

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE RETREAT

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

January 18, 2008

Chickamauga Room, University Center

Representatives and Alternates in attendance: Joyce Blevins, Pat Boyer, Angela Bradshaw, Deanna Cameron, Julia Cronin, Cheryl Faulkner, Linda Gehron, Kelly Griffin, Michael Headlee, Ken Hood, Anne Jay, Sandra Jones, Jeannie Hill, Valerah Hodges, Anne Jay, Anna Lane, Stephen Leather, Jack Pitkin, Joyce Powell, Jean Rice, Doris Roensch, Frankie Roeser, Sue Stephens, Nancy Tolar, Jan Uhles, Liz Walker.

Others in attendance: Pat Branam, Associate Vice Chancellor, Development; Richard Brown, Vice Chancellor, Finance & Operations; John Delaney, Vice Chancellor, Student Development; Terry Denniston, Assistant to the Chancellor; Bob Lyon, Vice Chancellor, University Advancement; David Pittenger, Associate Provost for Academic Administration; Matt Pope, Associate Director, Athletics; Dan Webb, Associate Director, Office of Human Resources; Melanie Sadler, Administrative Specialist, Office of Human Resources.

Call to Order: Ms Hodges called the meeting to order.

Minutes: Motion was made and seconded to approve minutes from November 15th meeting. (The ERC did not meet in December.)

ERC By-Laws

The purpose of the Employee Relations Committee is to provide a direct channel of two-way communication between University administration and regular non-exempt employees for information and advisory purposes. The ERC will serve as a means for University administration to disseminate information concerning plans and programs affecting non-exempt University staff. It will also serve as a forum by which non-exempt employees can discuss issues of general concern to them.

UT policy established Employee Relations Committees on all campuses 25 years ago. Mr. Webb said his role is to facilitate the communication process and make sure policies and procedures are followed. Employees who represent units, which are determined by geographic location and/or job group, are elected to serve. A small sub-committee met prior to elections to re-draw representational groups. The ERC meets 11 times a year (does not meet in August) and a representative and/or alternate from each area are expected to attend all scheduled meetings. Representatives may miss no more than four (4) regularly scheduled monthly meetings during a calendar year. A representative's absence is excused if the alternate attends in their place. If an item is voted upon, only the representative may vote if the alternate is present.

The committee elects a Chair and Vice Chair every other year. According to guidelines, the Chair will serve as liaison to the Director of Human Resources; will collaborate with the Director of Human Resources in determining meeting agenda, presiding over meetings, appointing subcommittees, and filling vacancies; will attend system-wide Employee Relations Board meetings.

Ms Hodges said she presented at past Employee Relations Board meetings an increase in annual leave (exempt employees accrue 2 days leave per month when hired); choice of retirement plans; true 50% discount for dependents; different dental insurance plans.

UTC's Employee Relations Committee is very proactive, according to Mr. Webb who cited the cookbook as an example. Other ERC accomplishments were obtaining Memorial Day as a holiday and an increase in the longevity pay for each year of service from 25 to 30 years. The ERC has provided much input for equity pay plans the past 10 years.

Guest: Terry Denniston, Assistant to the Chancellor

UTC experienced a record enrollment this fall in both graduate and undergraduate students. *U.S. News & World Report* rated the university as one of the top Master's level colleges in the South and 13th in public universities in the South. UTC was the only institution in the UT system to rise in rankings. *Princeton Review* featured the College of Business as a top program and also a top program for women.

In the past eight years, UTC has invested more than \$200 million dollars in construction for UTC Place, EMCS (Engineering, Math, Computer Science Building), and renovation of the University Center. The state has committed \$48 million for construction of a new library.

The Sim Center was recently established as the Sim Center: National Center for Computational Engineering and has secured \$20 million in private funding. This will enable competition at a higher level for government and private research funding and development of a closer relationship with the Oak Ridge National Research Laboratory. IM America of Silicon Valley has chosen the Sim Center to test fuel cell performance. In a newly formed research consortium, TVA has allowed UTC and the Advanced Transportation Technology Institute use of their research facility and test track. As a result, the College of Engineering received a federal grant to develop hydrogen as an alternative fuel for vehicles in collaboration with UT Knoxville and other partners in the East Tennessee Hydrogen Initiative.

New programs this year are ROTC, Womens' Studies, and a Computer Science degree in Security & Information Technology. The Teacher Prep Academy has been named a participant in Teachers for a New Era, a landmark initiative focusing on K-12 education and best practices. The Ford Foundation, Annenberg Foundation and Carnegie Corporation will provide funding. The Athletics Department launched a new marketing campaign with 'C' pins, which Ms Denniston distributed.

Ms Denniston said several ERC members participated in the Strategic Plan examining UTC's strengths, challenges, and opportunities. The four strategic initiatives are partnerships with students, partnerships for education and research, partnerships with diversity, and enabling partnerships. The budget committee has been reorganized and renamed UPRAC (University Planning Resource Advisory Council). Dr. Deborah Arfken has been named UTC planning coordinator and charged with implementing the Strategic Plan. She is developing working groups which will view action steps and present plans and comments to UPRAC. This will be used to develop a blueprint for the future and but also a

remembrance of UTC's heritage. UTC's motto "We Shall Achieve" was etched in buildings over 100 years ago and should serve UTC beyond the next 100 years.

Guest: Richard Brown, Vice Chancellor of Finance, Operations & Information Technology

Dr. Brown said he would soon release \$1.7 million from enrollment fees to advance programs and operating budgets. The largest compensation program for higher education employees, a 5% pool, was distributed last year. Compensation will remain a top priority as well as increasing operating budgets.

Capital projects of approximately \$91 million include the Wellness Center and \$48 million Library, which has received much interest from the community. An RFP (request for proposal) will be released in two weeks for a new student information system, which has been 10 years in the planning. UTC will be the first campus in the UT system to implement a new student information system.

The financial health of the university is strong and although the state may experience a budget shortfall, it is expected that rainy day funds will be used to balance the budget. Dr. Brown said he wanted each employee to understand the budget and encouraged them to attend budget hearings.

Guest: John Delaney, Vice Chancellor, Student Development

Dr. Delaney said he was delighted to return to UTC; he was employed here from 1990 - 94. He is particularly interested in advancing a campus climate of treating each other with respect and engaging students in the conversation. As a result, he believes UTC would become a better place to live, learn, and work.

Dr. Delaney and Provost Oldham are viewing retention initiatives and putting together a student support team from 10-12 areas that will impact student success and retention.

In the 1990's, Dr. Delaney said he was involved in discussions about establishing an Intramural Complex and now after 15 years it is close to realization. He invited members to participate in Intramurals by taking a hiking or canoe trip or watching indoor soccer. A group is viewing use of the Wellness Center, funded by student fees, by faculty and staff. Phase II of construction will include a pool.

An RFP for Student Health Services that would meet the needs of students, athletes, and a component for the university community is being drafted. It is expected to be released in mid-March.

Dr. Delaney said he or other representatives from Student Development would be glad to meet with the ERC at future meetings.

Guest: Bob Lyon, Vice Chancellor, University Advancement

Mr. Lyon said University Advancement is comprised of WUTC Radio Station, University Relations, Alumni, and Development.

WUTC, under the direction of John McCormack, Station Manager, implemented program changes four years ago due to declines in ratings and underwriting. Since then, ratings have increased in all time slots and underwriting has increased 35%. A record on-air fundraising was accomplished this past spring. WUTC ranks 18th in public radio stations compared to the local market.

Mr. Lyon praised the calm, business-like demeanor of Director Chuck Cantrell and the staff of University Relations. His office is responsible for video and publication releases.

Director of Alumni Affairs is Jayne Holder. The Alumni Board has been active in participating in UTC's Strategic Plan and University-Wide Strategic Planning Process; visiting high schools to encourage students to graduate and attend college; meeting with superintendents from North Georgia counties to discuss the North Georgia tuition plan and other issues. The Board meets with Chancellor Brown for breakfasts that are geared towards fundraising and friend-raising.

Pat Branam has been hired as Associate Vice Chancellor for Development. Several positions in the department are vacant following retirements but Mr. Lyon said he expects them to be filled soon. Fundraising has averaged \$7 - 8 million a year; so far this year fundraising totals \$13 million from gifts, deferred gifts and pledges.

Mr. Lyon reiterated Dr. Delaney's comment that every student has a story to tell. Debbie Ingram, President of the UT Alumni Association, has spoken about the impact on students' lives from donations to the University. Mr. Lyon said he hopes to relate more stories about although there are some confidentiality agreements.

Ms Tolar thanked Mr. Lyon and the Development Office for fundraising efforts for a Chemistry Department lab. Mr. Lyon said more monies are needed for Grote Hall renovations beyond what the state is providing.

Guest: Matt Pope, Associate Athletic Director

Mr. Pope said he was representing the Athletics Department for Rick Hart, Athletic Director, was traveling with the Wrestling Team. Since Mr. Hart's arrival 1 ½ years ago at UTC, he has taken an analytical approach in determining how Athletics integrates with the campus.

The mission of Athletics is to "guide, encourage and support our student athletes in the quest for comprehensive excellence, academically, athletically and socially. Above all else we prepare our student athletes for productive meaningful lives." Mr. Pope said the core values were respect, integrity, positive attitude and premiere service.

Athletics has 17 programs, all of which are in the Southern Conference. Six programs do not have a permanent facility but Mr. Pope said they are able to accomplish a lot with resources on hand and community partnerships.

The football team will play Oklahoma in their season opener and is also scheduled to play Florida State during a 13-game season. Mr. Pope said he expects more games of this caliber to be scheduled. UTC will host

the NCAA golf championship this spring, Men's and Women's Basketball Tournament on campus in 2009/10, and Men's Golf Nationals Championship at the Honors Course in 2010. Golf is ranked in the top 50 in the country and the Wrestling Team is ranked #19. Special events are planned during basketball games to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Arena.

Scott Koskoski is the new Assistant Athletic Director for Development. A new marketing campaign was kicked off with the 'C' pin. A proposal for University Health Services is being viewed with relationship to its effect on Athletics Training. Twelve new computers have been added to Athletics Academic Support, which is directed by Kim Reece. Mr. Pope said students must have access to succeed academically. He noted that NCAA regulations do not allow an athlete to change majors.

Three major firms have visited the Arena and held discussions with Athletics and Arena staff. Firms will propose plans to update the 25 year old facility which is in need of new plumbing, heating, etc. It is expected that the work would be done in phases. Mr. Pope said are also viewing new video boards for the Arena.

Payroll deductions for season tickets for football, women's basketball, and men's basketball are an option for faculty and staff through Human Resources. (Payroll deductions are not available at this time.)

Guest: David Pittenger, Associate Provost for Academic Administration

Dr. Pittenger said he has worked with 3 Chancellors, 5 Provosts, 3 Athletics Directors, 4 Student Development Directors, and 2 Development Officers in the 7 years he has been at UTC. In spite of the changes, he noted a level of cooperation and communication across divisions never seen before. He cited the Retention Task Force, comprised of staff from Academic Affairs and Student Development, as one such example of cooperation. UTC is continuing discussion with Chattanooga State to increase the number of transfer students and repackaging of the articulation agreement.

UTC has a shared faculty appointment with Hunter Museum for an Art Conservator which benefits UTC, the community, and develops partnerships. The January 29 newspaper will contain an article about a partnership between UTC and the East Tennessee Construction Management Association. The College of Engineering will offer a major in Construction Management; start-up funds will be provided by the Association of Contractors.

A one-stop shop, known as First Place, will integrate the front-desk functions of Financial Aid and Records in Phase I. Jobs are posted and interviews are scheduled to begin soon. First Place will be housed in the current Financial Aid Office. Phase II will include the front-desk functions of Bursar.

The present Banner system, in place since the 1970's and written in a computer code no longer taught, will be replaced soon. Dr. Pittenger said the new system will inform students of pre-requisites and co-requisites and textbooks needed for class. It is also possible to download photos from student IDs which could be displayed alongside names for instructors' student rolls.

Recognitions

Ms Hodges presented certificates of appreciation from the Chancellor to representatives and alternates and special recognitions to:

- Compensation Committee: Julia Cronin, Chair; Bonny Clark; Jeannie Hill; Pat Boyer; Joyce Powell

Ms Cronin said as salary funds became available, the committee shared with Mr. Webb and the administration their desire to address compression, across-the-board increases, or moving closer to market value.

- Communication Committee: Sue Carroll, Chair, Nancy Leamon

A "buddy system" was begun several years ago for ERC members to invite new employees to join them for lunch or coffee. Ms Hodges presented this idea at a board meeting last year to Dr. Petersen, who was very complimentary and said he would share it with others.

- Training Committee: Anna Lane, Chair; Kelly Griffin; Anne Jay; Bonny Clark

Ms Lane said the purpose of the committee was to serve as a sounding board to Mr. Webb and determine training offered on campus.

- Administrative Support: Melanie Sadler

Mr. Webb presented a certificate of appreciation from Chancellor Brown to Ms Hodges for her service as ERC Chair.

Election of Chair & Vice Chair

Mr. Webb opened the floor for nominations for Chair. Ms Hodges was nominated and with no other nominations, a motion was made and seconded to unanimously elect Ms Hodges as Chair.

The floor was opened for nominations for Vice Chair. Ms Lane was nominated and with no other nominations, a motion was made and seconded to unanimously elect Ms Lane as Vice Chair.

Cookbook

Proceeds from cookbook sales have been deposited in the Career Development Fund (CDF), which provides funds for regular, non-exempt employees to attend job-related training. Ms Hodges said 30-35 cookbooks remain for sale and the CDF balance is now \$8,148.43. Ms Denniston congratulated Ms Hodges for the newspaper article featuring the cookbook.

Ms Hodges said she would like re-order cookbooks this fall; the minimum order is 600 although she hoped Fundcraft (publisher) would allow a minimum of 300. According to Fundcraft, UTC's cookbook was the largest and most difficult one they had printed. A member suggested waiting several years before publishing another cookbook.

Picnics, Luncheons, Seminars

Ms Hodges said she thought the Chancellor would sponsor two picnics again this year. Suggestions for picnics included a bake-off contest, karaoke contest, beach theme, and "UTC Idol" contest with a Simon Cowell impersonator.

Ms Hodges is scheduling two luncheons during Administrative Professionals Week, as she did last year.

The Training Committee will meet with Mr. Webb to discuss a training program and luncheon to coincide with Administrative Professionals Week.

Future Meetings

Ideas discussed for future meetings included inviting senior administration representatives; Dr. Nancy Badger, Director of Counseling & Career Planning, to discuss recognizing students in distress; Adam Cava, GSA representative, and Bill Staley, SGA President, to listen to students' needs and views; representatives from Financial Aid, Records, Continuing Education and other departments to present an overview of what their offices do.

Other Issues/Concerns

In response to Ms Hodges question, Mr. Webb said New Year's Eve is not recognized as a holiday at Tennessee Board of Regents Schools. Ms Hodges said she may request New Year's Eve as a holiday at the Employee Relations Board meeting. She submitted a request for a 37.5 hour work week at last year's meeting.

Ms Hodges encouraged members to attend budget hearings the end of February. She added that it was encouraging to see more men participate in the ERC.

Adjournment

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Next Meeting

The ERC will meet February 21 at 2:00 in the Fortwood Room, University Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Sadler
Administrative Specialist
Office of Human Resources

