EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COUNCIL MEETING
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Thursday, November 21, 2019
Fortwood Room, University Center

Members attending: Melita Rector, Shirley Hatfield, Anne Jay, Nick McCampbell, Heather Heinlein, Andrea Evans, Sue Carroll, Sarah Wetherill, Kellie Karaky, Mark Stotts, Jean Betters

Others in attendance: Laure Pou, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, Human Resources; Julie Brown, Manager of Employee Relations, Human Resources; Janice Michaels, HR/OEI Assistant, Human Resources

Call to order: Ms. Rector called the meeting to order.

Minutes: The minutes for the October 2019 meeting were submitted and approved electronically with no changes needed.

Blue Ribbon Award: Kim McCroskey, Walker Center for Teaching & Learning, was the recipient of the Chancellor’s Blue Ribbon Award for November 2019.

Guest Speaker: Chief Robert Ratchford, UTC Police Department

Chief Ratchford gave an update on changes being made since the active shooter scare in August.

Lock-down Procedure

In the event of a threat to campus labeled as an Act of Violence (active shooter, potential gunman, violent protest, etc.) UTC will lock-down the campus until the threat is over. Remotely all exterior doors of academic buildings, residential halls and gymnasiums will be locked barring any potentially dangerous person(s) to harm students, faculty, staff or visitors.

While numerous exterior doors are able to be locked remotely at this time, UTC is currently working on finding a visual mechanism to show that they are locked, enhancing a sense of security in a lock-down scenario. The University was recently awarded monies from the State to enhance public safety, and part of the funding is being earmarked to augment electronic access and security.

During a lock-down, employees may leave campus if they feel unsafe. Those that are off campus when a lock-down happens will be advised to stay away from campus. Also, Carta buses will be dispatched to a staging area away from campus in case they are needed for evacuation.

Communication/UTC-ALERT

Due to how long an ongoing situation could potentially last and how fast misinformation can spread, our plan now is to send out frequent updates, even if the message is still the same. In the event of Acts of Violence on campus there will be a unified update via UTC-ALERT every 10-15 minutes to confirm that the situation is still being addressed, as well as information on how to stay safe in certain situations.

An Alterus function has been added to every computer on campus. When an UTC-ALERT message is pushed out that requires immediate action to stay safe, Alertus will trigger on all
logged in screens and display alert information on what to do. This is only for UTC operated and owned desktops and cannot be added to personal devices.

Directions on the UTC-ALERT page on utc.edu/ALERT has been updated to be clear on how to sign up. Each individual with a UTC ID can sign up a total of three phone numbers and three email accounts to receive alert notifications. Efforts have been raised to address access to those who visit the campus or those who have a difficult time signing up the free service. If you are still having issues signing up, please contact Safety and Risk Management by email, safety@utc.edu or call 423-425-5741.

Campus Trainings

As of November 15th, a total of 700 faculty and staff have received Active Shooter training. These are mandatory trainings from the Chancellor's Office and those whom have not received a training have been or will be scheduled in the near future. A representative from both the Police Department and the Office of Safety and Risk Management provides the training at the departments location in order to help give specific training and field questions pertaining to their hall or building.

There have been three safety trainings offered to students, as well as a Campus Safety Forum hosted by SGA and a Town Hall Meeting open to campus addressing emergency preparedness in the state of Tennessee. Although these were not heavily attended, good feedback was received on how to get better outreach to students on safety as well as increasing efforts on creating resources online, thinkSAFE safety grams and social media presence via UTC Police Department and UTC Emergency Services.

TEMA Evaluation

Multiple representatives from the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency have given our emergency preparedness procedures and policies a thorough overview. After the regional director, among others, read through our plans a rep from TEMA came and gave the UTC leadership a summary of their findings. Based on their feedback we are bolstering minor changes; but we are aligned with the state’s procedures and the surrounding agencies in the event of an emergency situation on campus.

UTC Police has completed their 3 year accreditation process and is now fully accredited. The Emergency Services department is now undergoing their process to become accredited.

ERC Information Communication

Ms. Rector reminded everyone to vote for new ERC reps/alternates and to encourage everyone in their group to vote.

President’s Award Nomination

The President’s Awards program recognizes outstanding contributions of staff and faculty in the areas of the University of Tennessee’s three-fold mission to provide education, conduct research and to offer outreach. Honorees are selected each year from a system-wide pool of candidates nominated by campus and institute leaders. Commemorative and monetary awards are presented during an annual ceremony, and faculty and staff winners will help select honorees in future years.

Ms. Pou asked for nominations from the ERC committee members for the UT President’s Award for the Support (Non-Exempt) category. Kellie Karaky nominated Faith Garner for the award.
Chancellor’s Blue Ribbon Award Process

Ms. Brown addressed questions/concerns from the October meeting.

It was asked if the committee uses a screening process/rubric when selecting the nominees. No, there is not a rubric. Committee members review nominations for individuals who are going above & beyond their regular job.

It was also asked if nominations could be carried over from month to month. Nominations are reviewed on a monthly basis to keep them timely and more manageable.

When asked if HR staff or Chancellor’s staff are eligible, Ms. Brown replied that since the Award is managed by HR & the Chancellor’s office, staff from those offices are not eligible.

Can everyone that was nominated be notified of their nominations, even if they don’t win? After discussing with the Chancellor’s office, the answer is not at this time.

Announcement

Amazon Prime begins on December 9 through UT Marketplace

Next Meeting

The ERC Retreat will be January 17 at 11:00 in the UC Chickamauga Room

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Michaels
HR/OEI Assistant