



Employee Advisory Council
October 12-14, 2016

Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2016

The University of Texas at El Paso
Acacia Room 102A, Andesite Room 102B, Cactus Flower Room 102C, and Desert Canyon Room 102
500 West University Avenue
El Paso, Texas 79968

PRESENT: Marcia Alleman, Paula Austell, Sally Bouis, Valerie Buchanan, Paige Buechley, Tara Cooper, Christian Corrales, Naomi Emmett, Jeannie Farahnak, Edward Gonazles, Joseph Gregory, Karla Iscapa, Leticia Longoria, Sonia Meinert, Maribea Merritt, Shannon Rios, Tania Secrest, James Smiley, Julia Spesivtseva, Sally Thompson, Frank Valiulis, Venetta Williams, Lorraine Wright, Bobby Yanez, Mary Ann Tant

ABSENT: Kristi Ann Clifford, Benji Hawkins, Jasmine Novogradac, Brenda Timmons

GUESTS: Sarah Pekar, Dan Stewart

I. Call to Order and Welcome

- 2016-2017 EAC Chair, James (Jim) Smiley, called the meeting to order at 8:44am.
- The Council was asked to show appreciation to Karla Iscapa for hosting the meeting at UTEP.
- The Council was asked to briefly introduce themselves, providing their name, institution, and longevity with their home institution.

II. Review/Approval of June 2016 Minutes

- Jim asked the council to review the June 2016 minutes (provided in hardcopy by Sarah).
- Three corrections were suggested by the council.
- Motion from Joe to have minutes approved with suggested changes. Venetta seconded the motion.
- The June 2016 meeting minutes were approved, as edited, unanimously by the council.

III. Travel Reimbursements – Sarah Pekar

- Sarah provided a PowerPoint presentation to review reimbursement procedures for travel and meal expenses.
- Sarah answered all questions and will provide the updated link to the Travel Reimbursement Form.

IV. Welcome Remarks from UTEP President

- Dr. Diana Natalicio, President of UTEP, provided welcome remarks to the council.
- UTEP was established in 1914. They just celebrated their centennial in 2014.
- UTEP has a very strong partnership with local school districts and community colleges.
- UTEP continues to research economic/educational disparities.



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V. Campus Updates and Committee Formation

- Campus updates were skipped due to time constraints.
- The survey, which was distributed prior to the meeting to solicit ideas for committees, yielded some great responses.
- Executive committee recommends the following standing committees:
 - One System One Voice (OSOV)
 - Continuity in communication for future EAC committees
 - Session Summary
 - Annual Report
 - Follow-Up on past initiatives
 - Standardized template for BOR recommendations
 - Regent's Outstanding Employee Award (ROEA)
 - Internal Procedures once approved by BOR in November
- Executive committee recommends the following possible new committees:
 - Employee Satisfaction
 - Retirement Benefits
 - Salaries and Compensation
- Floor opened for discussion and additional feedback.
- No new committees were formalized during this session. Will pick up discussion after lunch.

VI. School of Nursing Simulation Lab Tour

- Council was led on a tour of the School of Nursing Simulation Lab by lab Director, Ronnie Stout.

VII. Lunch and Student Panel Discussion

- Panel was comprised of three students who were both students and employees at UTEP.
 - One undergraduate, one Master's student, and one doctoral student participated.
- Council member Christian Corrales moderated the panel discussion.
 - Provided panel with two general questions.
 - What led you to work at UTEP?
 - What are the benefits and challenges of being a UTEP employee and with the UT System?
- There were additional questions from the floor.

VIII. Continuation of Committee Formation and Committee Breakout Session

- Discussion continued and finalized into 5 possible committees, noted above.
- Council was asked to rank the committees from top choice to bottom choice using secret ballots.
- Executive tallied votes and divided council into committees as follows:
 - ROEA
 - OSOV



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- Employee Satisfaction
- Benefits, Salary, Compensation
- Committees were announced and then asked to break out to complete the following:
 - Elect Committee Chairs

VIII. Walking Tour of Lhakhang Building and Centennial Plaza

- Council was taken to Centennial Plaza and Lhakhang Building for a tour.

X. UTEP Campus Bus Tour

- After council meeting was adjourned for the day, council was driven around UTEP campus.
- Christian Corrales provided commentary throughout tour.
- Council made stops at University Bookstore, and The Sun Bowl stadium.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30pm.

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I. Executive Committee and Sub-Committee Chairs Meeting

- Committee Chairs are as follows:
 - Paula Austell – ROEA
 - Paige Buechley – OSOV
 - Christian Corrales – Employee Satisfaction
 - Jeannie Farahnak – Benefits, Salary, Compensation
- Committees charged to work through action plans and meeting schedules

II. Call to Order – Day 2

- Jim, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:50am.
- Jim made a slight change to the schedule. Dan will speak at 10:00am, instead of 11:00am to allow folks with early flights to benefit from his UT System updates.

III. UTEP Staff Council Visit

- The Staff Council at UTEP as invited to talk with us about their best practices.
- Panel included the current Chair, Vice-Chair, and Parliamentarian
- Ongoing Initiatives
 - Monthly Miner Minutes Newsletter
 - Staff Textbook Scholarship
 - Staff Coach
 - Annual By-Law Review
 - District Representation
- Professional Development/Presentations
 - 14/15 – Strategic Planning Event
 - 15/16 – 5 Keys to Successful Leadership
- Effective Practices



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- Newsletter
- Website
- Anonymous E-Mail for Issues
- Staff Forum
- End of Year meeting with President

IV. UT System Update – Dan Stewart

- Another big “Thank You” to UTEP for hosting the meeting
- UT System Administration going through some changes due to interviews and surveys on needs of institutions.
- Upcoming Legislative Session
 - Currently talking with institutions on what they think is pending
 - Session may be more conservative than last year.
- Dan’s probable retirement from UT System Administration in May 2017.
- Additional ideas for EAC to consider:
 - EAC is an extension of our individual institution Staff Councils.
 - Have an obligation to extend and strengthen that relationship.
 - Should vet what our individual Staff Councils’ are working on as a regular agenda item.
 - No EAC has ever reported to the BOR on what individual Staff Councils’ are working on.
- Will not have another benefit pilot on no deductible, no co-pay program.
- System is looking into health institutions offering reduced or bundled rate care to UT System employees.
 - Must be revenue neutral and official agreement must be reached.
- UT System Police Retirement Issue
 - Differences between Employee Retirement System (ERS) and Teacher Retirement System (TRS).
 - ERS holds most state police employees but UT System police employees are not allowed and must be in TRS.
 - Benefits are not equal and allow for earlier retirement in ERS with better vesting.
 - System Administration has tried, with little success, during past 3 legislative sessions to allow UT System police employees into ERS.
 - Working on creating an IRS 457-F.
 - Will allow for contributions from UT System Police employees and a matching amount from UT System.

V. Committee Work

- Work on action plan for the year.
- Plan meeting schedule for the year.
- Committee pictures were taken during this time.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00pm.



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Next meeting scheduled for January 11-13, 2017, in Austin, at UT System Administration.

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