

## Staff Benefits Survey Results

The Ithaca College Staff Benefits Committee, in conjunction with Staff Council, conducted a survey that was sent to all benefit eligible staff members and ran from 9:53 am on April 4<sup>th</sup> through 8:13 am on April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. This survey was not affiliated with the Staff Compensation Program Review Online Survey sent out by Sibson Consulting, on behalf of Ithaca College Human Resources, that concluded on June 9, 2017.

Out of a possible 837 eligible staff, 406 started the survey and 358 completed the survey. Of those who responded, approximately 80% were either somewhat or extremely satisfied with their current benefit package. There was a significant amount of feedback from staff that has been broken down into general categories.

### Medical Insurance Costs

When asked what, if any, concerns do you have with the current benefits offerings, the following data was collected. Please note that more than one response was allowed for this question.

<u>Concern</u>	<u>Responses</u>
Cost	195
Extent of Coverage	84
Limits to coverage	93
Limits to reimbursement	33
I have no concerns	78

While the majority of staff members were satisfied with their overall benefits, the most common concern was with the cost and coverage of the medical plan. Out of the responses, only 78 had no concerns with the benefits package. The majority of respondents were concerned with the increased cost of the plans, both Point of Service (POS) and High Deductible (HD). This data was backed up by over 83 specific comments regarding the high cost of the medical plans, in premiums, deductibles, prescriptions and co-pays. There were over 46 comments regarding the concern with the limits to coverage and limits to medical reimbursement.

### Retirement

Out of the 22 comments received, almost half were satisfied with Ithaca College's retirement plan, including the matching funds that Ithaca College provides. The remaining 12 comments included suggestions on including overtime contributions into retirement, increased contributions from Ithaca College, "cashing" in sick time at retirement and better health coverage at retirement.

### Paid Time Away (PTA)

Paid Time Away was broken into the following categories; sick time, vacation time, personal time, paid holidays and bereavement time. Please see the chart below for the breakdown of data.

	Extremely Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neither Adequate or Inadequate	Somewhat Inadequate	Extremely Inadequate

Sick	65.23%	23.85%	5.75%	3.45%	1.72%
Vacation	58.05%	28.16%	5.46%	6.32%	2.01%
Personal	48.41%	29.39%	9.22%	10.37%	2.59%
Paid Holidays	68.68%	20.11%	4.89%	4.89%	1.44%
Bereavement	50.15%	26.25%	16.22%	4.13%	3.24%

There were a large number of comments made for this category and the main concerns are listed below:

- There were over 40 positive comments about the PTA given, including summer hours, the holiday time between Christmas and New Years and the generosity of PTA.
- There were 23 specific comments regarding insufficient vacation time including changing the way vacation accrual works. For example, increase the number of vacation time rolled over as well as the timeline of when the rollover occurs; change the timeline to acquiring additional vacation time to shorter increments instead of the current 10 and 20 year mark. A couple people voiced concerns that their offices were too busy and they had too many responsibilities to take the time they were allotted.
- Seven commenters would like to see the college add Federal holidays to PTA, especially MLK day and Veterans Day and increase the time off during Spring Break and Thanksgiving.
- There were 10 comments made about needing a change in personal and sick days. Some would be willing to exchange sick days for personal days. Another concern was that there is a limit to the number of sick days that can be used for family illness and/or doctor appointments.
- Over 10 people specifically mentioned being able to share unused sick time with people who have had a serious life event that required time away from work.
- There were 6 comments made from people who were unaware of the bereavement policy and an additional 6 comments regarding the policy as being insufficient, especially when those family members were not local and travelling had to happen.

### **Vision Benefits**

The biggest concern raised by respondents involved the individual cost of the plan, or their “out of pocket” expenses. From 14 comments, 6 employees raised concerns specifically about the plan's cost, while 3 others raised concerns about the extent and quality of providers in the area that accept the plan, and four employees mentioned inadequate coverage in the plan. One employee mentioned that the vision plan is “great.”

### **Dental Benefits**

The biggest concern raised by respondents involved coverage offered by Delta Dental Insurance. From 36 comments, 24 employees mentioned concerns with the plan, primarily regarding limitations, quality, and cost of coverage. The primary suggestion offered by 4 different employees was for the dental plan to cover “adults” for orthodontia services. Eight different employees mentioned being pleased with the plan and its coverage.

### **Maternity/Paternity Leave**

There were three main themes of the comments on the subject of Maternity/Paternity Leave. They are listed in order of frequency.

- More fully paid leave time for both mothers and fathers

- The rules are confusing and unclear
- Need for adoptive/foster leave

We had 25 comments overall with some encompassing more than one of themes.

**Childcare**

The main concern of the 15 comments we received regarding childcare is that they believe childcare should be offered on campus or at least be subsidized in some way. Having an official relationship with a nearby childcare provider was suggested as well. It was said childcare has been a concern for years and looked into previously. There was a continued request for the college to look into this option.

**Mind Body Me Program**

The majority of the 11 comments received were positive and people think it is a great benefit. The other comments encompassed wanting incentives for the program that are tied directly to our benefits, and to be able to leverage the program as a tool to bring college-wide health care costs down.

**General Benefits not including PTA or Healthcare**

The majority of staff were aware or have used a number of benefits offered by the college. The table below shows the data.

	<b>Yes, I'm aware.</b>	<b>I have used this benefit.</b>	<b>No, I had no idea.</b>	<b>Total Number of Responses</b>
<b>BalanceWorks (ENI)</b>	53.82%	33.14%	13.03%	353
<b>Mind, Body &amp; Me Program</b>	50.57%	45.43%	4.00%	350
<b>Lifemart &amp; Aetna Discounts</b>	35.19%	4.11%	60.70%	341
<b>Free Will Services</b>	26.50%	0.85%	72.65%	351
<b>Funeral Planning &amp; Concierge Services</b>	21.59%	0.00%	78.41%	352
<b>Travel Assistance &amp; ID Theft</b>	28.77%	1.14%	70.09%	351
<b>Beneficiary Assist- Counseling Services</b>	37.10%	2.32%	60.58%	345
<b>Long Term Care Insurance</b>	71.79%	3.99%	24.22%	351
<b>Dining Hall Meal Plans</b>	66.95%	24.50%	8.55%	351
<b>Free Occupational or Physical Therapy</b>	51.70%	21.02%	27.27%	352
<b>Free TCAT Bus Pass</b>	67.71%	20.96%	11.33%	353
<b>Free Speech &amp; Hearing Clinic</b>	61.21%	14.66%	24.14%	348
<b>Cell Phone Discounts</b>	37.39%	44.48%	18.13%	353
<b>Plum Benefits</b>	50.72%	16.81%	32.46%	345
<b>Retirement Planning</b>	67.81%	28.49%	3.70%	351
<b>Toastmasters Program</b>	71.06%	5.44%	23.50%	349
<b>Orthodontia Care</b>	65.70%	5.23%	29.07%	344
<b>Tuition Remission</b>	69.03%	28.41%	2.56%	352
<b>Teladoc</b>	73.14%	6.29%	20.57%	350

Along with the numerical data, there were 5 main themes in the 47 comments we received.

- Positive - Just over half the commenters feel they are getting great benefits that are comparable or better than most employers in the area
- More information needed (6 comments) - Need reminders of the benefits we don't think about all the time. Need to communicate benefits better to new employees as well.
- Lack of access (3 comments) – They would like benefits like the fitness center extended to immediate family who are on their plans already. They have no time because of job demands to utilize these programs.
- Customer Service (4 comments) - Some comments asked for better/faster/any response from HR, others commented on how we need to review our benefits with knowledgeable people to make sure our LGBTQ community is covered equitably. There were a couple comments on poor customer service from Aetna and ENI.
- Tuition Remission Program - Overall, staff are happy with this, but some would like to see increased benefits extended to other local colleges.

The Staff Benefits Committee would like to thank all who participated in this survey.