

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE
February 16, 2023
UC Sequoyah Room/Zoom
Minutes

Members in Attendance: Melita Rector (Chair), Mark Stotts (Vice Chair), Heather Heinlein, Matthew Holzmacher, Shirley Hatfield, Sharon Thomas, Monica Watson, Mandy McAllister, Merrium Carver, Ann Laster, Marion Perkins, Jean Betters, Shari Kappel, Stuart French, LaDonna Spruill, Terri Bearbower, Kim Sapp, Evie Deal, Laneeta Derrick

Others in Attendance: Laure Pou, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources; Julie Brown, Director of Employee Relations; Nicole Gaines, Employee Relations Consultant; Logan Rader, HR Administrative Support Specialist

Call to Order: Melita Rector called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

Introduction: Nicole Gaines has joined UTC Human Resources as an Employee Relations Consultant. She will be working with Julie Brown on employee relations matters such as addressing employee concerns and complaints, coordinating facilitated discussions, training and development, employee recognition, etc.

Search Process Enhancements (Laure Pou): Human Resources and the Office of Equity & Inclusion (OEI) have been collaborating over the last year to improve search processes and hiring procedures at UTC for both faculty and staff. In Spring 2022, a series of focus group sessions were held on campus to obtain feedback from hiring managers, search committee members, etc. to identify pain points in the process and what opportunities exist for improvement (e.g. pace is too slow; process is too convoluted; inconsistent responsiveness, etc.). Ms. Pou shared the work that has been done through this collaborative effort as of this date.

Faculty hiring is typically more cyclical than staff hiring, so Human Resources has begun reaching out to new faculty members months in advance to schedule intake appointments before the Fall and Spring semesters begin in an effort to mitigate barriers to early access for email, required training, etc. New faculty and staff hires are still going to be entered into IRIS as a Pending Employee prior to their start date to expedite their access to some elements like their UTC email address. Faculty members typically have an effective hire date of August 1, January 1, and May 1, with minimal exceptions on campus, to coincide with the beginning of each academic semester.

The primary point of contact for faculty hires is now Charlene Ragland in the Office of Equity & Inclusion due to the role that OEI plays in initiating the faculty hiring process (review of job advertisements and posting thereof). Rachel Riehle is the Human Resources point of contact for faculty hires.

Updates have been made to the guideline document for UTC's hiring process to more accurately reflect points of contact, steps in workflow, timeline, etc. Those procedures can be found on the [HR Procedures website](#). An online shared folder is planned to be established for each search process with a variety of tools, guidelines, and helpful resources. As a capstone function of the hiring process, Human Resources will also be generating a feedback survey at the end of each search to gauge what went well and where opportunities for improvement can be addressed.

Human Resources and OEI are now recommending that an additional role of Search Assistant be established for faculty and staff searches. This additional resource will help alleviate any logistical or communication issues, and they can serve to support the process by communicating and scheduling with candidates, Human Resources, and OEI, all in collaboration with the search committee and hiring managers. These individuals will have the same access to search materials as other search committee members.

OEI is in the process of creating a new Search Progress Form, which is intended to reduce the amount of back-and-forth email communications (requesting documentation, sharing diversity data, etc.).

An eventual set of goals for the coming DASH system that is set to replace IRIS in July 2024 is to incorporate all these improvements to institutionalize and automate several elements of the search and hiring processes, including the expedition of access to UT systems.

Blue Ribbon Award Recipient (Julie Brown): Eddrick Brooks, Coordinator of Club Sports in Campus Recreation, was selected to be the January 2023 Blue Ribbon Award Winner. The committee thanks Mr. Brooks for his valuable time and service to the students at UTC and encourages members to offer congratulations.

Safety & Security Advisory Committee Meeting (Melita Rector): The Safety & Security Advisory Committee meets at least two times a year to assess the safety and security of the campus environment as well as protocols for employees in the event of an emergency. Members are encouraged to reach out to an individual in Safety & Risk Management or the UTC Police Department in order to evaluate and share individual departments' safety practices and procedures. Each building and office is relatively unique, and keeping up-to-date on the standard safety and security practices in your environment is a top priority for UTC colleagues and administration.

Performance Reviews (Melita Rector & Mark Stotts): Annual Performance Reviews are due to Human Resources from all benefits-eligible employees by March 31, 2023. Staff members and supervisors are encouraged to complete the necessary evaluations (self-evaluation, goals & objectives, and performance evaluation) as soon as possible. Employees are also encouraged to track their goals, accomplishments, and training over the course of each calendar year to assist in this process.

Other Matters (Members):

- **Salary Pool for FY24:** Although the governor's budget allows for a "5% pool" for market-based salary increases, this does not translate to a 5% increase for all staff members. Incorporated within the 5% includes the salary pool for current staff members, efforts to address compression, and reaching the milestone of a \$15.00 minimum hourly rate for the coming fiscal year.
- **Performance Management Training:** As it currently stands, UT System utilizes a 5-point scoring scale for annual performance reviews. Supervisors are encouraged to maintain a level scale across their department. Though there are no current plans to adjust the scale or capture overarching score data, a suggestion was made by members to conduct more training opportunities for supervisors undertaking departmental reviews. Some shared concerns regarding different standards across departments and divisions (e.g. supervisors rating generally high versus rating generally low). UTC does conduct training for staff evaluations, but there has historically been low participation rates. There are ongoing discussions to identify these trainings as mandatory for supervisors and managers, but they are currently voluntary.
- **360 Evaluations:** Evaluations of supervisors are currently optional for departments using the [Peer 360-Degree Review Form](#), which some members have found to be helpful. More supplemental forms can be found at the [Performance Management](#) site. Human Resources has been conducting discussions with Academic Affairs to implement more resources and training for department heads, specifically, especially for those faculty members who supervise staff members.
- **Student Employee Evaluations:** There is a program called [MocsGrow](#) to assist student employees and their supervisors, which includes supervisor and student responsibilities and upcoming training opportunities.

Adjournment: Melita Rector adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 23, 2023