

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

November 19, 2009
Heritage Room, University Center

Members Attending: Joyce Blevins, Pat Boyer, Sue Carroll, Cheryl Faulkner, Kelly Griffin, Jeannie Hill, Valerah Hodges, Ken Hood, Anne Jay, Anna Lane, Jack Pitkin, Joyce Powell, Jean Rice, Nancy Tolar, Liz Walker, Jean Walston.

Others in attendance: Dan Webb, Director, Human Resources; Melanie Sadler, Administrative Specialist, Human Resources.

Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the September 19th meeting.

Blue Ribbon Awards:

- July - Kellie Karaky, IT Technologist II, Teaching Resource Center
- August - Steve Smith, Craft Specialist III, Facilities Planning
- September - Charity Trillet, Director, Technology Support Services

Guest: Dr. Bryan Samuel, Director of Equity & Diversity

Dr. Samuel, who earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at UTC, said he was excited to return as Director of Equity & Diversity on July 1. His office is responding to an OFCCP (Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs) audit that is due December 16, but could be extended to January 1st. The risk to the University of the failure to have an acceptable Affirmative Action plan and to meet OFCCP standards is that it could lose access to federal grants and contracts.

The Access & Diversity Committee, comprised of several subcommittees, is viewing strategies and initiatives to recruit staff; mandatory diversity training to include sexual harassment prevention and cultural competency. A recommendation should come forth requiring all employees to receive 3-4 hours of mandatory training per year, which would be offered 10-20 times a year. Some universities outsource such training or could be done in-house. The committee is working to identify faculty and staff with expertise in areas to assist as trainers.

Dr. Samuel said he would like to establish a fellowship initiative for each college, by Fall 2010, encouraging a full-time tenure-track faculty member attaining a doctorate. He said he would also like to establish a professional development initiative for promotional advancement allowing employees to advance from one EEO category if they attain a degree, required to perform the job, and experience. Mr. Webb said a career ladder system exists within certain research jobs in Knoxville.

Dr. Samuel said he is unsure of the particulars but had seen it work at other schools. He cited Miami University, Ohio where the assistant to the President took on additional job duties and after acquiring a doctorate, was selected as Vice President.

A member questioned if this would allow an employee to advance internally without competing with a pool of applicants and if this could lead to a lawsuit from an outside candidate. Dr. Samuel responded that any organization can support and grow its work force but must consider outside candidates when hiring. He added that this is in the exploration stage now and is unsure of the costs and parameters for professional development opportunities.

A member asked how the current hiring process is affected by the Office of Equity and Diversity. Dr. Samuel said a committee should select candidates to interview and have

a fair and objective reason for not offering the job to certain candidates. The university must make a good faith effort to recruit. Applicants are asked to self identify into one of five populations: white, black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian.

Training Advisory Group

Mr. Webb said a PPT presentation will be presented to the Executive Team, with the following content:

1. Mandatory Training
Carol Oglesby has investigated mandatory training at peer institutions, most of which do have some form of mandatory training. Campus-wide Mandatory Training is not currently required on any UT campus.
2. Chancellor's Challenge
Although there are plentiful opportunities for on-campus training, many sessions have low attendance. Carol Oglesby and Laure Rodebaugh are working on the Chancellor's Challenge that will highlight and promote training programs, through a fun game-format program that will challenge faculty and staff to participate in a broad range of activities that promote professional development as well as general wellness.
3. Performance Management
Laure Rodebaugh will interview a number of deans, directors, and department heads to use as research to improve the performance appraisal instrument (SPDR) as well as to improve the general performance management process, with the emphasis on enhance the contribution of each staff member through training, constructive feedback, and coaching.

Ms Lane said a perceived wellness survey is complete and will provide a baseline as the university develops a wellness program.

STAR Achievement will be presented in the spring for Administrative Professionals, which addresses relationships, attitude, motivation, and networking in four modules. Kelly Griffin is a certified STAR Achievement facilitator.

ERC Election and Retreat

ERC election ballots will be mailed Monday. ERC Retreat will take the place of the regular ERC meeting in January. Ms Sadler will invite Chancellor Brown and the vice chancellors to join the retreat for lunch and address the ERC about goals and visions for their respective divisions. Chair and Vice Chair will be elected to serve for the next two years.

Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting

Ms Hodges will attend the board meeting December 8 in Nashville. Among the topics to be discussed are RIFs, salary adjustments and merit pay, insurance rates, UT athletics, and tobacco usage.

Other Issues

- Ms Hodges presented Cooking by Degrees to Ms Hendricks at the October meeting. All cookbooks have been sold. Reprint will require minimum order of 600.
- The Chancellor's Open House will be Tuesday in the University Center. The chorus will sing at 3:15.
- The Chancellor's Christmas Party, at his residence, for ERC members will be December 1.

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- Volunteers are needed for the United Way auction, November 25 from 10 - 2 pm, University Center.
- A member said the ARC (Aquatic & Recreation Center) opens at 6:30 and they wanted to know if it could open at 6:00 so they could work out and be at work by 8:00. Mr. Webb suggested that Ms Hodges draft a letter to Dr. John Delaney, Vice Chancellor for Student Development.
- Some members asked about the future of Healthy Mocs and Ms Walker will make some inquiries and report at the next meeting. She said that equipment has been moved out of the auxiliary gym.
- The university will be open December 24. Employees may use personal day, if applicable, or annual leave with supervisor approval.
- Members agreed to cancel the December ERC meeting.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Sadler
Administrative Specialist, Human Resources