and *Interim Title IX Procedure*.

Charge 2: Committee deliberations and findings pertaining to the topic associated with the first bullet (above) were communicated via a report made available through the Shared Governance Executive Committee to the President.

Charge 3: No proposals were generated by the committee.

Charge 4: This report will be submitted in accordance with the timeline specified in the charge.

V. What were the Committee’s formal recommendations?

1. Key recommendations pertaining to the review of the implementation of the Birth Recovery Leave and Parental Leave Policy (Faculty Handbook policy 3.13):

- **Promoting consistent implementation and equity:** “When faculty apply for leave, we recommend adding a step to the process that documents how the department implemented the workload adjustment aspect of the policy. It is important to capture any teaching that may be required of the faculty member while on leave away from campus, responsibilities that are shifted to other faculty members in the department, and compensation awarded to faculty and/or adjuncts supporting the leave. A mechanism is also needed to allow faculty members to potentially comment on the workload adjustment plan directly to a review committee. Ongoing review and oversight are likely the best ways to document trends in implementation and gradually implement thoughtful changes that don’t inadvertently undermine an important policy.”
- **Implementing a compensation plan:**
 - “Immediately set the expectation that faculty members will be financially compensated when they assume additional teaching responsibilities beyond their full-time teaching assignment to cover courses taught by a colleague taking birth recovery or parental leave.”

- Move to a “new compensation structure starting in Fall 2026 that incentivizes faculty to assume additional teaching responsibilities by providing additional compensation calculated on a weekly basis—\$200 per week for a 16-week course or \$400 per week for an 8-week course. Faculty would continue to be paid on their regular monthly schedule, with the additional compensation included based on the number of instructional weeks taught for each additional course.”
- “Providing compensation for additional teaching duties does not address new service-related obligations that may be distributed to faculty when a colleague takes leave. Therefore, the FSW Committee recommends establishing a system that would allow faculty members to document their work (e.g., describing additional duties and time spent) and apply for compensation through funds made available at the university level (similar to requesting a research grant). This wouldn’t be a source of automatic funding, but money could be awarded based on criteria established by a committee.”

2. Recommendations related to the committee’s review of policies up for review (3-year cycle):

- *Drug & Alcohol* – The policy is still relevant and doesn’t need updating.
- *Private and Government Aircraft* – Changes are needed to the policy. The committee feels the policy is no longer necessary and should be abolished.
- *Nondiscrimination Statement* – Changes are needed to the policy. Specifically, the location of the Title IX office needs to be updated.
- The committee determined that the *Consensual Relationships Policy* and *Policy Regarding Workplace Threats and Violence* are still relevant and do not require updating. However, a small edit was recommended for each document.

3. Feedback and edits from committee members pertaining to the *Interim Discrimination & Harassment Policy* and *Interim Title IX Procedures* were consolidated and added directly into the documents. A general recommendation was to make the policies more user-friendly by presenting some ideas in a visual format (e.g., tables, a figure depicting key steps involved in processing a complaint, etc.).

VI. What does the Committee plan to accomplish?

A. In the coming year?

The committee plans to continue reviewing policies assigned by the SGEC according to the relevant cycle (3 or 5 years based on the policy).

B. In future years?

The committee will work to proactively address faculty/staff welfare concerns that may warrant policy changes, as needed.

VII. What are the Committee's weaknesses?

The main weakness involved inadequate communication between the outgoing chair and incoming chair regarding a new task that was assigned to the committee (an item not addressed by the committee during the 2024/25 school year). The committee had to react in the fall to an unexpected email notification granting an extension on a missed deadline.

A. What can the Shared Governance Committee help you do to address the weaknesses?

One option would be to avoid assigning tasks to the committee late in the spring semester or over the summer when its full membership is less available (due to vacations, etc.) or not on contract. If this change isn't possible, then I would make sure to email both the current chair and the incoming chair when tasks are assigned during transition periods.

VIII. Comments

N/A