

February 22, 2021

Dear Olga,

Thank you for submitting a proposal for Senate consideration. The Senate leadership reviewed your proposal to amend the University's parental leave policies. These policies were recently reviewed and revised by the Senate and approved by President Loh on March 25, 2020 ([Senate Document #18-19-35](#)) and ([Senate Document #18-19-34](#)).

In your proposal, you suggest amending the following three provisions in the faculty and staff parental leave policies.

1. "Leave may only be used on one occasion in a twelve-month period"
2. "...and up to three (3) separate occasions during the duration of their employment with the University System of Maryland (irrespective of job category)."
3. "During the Parental Leave period, staff shall use any accrued and available annual leave; personal leave; observed holiday leave; and/or discretionary paid administrative leave that is granted during the Parental Leave period for institutional closures."

The Senate Executive Committee considered your proposal at its meeting on January 21, 2021. The SEC reviewed your suggested amendments as well as the recent revisions to this policy by the Faculty & Staff Affairs Committees in March 2020 and found that the specific concerns that you have raised were discussed as part of that review process. Based on these considerations and the limitations placed on this policy by the University System of Maryland (USM) policy, the SEC has decided not to move these proposed changes forward for further consideration. The specific details of the committees' reviews and other concerns regarding these changes are provided below.

In academic year 2019-2020, the Faculty Affairs and Staff Affairs Committees thoroughly and thoughtfully considered the frequency and total number of occasions that an employee could use parental leave. The [UMD policy](#) already provides one more occasion than the [USM policy](#) by allowing three (3) separate occasions instead of the two (2) allowed in the USM policy. The committee also discussed the possibility of removing the cap on the number of occasions but learned from University Human Resources (UHR) that no employees had attempted to use the benefit a fourth time or inquired about the possibility. In considering the balance between the financial impact to the institution if the cap were to be removed and the tremendous perceived value to those few staff members who may choose to utilize the benefit again, the committee could not find evidence that an additional use of the benefit would have a significant positive impact on staff, and decided not to recommend a change. With regard to the use of accrued annual leave before assured parental leave kicks in, this is a provision that is within the USM policy where discretion is not given to the institutions. Therefore, the University cannot amend its policy to be out of alignment with the [USM policy](#).

The Senate has also held a principle that it would not review an issue that had been recently reviewed or would override the work of a prior Senate unless there is a subsequent change in federal or state law that requires it.

For these reasons, the Senate Executive Committee decided not to charge a committee with reviewing your proposal and that no further action will be taken on your proposal by the Senate. If you have any questions about the Senate review process, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Dugan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laura" and the last name "Dugan" clearly distinguishable.

Laura Dugan
Senate Chair