

APPROVED MINUTES

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL

MARCH 31-APRIL 1, 2011

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

**Conference Room – Templeton Suite at Student Union**

**PRESENT:** Paula Austell (alternate UT Dallas), Benjamin Bond, Yolande Caddell, Jorge Cardenas, Dennie Clemons, Gerald Cleveland (alternate UTMB), Gary Cook, Pattie Espinoza (alternate UT Pan Am), Michael Gannaway, Olga Garcia (alternate UTB), Ronnie Garcia, Lewis Garrison, Joseph Gregory, Joel Helmke, Dexter Jones, Jesse Manciaz, Brenda Martinez, Rochelle Pena, D. Ellen Reedy, Shirley Rowe, Kimberly Sanders, Eric Solberg, Douglas Stark, Laurie Thompson, Sally Thompson, Doc Weathers, Venetta Williams, Marsha Zimmerman

**ABSENT:** Lisa Belue, David Marquez, Colter Fleming, Priscilla Castillo, Susan “Aris” Obar, Melanie Loving, Shawna Ridley, Adriana Hinojosa

**VISITORS:** Sarah Hart, Dan Stewart, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Employee Benefits & Services

**Thursday, March 31, 2011**

Executive Session (Officers & Committee Chairs)

Called to order at 8:05 by Chair, Joel Helmke. Discussed purpose of this session which is to catch up and see where each of the committees are in meeting their goals.

**Work-Life.** Olga Garcia is representing this committee in the absence of chair. Reviewed mission statements from last meeting in October 2010.

Flexible schedules will be one focus. Increase morale. Decrease comp time.

Deliverable: Review flexible schedules at all components and develop a best practices to be presented to the Regents. Health care institutions are more advanced in this regard. Need to task each of the members to provide information.

**Cost Reduction.** Rochelle Pena is representing this committee in absence of chair. They have received several reports from components. Need to meet and cull out the details. Committee will work on the information gathered and formalize a report/recommendation.

Deliverable: Share best practices with other components. Where will information gathered be compiled and made available to all members/components? Perhaps organize into buckets: facilities, cost containment, budget.

Sarah Hart offered to develop web page and post information on the EAC website.

**Wellness.** Dennie Clemons, chair, presented update. Made updates to various wellness websites. Developed program “Plant ‘Seeds of Success’ in Wellness Garden”. Will begin gathering success stories.

Consulted with Rolando Roman, UT System Wellness coordinator. He would like to use some of the stories and possibly create a “wellness video” to share stories with all members.

Deliverable: Goal is two-fold: (1) PowerPoint presentation on web providing inventory of personal success stories (2) made available to all UT System employees through the UT Wellness website

**Recruitment/Retention.** Ben Bond, chair, presented update.

Survey completed on Employee Discount Programs. Researched and compiled information. Second, exploring development opportunities for current & future staff. Still need to research. Also, potential for sabbatical opportunities along the same lines as that available for faculty.

Olga Garcia mentioned that if any parent served in military their children up to age 25 can receive full tuition assistance at state universities through Hazelwood Legacy amendments.

Deliverable: (1) Best practices on EDPs. (2) Focus on tuition reimbursement and developmental opportunities.

Joel mentioned that there is some interest in tuition reimbursement programs.

Some members offered success stories at their campuses.

**Policies/Procedures.** Jesse Manciaz, chair, provided overview.

Focus was on performance evaluations. New initiatives rolling out such as ePerformance (campuses currently on Define). Would like to meet with committee to discuss.

Deliverable: Request of System HR Committee to report on how performance evaluations are completed. Who will be switching to new tool? What tools will they be using? What are the best practices? What are they developing to transition? Conversion process can be difficult

Joel mentioned that there was some interest in Performance Evaluations. If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

PeopleSoft includes 360 performance review, electronic signatures and several other features that are very positive.

Joel suggested that we review the minutes from the Regents meeting to determine what received attention. Will provide report on Regents meeting.

**Call to Order at 9:05** – Joel Helmke thanked Jesse Manciaz and Jorge Cardenas for organizing visit then introduced Dr. Diana Natalicio, President of UT-El Paso who spoke about the history and evolution of the university.

Views on UTEP – Student Panel. Two student representatives spoke about their experiences at UTEP and their challenge to move to Tier One status and what it means to them.

**Comments / Approval of Minutes**

Joel Helmke provided a **report from Board of Regents meeting** which focused on each of the committees and their goals. Rochelle Pena informed us that Joel was very well prepared and represented us well by being able to respond to the many questions they had.

Wellness and WebMD – initiatives well received.

Work-Life Flexible Schedules – several questions but educated board members on definitions.

Policy/Procedures – disparities that exist at components regarding performance evaluations.

Recruitment/retention – reward people who are assets

More of a discussion than anticipated. Elder care support. Several questions. They were respectful of the issues represented. Mr. Helmke emphasized the importance of providing this information to those who make decisions. They wanted to understand better how they could assist.

Deliverables need to be relevant and impactful when we present next report in November 2011 which will be to entire Board of Regents instead of a smaller Campus Life committee. Want to present Best Practices. Need to look at economic challenges of each of the initiatives.

UT System Board of Regents information is available online.

Joel thanked Dan Stewart and Sarah Hart for their assistance in preparing for the meeting.

Several minor changes were made to the minutes. Doug Stark made motion to accept minutes as revised; Rochelle Pena seconded. They were approved unanimously.

### **Legislative Update – Dan Stewart**

Dan reinforced how well Joel represented the Council at the Board of Regents meeting (he “hit a homerun”) and was very well prepared to answer questions.

Commented on how effective Dr. Natalicio is as a university spokesperson.

\$20-28 Billion deficit. Much discussion about Rainy Day fund which is approximately \$8B but use would be limited to no more than \$3B and there would be no impact on higher education. It may only deal with crisis for current fiscal year

Most likely will be Special Session possibly moving into May. Budget is dependent upon this and benefit rates cannot be determined. Impact: annual enrollment may be pushed to August and may be a much shorter enrollment period.

About 330 bills analyzed related to employment conditions of our staff. Thirty fiscal bills analyzed and to be reported.

Most likely to be passed:

**“Permissive” furlough bill.** Does not mandate, just allows it legally. Conditions – cannot use paid leave to account for “fifth day” if furloughed to four-day work week in which you would receive 4/5 of salary. Could be implemented as a cost savings initiative.

**Wellness incentives.** Legislature stymied as to how to stem health care costs. How can we incentivize changes to lifestyle which drive claims? 15% of staff drive 85% of claims.

**Guns on campus.** Will allow those with concealed handgun permits to carry weapon. Where can you carry it? How can it be determined where the safe places are to carry them? Much discussion on issue. Very rigid process to obtain permit. Belief is that guns will control violent outbreaks. Data shows that there has not been any incidence of use of concealed weapons inappropriately. Is there any data to indicate that the presence of a concealed weapon has averted a crisis situation? If and when bill is passed there may be an increase in number of holders of permits.

(Doug Stark) Should we, as committee, put together educational pieces to explain procedures?

(Dan Stewart) UT System will, most likely, be putting together guidelines for institutions' use.

### **GOOD NEWS:**

Our financial situation is much better this year. From a relative position, we are in a good position. May not be good but it could be much worse. More and more companies are dropping retiree coverage.

Extremely fortunate in relationship to rest of agencies, state, country as far as what is offered to employees.

\$820M to be earned by University Lands Office for contribution to Permanent University Funds. UTIMCO has done a good job of investing these funds. PUF is ever-increasing fund for capital projects. UT has 4<sup>th</sup> largest endowment; largest public endowment.

Break for Lunch

### **Review of Committee Goals and Action Items**

Draft for Board of Regents meeting will need to be submitted in August. Need definition of recommendations for July meeting.

### **COST REDUCTION**

Mission Statement: To identify and share cost-saving opportunities and efficiency models across the University of Texas system.

Distributed 4 questions to component members but information received still needs to be culled to determine items that could be cost-effective for two constituencies with varying demands and needs: academic and health institutions.

Will post best practices to EAC website after July.

### **WELLNESS**

Looking for inventory of Success Stories to be posted on Employee Benefits web page. Working with UT Wellness coordinator. Will discuss whether collaboration on a video will be possible.

Shared some success stories. Gerald demonstrated how he creates "Moments of Relaxation" by focusing on deep breathing activities.

Seven questions will be distributed to help individuals develop personal success stories. Sharing stories will motivate others to adopt healthier lifestyles. Use wellness coaches to support progress.

## **RECRUITMENT/RETENTION**

Two main areas: (1) evaluating EDPs across institutions. (2) professional development opportunities for staff

Have spreadsheet to condense info from each component on EDP

Development opportunities:

- Tuition reimbursement
- Internal development opportunities. Who is doing what?
- Approved time away from office such as sabbaticals

Will develop best practices. May need to continue into next year.

## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

Flexible and alternative work schedule guidelines. Are there institutions that do not support this?

Rochelle Pena - With implementation of PeopleSoft, will approvers need to use personal time to complete records? If you're exempt, how does this impact you? The same issue comes into play with the use of Blackberries and SmartPhones. Doug Stark suggested that a survey be completed to determine who has policies in place. With increased use of technology, what guidelines need to be developed?

Many components allow individual managers to decide whether flexible/alternative schedules can be incorporated into their offices. Evidence suggests that flexible schedules increase productivity and improve morale.

## **POLICIES/PROCEDURES**

Although performance evaluations are policy they are not necessarily implemented across the board. Discuss with Human Resource directors how they determine if Performance Evaluations are being completed. What is the mechanism to determine whether it's being accomplished according to guidelines? There was discussion as to how several representatives/managers facilitate this in their own institutions. Would it be best to ask at general meeting or on individual basis?

There was extended discussion on the processes in place and the value of the process. Are the individual component policies in place consistent with UT System policy? Purpose of evaluation is to identify strengths/weaknesses of employee and to make them more productive not for merit purposes.

How do group/team evaluations (being beta tested at UTHSC-Tyler through People Manager) comply with Joint Commission Guidelines?

There may be several new policies that need to be developed based upon the decisions of the legislature including those related to guns on campus.

Committees broke out into individual rooms to continue their discussions and to refine ideas.

We assembled and completed a tour of the campus.

## **Friday, April 1, 2011**

Executive Session (Officers & Committee Chairs)

Joel Helmke called the meeting to order at 8:14.

Quick updates from committee meetings on Thursday.

**Cost Containment** (Aris Obar) – Reductions must come from appropriated funds. 85% of those funds go to salary so areas other than salaries need to be looked at closely.

Four areas the committee has identified as potential cost cutting areas:

- Leasing equipment. Rather than getting newer equipment, keep same model to reduce costs.
- Telephones. Using Skype or similar models to replace telephone service. Could save \$500 per each telephone. Faculty may only be in office a few hours a week but still pay for phone service.
- Centralizing services. Purchasing/HR/secretarial/research grants.
- Consortium savings. Maintenance contracts can be reduced significantly through REMI Group consolidation. Utilities/maintenance/supplies – using the buying power of the larger group

**Policy & Procedures** (Jesse Manciaz) – discussion continued within committee regarding Performance Evaluations. Regents Rule 3.05.01 states that evaluations must be done annually. May need to go beyond recommending or suggesting that HR directors address this.

Dan Stewart - should we separate the things that have already been acted upon and those that still require action when reporting to Board of Regents?

Joel Helmke - Should we resurvey again to see how it is implemented?

Rochelle Pena - need to go to staff council to survey not HR as HR will state that they have a policy in place. The question is how it is implemented. Performance Evaluations should not be tied to the Merit Raise issue.

Dan Stewart - More pointedly state that there are employees not receiving Performance Evaluations.

Dennie Clemons - may not be implemented across all offices at an institution either.

Joel Helmke - How is completion ensured/tracked?

Jesse Manciaz - University employees will perform more effectively if they have Performance Evaluations. Committee will seek responses to the following:

- How does institution track PEs?
- What are consequences for evaluating manager?

Dan Stewart - everyone believes that they are aligned with policy but there is apparent abuse. Electronic appraisals help to resolve them. May be effective to provide information – “we are working with HR directors to ensure the Board of Regents rule is implemented.”

Ben Bond - do managers need training?

Joel Helmke - someone needs to be held accountable for lack of Performance Evaluations being completed.

Dan Stewart - the liaison may need to be communicated with. The disconnect needs to be resolved.

Joel Helmke – Policy and Procedures Committee needs to develop action items.

Jesse Manciaz - would like to craft the question more precisely.

Brenda Martinez - what is completion rate for Performance Evaluations?

### **Recruitment and Retention** – Ben Bond

Committee reviewed PowerPoint. Great deal of discussion on changes that need to be made.

Explore professional development opportunities. Is tuition reimbursement being investigated at System?

Dan Stewart - not aware of any current review in progress. Just providing information to Regents. Not a particularly good time financially to be broaching the subject. Most institutions have reduced budgets 5-10%. Not a time to pursue.

Joel Helmke - perhaps look at various training opportunities (Leadership, supervisory, etc.) for staff.

### **Wellness** – Dennie Clemons

Contact component wellness coordinators to obtain success stories. Try to get close to 100% participation rate

### **Work-life Balance** – Olga Garcia

Mission Statement:

The principal goal of the EAC Work-Life Committee is to identify and recommend programs intended to assist employees with creating a healthy balance between work and life. Adequately attending to personal needs leads to greater life satisfaction and consequently to an increased morale that will manifest positively in the workplace in the form of greater quality of work product and efficiency.

Goal: Consistent implementation of flexible or alternative scheduling and telecommuting across components.

Committee will split assignments to gather information and assemble data along with benefits to institution/employees.

Joel Helmke - identify best practices that already exist and provide that information to those in development.

Olga Garcia - UT Arlington has good policy in place along with guidelines and benefits. Will also better define "Flex time". Then look at who is allowing. Set up timeline. UTSA is implementing telecommuting.

Dan Stewart - if Furlough bill is passed, flexible/telecommuting may no longer be an issue.

Joel Helmke - last Regents recommendation broke down telecommuting, flexible and alternative scheduling. Told them we would provide best practices at next meeting.

Need reports from Jesse, Rochelle and Ben.

## **Call to Order at 9 by Joel Helmke.**

### **General remarks**

Joel Helmke— will be preparing recommendation to Regents. Have a hard copy at next meeting. Include best practices.

Dan Stewart – Regents will meet in November so legislature will have completed session. When work of committee is presented, much of the budget implementations will have become reality. Can you build in some type of response to any budget effects? Report will fall on deaf ears if it requires an increase in funding. Demonstrate that we realize the complexity of the issues facing us. Prepare report as if it is already November. "We are allies of the Regents but can enhance what is in place."

Committee Discussions/Preparation for July Best Practices Summaries

### **Worklife Balance** - Olga Garcia

Will poll institutions without flex/telecommuting/alternative scheduling policies to determine if they are exploring it. Will determine Best Practices for July meeting. Also include benefits and policies including attachments and forms required.

### DISCUSSION

Not a direct recommendation to implement but indirectly demonstrate that this is possible.

Joel Helmke – review studies that demonstrate benefits of these policies. Do we have any research articles? This would help strengthen any recommendations made.

### **Wellness** – Dennie Clemons

Focus on supporting UT System initiatives on Living Well. Each committee member will update information and they will update previous report. Will continue to pursue success stories for promoting wellness.

Have an inventory of success stories that Rolando can incorporate.

### DISCUSSION

Gerald Cleveland reported on Wellness Task Force. Assembled group of people interested in promoting wellness. Have monthly conference call. EAC Committee chair should be included on this conference call.

### **Recruitment/Retention** – Ben Bond

Reviewed PPT on Employee Discount Programs. Will be used to provide information to all components on what is occurring.

Still need to explore developmental opportunities as well as tuition reimbursement policies.

### DISCUSSION

Dan Stewart – Regents just approved new employee discount program policy that is broader in scope and allows the component to offer more to staff. There are third-party companies that actually run programs for you that will now be approved. Policy is available under Board of Regents website. Real opportunity to promote cost savings to staff.

Shirley Rowe – UTSA Student Affairs division provides an in-house Staff Development conference annually which is completely coordinated by staff members. Cost per staff member is under \$10.00 for a full-day conference. This enables all staff in division to participate rather than just a select few tapped for leadership or supervisory roles.

### **Cost Containment** – Rochelle Pena

Would still like to review material submitted to determine if there are additional items.

### DISCUSSION

Suggestions from the council-at-large included:

- Doug Stark - No matter what day an employee starts they receive full benefits for entire month. If you don't bring employees on board the last week of the month you can save \$400,000 annually.
- Doc Weathers – does everyone turn off projectors, turn off lights? Are sensors being used/installed?
- Olga Garcia – should we deactivate hot water? Not buying water for employees can save money.
- Joe Gregory – using in-house technicians could save money rather than having maintenance contracts. Need to check what's already available and/or what training would be needed to meet the maintenance needs.
- Patty Espinoza– when university is closed, what cost savings occur by turning off computers, air conditioning, and other equipment?
- Joel Helmke – leveraging our girth to get better pricing.
- Websites created to ask for suggestions from staff member.
- Rochelle Pena clarified the Centralizing services recommendation - we have 8 departments and 32 AA who provide services to faculty. When centralized, we will be able to decrease to 15 AA. Not terminate but not replace.

## **Policy & Procedures** – Jesse Manciaz

Performance Evaluations. Reported Regents Rule 30501 which states in part: “An annual evaluation program for all employees (administrative, faculty and classified) within The University of Texas System or any of the institutions is to be used for the improvement of performance, promotion consideration, and merit salary review.” They are not an option. Based upon this information, the committee will pose three questions to components then report on results. We owe this to our employees. Should have more information and develop more specific guidelines.

- What is completion rate for Performance Evaluations?
- What are consequences for leader/manager who is not complying?

### DISCUSSION

Doc Weathers - Given that we need to have them, we need to also consider the following. Are evaluations of value? Are employees frustrated by the results of evaluations? Is it a “gotcha” item for staff? Do employees benefit from them? Is it stressful for all concerned?

Jesse Manciaz – Did research on various evaluations and put together what he felt was best option for his staff.

Dexter Jones – Pushed for staff to be able to evaluate themselves but then staff no longer wanted to complete them.

Joel Helmke – Rule needs to have standards. As manager, could recommend training

UT Dallas – HR provides training to all supervisors/managers for completing PEs which is strongly suggested.

Dan Stewart – make sure that something is done annually in compliance with rule. When dealing with problem employees, a review of personnel files will usually find glowing reports. There is usually no indication of any type of issue.

Jesse Manciaz – many campuses are moving towards PeopleSoft and that may change the way they are implemented/completed.

Joel Helmke – electronic may be good but it may not necessarily be better. May include more writing but it does aid tracking. “You should never walk into evaluation meeting and be surprised.”

Doug Stark – Which goes back to competency of the manager.

Brenda Martinez – Very important that you provide positive reinforcement.

Olga Garcia– Just implementing new system. Trying to empower staff.

Dennie Clemons – many managers have just used “cut and paste” for completing reports.

Jesse Manciaz - will need to work with Joel & Dan for strategy on whom to approach and questions to be asked.

11:00 Closing Remarks

Brenda – can EAC members have access to some of the issues that HR is apprised of when new legislation is approved?

What is hottest issue at your campus?

Does HR representative sit in on staff council meetings?

Sally - UT Arlington was recognized by Administrative Association as employer of the year.

**Next meeting (tentative):** July 21-22 in Austin

Expectation: Developed reports from each committee to be included in Regents meeting.

Each group should submit report in PPT form using the same template prior to July meeting and Joel will then consolidate reports into hard copy. This would be easier to present.

Dan would like to push to allow us to submit PPT to Regents.

Motion to adjourn at 10:20.