



Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 26, 2013

PRESENT: Philip Abraham, Tara Andrews, Paula Austell, Paula Austin, Ryan Baldwin, Dennie Clemons, Gerald Cleveland, Kimberly Coleman, Erika Frahm, Ronnie Garcia, Joleen Gould, Sasha Grissom, Amelia Harrell, Daniella Haynes, Kelli Ivy, Leonora Martinez-Ortega, Beth Payne, Sarah Pekar, Rochelle Pena, JoAnn Rios, Louie Rodriguez, Liana Ryan, Tania Secrest, Jennifer Skinner, Eric Solberg, Wendy Spencer, Dan Stewart, Laurie Thompson, Raquel Vasquez, Doc Weathers, Venetta Williams, and Sally Thompson

ABSENT: Amineh Baradar, Will Choyce, and Ernesto Tusa

VISITORS: Dr. David Callender

7:30 AM All Member Orientation

- Chair, JoAnn Rios, welcomes all to the 2013-2014 EAC. Our focus for the year will be on **Engagement, Accountability, and Collaboration** – this will be our new motto and focus. Each council member received a notepad with this motto noted on
- Introduction of executive committee:
 - JoAnn Rios, Chair, UTHSC San Antonio
 - Gerald Cleveland, Vice Chair, UTMB Galveston
 - Tara Andrews, Secretary, UT Southwestern
 - Ronnie Garcia, Historian, UT Pan American
 - Dan Stewart, Assoc. Vice Chancellor Employee Benefits & Services, UT System
 - Sarah Pekar, EAC Administrative Support, UT System
- New members are welcomed to the council
- Chair, JoAnn Rios explains UT System average financial investment in members to attend an UT System EAC meeting:
 - \$550 – average cost to UT System for one person to attend an EAC meeting
 - \$17,600 – average cost to UT System for 32 EAC members to meet once
 - \$52,800 – average cost to UT System for all three EAC meetings (one fiscal year)
- UT System makes quite an investment for us to get together to have great results and we want to ensure that we are providing a great return to UT System. This year, we want to be focused and serious about what we do, ensuring the Board of Regents and UT System know that they have made a good investment in us.
- Historian, Ronnie Garcia – *History & Purpose of EAC:*
 - EAC was founded August 2000 to serve as a vehicle for communication and



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facilitate the flow of ideas and information.

- For the new members, this may be a questioning time and you may be unsure of expectations; however, the EAC is looking to the new members to bring new innovative thinking and ideas to the council. The veteran members are encouraged to welcome the new members of the EAC, encourage, and engage them.
- The one word missing from the “History & Purpose of EAC” slide is “future”. Just because we have a history doesn’t mean that we have to follow the same wheel. We are here to reinvent.

- Vice Chair, Gerald Cleveland – *EAC Mission Statement:*

We’re the communicators. AT UTMB, the EAC slogan is: “Your colleagues at your service.” Each of us is a representative of our campus and we want to communicate the ideas and concerns from our individual campuses, share them at the UT System EAC, and build on that. Our overall goal is to share this information with the UT System Board of Regents (BOR). It is a great honor that the BOR recognizes the EAC, and made time on their agenda to hear what we have discussed.

- Secretary, Tara Andrews – *What Is Your Role?*

- **Be Here:** Due to the time and financial investment, as highlighted by JoAnn, it is important that we attend these meetings and properly represent our local campuses.
- **Participate:** While attending these meetings, we want to be an active participant. Share and convey the concerns of our campuses.
- **Communicate:** We want to communicate to our local campuses what we learn at our UT System EAC meetings.
- **Educate:** Share the knowledge. If we are the primary representative, we want to ensure that we communicate to the alternates the information discussed/learned at these meetings. This keeps us all on the same page.
- **Innovate:** Convey ideas – bring something new to the table.

- Ronnie Garcia: *Wrap Up??*

The big date that we need to keep in mind is **November 2014**.

We are here for a reason – meeting three times a year. When meeting in our subcommittees, we need to come up with ideas, suggestions, recommendations, and best practices to present to the Board of Regents. Therefore, it is important to meet and come up with these ideas. At the end, the executive board will meet with the Board of Regents to present the ideas that the subcommittees have created. Therefore, we want to work collaboratively.

- JoAnn Rios: As we work together and begin to discuss what ideas, issues, or proposals we want to tackle, always keep in mind that in November 2014 we will stand before the Board of Regents to present what we started today.



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Therefore, with that in mind, realize the importance of the work that we do and understand that when we meet three times a year, it is to discuss the work that has occurred in between our meetings. We do not come just to work those three times a year – there is work that occurs in between. Our meetings are intended to give each other a status check on the progress each committee/group has made.

- Sarah Pekar: Travel arrangements: UT System-wide travel policy was updated and modified as of July 1, 2013. There are new rules. Please ensure that we obtain new travel form each and every time from the UT System EAC website.

8:00 AM: Call to Order by Chair, JoAnn Rios

JoAnn asked if there is any old business – no old business response from council
Moved on to new business – asked if there were any new issues to consider

Welcome – Dr. David Callender (5th President of UTMB):

Addresses council and is excited that we can get together to work together on what we can do across the System to better support our employees for the amazing work that happens in all the different components that comprise the UT System. This is a challenging time for academic institutions – the traditional revenue streams are being threatened, more scrutiny of what we do, more and more accreditation standards, and perhaps a higher level of expectation associated with education, research, and for those of us in healthcare, the delivery of patient care. So, we need for everyone to be engaged and thinking about how we address those challenges and I think that this group can really help us do – figure out how to engage the incredible intelligence and capability of our employees across the System.

The local UTMB EAC has been instrumental in doing this by thinking about how we will get together, identify major issues and concerns, and begin to address them effectively. They have done things like establish office hours for me where they take me to various parts of the institution and we say that I, or senior leaders, will be there for up to one and a half hours so that individual groups or employees can come by and just talk and express their concerns – from concerns about their health insurance to the direction of the institution.

We need everyone to be engaged to help with the challenges our campuses and institutions encounter.

8:30 AM: Council Business / Approval of July 2013 Minutes / New Member Introductions

July 2013 meeting minutes were not yet available. Approval by Council will be done via email.

Laurie Thompson, with UT Arlington, posed a question inquiring about an update as to what other institutions or campuses plan on doing for the UT System Day that is slated for November 8, 2013.



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Eric Solberg raised a point for the council to consider, if the arrangement doesn't currently exist on their campus, and that is to have an Employee Advisory Council representative on our faculty senate. On his campus they have such a group and it is called the "Interfaculty Council" and it is a way to facilitate dialogue between faculty and staff. This is written into their bylaws.

Additional Introductions – new members gave council a brief introduction of themselves and what they expect to gain from being a member of the UT System EAC.

Employee Recognition Day – November 8, 2013

What are some of the things that other institutions are doing?

UT San Antonio: Event will be held from 12 Noon – 2 PM, food trucks will be on hand, president will serve ice cream, there will be badge holders distributed, will provide food trucks with \$5 menus (20% of proceeds will be placed in an emergency fund for university), trying to encourage a philanthropic culture. Most of these supplies will be donated and any out-of-pocket expenditures are not expected to exceed \$1,000.

UT System (Doc Weathers): They experienced some miscommunication but will get smoothed out.

JoAnn Rios explains what UT System Recognition Day is – just celebrating that we are a part of the UT System – open to employees, students, and faculty. The event is one that does not have to be elaborate and is contingent upon your campus budget and support. It can be as simple as everyone wearing a t-shirt. It is really a pep rally for being an employee of the UT System. This will occur on the 2nd Friday of November on an annual basis.

Dennie Clemons: There are easy ways to celebrate – just a nice lengthy email to all, something on your campus website, etc. There are easy ways to celebrate without going all out to celebrate – just recognizing that the UT System Day is the day that we all come together. It was designated based upon when UT System was founded. It will be celebrated the second Friday each November.

This event is not to be confused with employee appreciation.

Gerald Cleveland: Letter from the president that explains what this day is and if the institution can do other things that would be a good thing. But at least a communication should be done – place on EAC web site.

Rochelle asked Dan Stewart if he thought the Chancellor could send a letter to presidents of each institution.

Dan Stewart addressed the council on this matter. How can we be "one" big happy family? Who is it that we work for? It's not just about our own institutions, but we are one and the same when we remove the characteristic identifiers of each campus. How do I celebrate who and what I am? Expressing that we like where we are/where we work, this is my family and I love my family.



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Doc Weathers suggested that we give a little history of each institution so that we all become familiar with each campus and what we all do at our individual campuses. Communicate what we do.

Dennie: Was fortunate enough to be in the room with the Chancellor when EAC made the recommendation. We want to show him that the EAC is interested in following through with this recommendation.

Ryan Baldwin: Asked Dan if there is an initiative to ????

Dan Stewart: How neat it would be if there were pictures of other institutions placed in prominent meeting rooms of our institutions

Paula Austell: Visited with some student workers in her office. The students didn't know that we are part of a UT System – not competitors. They had no clue

Sally Thompson: UT Arlington has a “connecting the dots” program

Dan Stewart: Asked about our websites. Asked how many of us have an “umbrella” of information for the UT System.

JoAnn Rios suggested that we make a motion. Paula motioned for the council to implement a “connect the dots” project; Wendy Spencer seconded; Council approved.

Committee Formations and Focus for FY2014

We are going to make changes on how we handled issues and committees; however, it's time to shake things up. We want to center the projects on an issue proposal concept. Project teams will be formed based upon these issues.

We will want to work with the November 2014...What will we bring forth to the Board of Regents?

Is it a best practice? Does it follow or model the Chancellor's framework? We want to show the BOR results.

Dan Stewart: The Board of Regents is interested in our actionable steps. What decisions got made? What best practices were made? High-level, actionable items, what did we do?

Eric Solberg: Wants to ensure that we coordinate our efforts with faculty senate; align ourselves with them for recommendations to the BOR. Look at what is going on across our campuses and throughout the UT System institutions.

Julie (UTMB): Posed a question to the council: How do we communicate to our campus information about our UT System EAC?



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- Kimberly Coleman: We distribute via email and EAC meetings; we have a list serve in the works
- Beth (UT San Antonio): Put information on a board in several languages
- Ronnie: Meet with their staff council

JoAnn: Please be prepared at the next EAC System to discuss how we communicate what was discussed or learned at UT System EAC to our campus.

Rochelle Pena (UT Dallas): They do have a listserv, by districts, that is updated nightly. Each district is required to send out a newsletter on what occurred in their meetings. It is important to communicate what is going on in our council.

9:15 AM: New Issues and 2014 Ad hoc Committee Charges - JoAnn Rios

Issue Proposal Submissions discussion:

- Issues that were submitted were discussed
- Opportunity for additional issues from the floor was opened to the council:
 - Professionalism (Dennie Clemons)
 - PeopleSoft (Jennifer Skinner)
 - “Connect-the-Dots” initiative in support of the UT System Recognition recommendation
 - Communication: Disseminating information – How?
- Issues ranked by council in order of interest

Issue projects:

- 1) Workforce Forecasting & Career Ladders
- 2) Professional Behavior
- 3) Sharing Best Practice – PeopleSoft
- 4) Connect the Dots

The following committees were formed to review the aforementioned issue projects:

1	2	3	4
Workforce Forecasting & Career Ladders	Professional Behavior	Sharing Best Practices - PeopleSoft	Connect the Dots
Amelia Harrell	Louie Rodriguez	Ernesto Tusa	Tania Secrest
Leonora Ortega	Dennie Clemons	Will Choice	Beth Payne*
Laurie Thompson	Philip Abraham	Pam Cole	Joleen Gould
Erika Frahm	Venetta Williams	Paula Austell	Amineh Baradar
Raquel Vasquez	Ryan Baldwin*	Kelli Ivy	Sasha Grissom
Liana Ryan	Eric Solberg	Jennifer Skinner	Wendy Spencer
Kimberly Coleman*	Daniella Haynes	Rochelle Pena*	Paula Austin

*Committee Chair



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Friday, September 27, 2013

PRESENT: Philip Abraham, Tara Andrews, Paula Austell, Paula Austin, Ryan Baldwin, Julie Cantini, Dennie Clemons, Gerald Cleveland, Kimberly Coleman, Erika Frahm, Ronnie Garcia, Joleen Gould, Sasha Grissom, Amelia Harrell, Daniella Haynes, Kelli Ivy, Leonora Martinez-Ortega, Beth Payne, Sarah Pekar, Rochelle Pena, JoAnn Rios, Louie Rodriguez, Liana Ryan, Tania Secrest, Jennifer Skinner, Eric Solberg, Wendy Spencer, Dan Stewart, Laurie Thompson, Raquel Vasquez, Doc Weathers, Venetta Williams, and Sally Thompson

ABSENT: Amineh Barader, Will Choyce, and Ernesto Tusa

VISITORS: N/A

8:00 AM: Executive Session

- Group #1: Workforce Forecasting & Career Ladders – Kimberly Coleman
Objectives: (1) Due to the economy, reduction in force, hiring freezes, dissatisfaction in compensation, and job titles; (2) Career Ladders.

The committee has come up with a plan to design a toolkit of resources for the employee to reference so that he/she can learn how to invest and empower themselves for career development, how to talk to their manager about being promoted, and the resources available to them to help develop themselves.

The return of investment would be loyalty, commitment, pride and have the university, in turn, invest in the employee with organizational development and training.

With regard to “workforce forecasting”, this committee feels that this should be left to the “professionals” because we do not have the expertise on how to forecast the workforce. In relation to RIF’ing, hiring freezes, promotions, salary increases, etc., we feel if the employee is empowered, then they have an opportunity or better chance to sustain their employment or transferring their skills to another department.

Dan’s feedback: Initially, there was concern about the committee taking on such an issue such as this; however, it was very refreshing to hear the committee’s spin on wanting to help employees empower themselves. Who would not want to do that? This is a great outlook and refreshing perspective.

- Group #2: Professional Behavior - Ryan Baldwin
This group entertained the idea of changing its name to “Professionalism”.

The group had a discussion on trying to determine where things are with campuses are with regard to professional behavior. As an early goal, it would be a good idea to review handbooks of operating procedures of the component institutions to look at where the faculty, staff, and student councils are in



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terms of what they have or have not put out with respect to professionalism or codes of conduct.

A second goal is to establish or ensure there is a culture of professionalism across all components. Another big facet for us is to make sure there is an equitable consequence for breaches of professionalism. One big concern that is being heard from a number of members is that if a staff member does a certain thing, they get fired; whereas, if a faculty member does a certain thing, they only get a slap on the wrist. This appears to be a very sore spot, especially with staff.

But by doing so, we need to engage with faculty councils; therefore, we have plans to do that. Lastly, in a most basic sense, define what professionalism really is – what we believe UT System believes it to be.

Dan's feedback: Initial sense of this committee is to seek out what exists and standardize – but more of a push to a common definition or appearance – whatever that may be. Will there best examples also be included where you see a campus that has done really well in not only defining it, but also implementing it as well?

This group has set a conference call to discuss this issue in November 2013. Additionally, Ryan plans on establishing a cloud-base space for this committee to be able to upload any information they have found. UT Austin uses "Box.com" for faculty, staff, and students.

Dan's feedback: This just occurred to me as Ryan was speaking and you may want to consider: Sometimes people lead by example, but what is really powerful is when groups lead by example. And there is no reason why the EAC could not adopt/establish a standard of conduct for itself – how it conducts its affairs. When the Regent's hear something like this, it really demonstrates that we believe in this and would like to align ourselves, as a group, to the same type of standards we suggest others should take or be in cooperation with.

JoAnn: Part of the agenda for our next meeting, potentially, as you do research and find out what others have obtained, we can establish some time in the agenda for us adopting, as a group, our own standards of conduct for the EAC.

- Group #3: Sharing Best Practices – PeopleSoft – Rochelle Pena

The group defined our goal to create a book of best practices and procedures for system-wide technological implementations – it could be just system-wide implementations. We looked at pitfalls and came up with two solutions: 1) we have a very short-term period of time where we need to try to provide seven institutions on the academic side that are going "live" on PeopleSoft in March and 2) we are not sure where the health science centers are and what they are putting on. We asked around and what is interesting is that most people do not know what is going on. They do not know if they are going to a new system or not.

So, what we plan to do is find out who is the implementation head at each of the institutions and send them a brief questionnaire that asks them what makes up their implementation team and the depth level of that team – departmental or all the way down to the people who will actually be responsible



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for entering the data in the system. Additionally, we will ask if their business practices been modified to meet the requirements of the new system, if have their forms been adjusted terminology-wise, and what type of training has been provided or planned on providing.

We will have a conference call in early October to review the results of the survey. We will ask the institutions to complete the survey immediately because we figure we have to have whatever we need to recommend by the first of November. Then, we need to figure out where to send our suggestions that we come with to each institution just as an “FYI”. This is our short-term goal.

Our long-term goal is to continue to gather information and to develop a handbook, to check with institutions and ask them to report back to us about their implementation of PeopleSoft, what they found were to be perceived as pitfalls, and what could have been done to make this process easier. From this information, we hope to yield a solid set of guidelines and best practices by the end of August.

Four pitfalls were identified: communication, underestimating the scope and magnitude, training, and employee burnout.

Dan’s feedback: PeopleSoft should and will be great – it will help us all automate processes that were done manually, unify systems. However, getting to this point has had a huge impact on either people leaving or falling out, etc. The challenge for this group is how you approach those you need to get this information and not add to the burden of tight deadlines that must be met.

- Group #4: Connect the Dots – Beth Payne
Will coordinate efforts to launch the UT System Day and “Connect-the-Dots” program.

UT System Day

Due to a strict timeline, it was decided to keep it simple for the inaugural event – November 8, 2013.

We decided to launch something that is basic and to the point:

- Synchronous communication via email from the chancellor to the presidents of the universities and institutions. In turn, the presidents of the universities/institutions will communicate the message at their local campuses.
- The message will explain what UT System Day is, what we do, and that we are a “UT family”. It will also contain verbiage that expresses appreciation to employees for what they do. The letter will also encourage employees to wear blue and orange on Friday, November 8, 2013.
- Will ask for each university/institution to include on their home page a link to the UT System home page so that employees will be encouraged to learn about other universities and institutions that comprise UT System.
- Each university/institution will be encouraged to take pictures to capture how they recognized UT System Day. These will be sent to Beth Payne, UT San Antonio. They will build a collage for UT System.



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The deadline for submission of approval for the letter and accompanying information is set for October 18, 2013.

Dan's feedback: Cautions about wearing the blue and orange colors: There is such an effort on the part of System that in no way do we want our being to be pushed down. There's a perception by many that UT System is "iron-handed" and that is certainly not the case. We certainly do not want UT System to overshadow the identities of the universities and institutions. This is not a mission that is coming from the top, down; rather, it is one that is coming from the employees.

Connect-the-Dots

Beth: The goal by February 2014 is to create a campus collage with all the buildings and fact statements from all the universities, institutions, and System. The committee will build it – they will be 30x30's as a gift from the committee to every university and institution. We will ask that they place it where they feel is best – greatest visibility.

Our final goal in July is to create an app for the UT System map. This will be designed to allow the user to click on the location of any of the universities or institutions – providing facts about each. Its purpose is to help employees/students learn about the universities/institutions that comprise UT System. This will also be a free gift.

9:00 AM: Call to Order - Chair, JoAnn Rios

Committee chairs will present a brief overview of what their objectives are for their committees this year.

9:05 AM: Discussion and Ad Hoc Committee Chair Reports

- Group #1: Workforce Forecasting & Career Ladders – Kimberly Coleman
Concerns: (1) Due to the economy, reduction in force, hiring freezes, dissatisfaction in compensation, and job titles with regard to workforce (2) Career Ladders.

Objective: Develop a plan whereby employees can empower and invest in themselves to develop a career plan. We will also create a resource toolkit for employees to use that will help them along these efforts. This toolkit will equip employees to learn how to discuss career development with their managers. The return on investment would result in self-worth, pride, and trust in the system.

There were no questions posed for this committee by the council.



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- Group #2: Professional Behavior - Ryan Baldwin
This group entertained the idea of changing its name to “Professionalism”.

Objective: To establish a culture of professionalism that is a standard. We would also like to see equitable consequences for breaches of professionalism. In a basic sense, we will define what we think professionalism should be. Per Dan’s idea during our executive meeting, add professionalism for EAC because this is really not defined in our bylaws. It is a good a way to step up to the plate and say that we are going to do this and have it added to the bylaws.

There were no questions posed for this committee by the council.

- Group #3: Sharing Best Practices – PeopleSoft – Rochelle Pena

Objective: Develop a handbook of best practices and procedures for system-wide implementations, specifically, we are considering technological implementations (PeopleSoft) at this point.

We have identified four pitfalls that need to be addressed: 1) communication (or lack thereof), 2) understand scope of project and the people requirements to execute the implementation, 3) training (not just point-and-click), but functional, understanding training so the people who will be using this system can understand it and teach it to others, and 4) employee burnout – when the time arrives for implementation, it has been found that the a lot of the team members will leave because they are at “burnout” and cannot take it anymore.

Therefore, our short-term goal is to attempt to put together some best practices, or the “good news/bad news” out on what to look for to help the staff make this a smooth transition. We will be reaching out to each of you to find out who is responsible for the implementation. We feel it will be better coming from you to ask questions like: “What kind of training has been set up for us? Are there people on the implementation team at our level and below who are working with you? Are you addressing form changes?” We do not know exactly what our questionnaire will say but it is a very delicate matter because these people have been working hard and are also burned out. We do not want to offend them and give them a lot more work. We will be working with Dan to help us obtain some of the contact names, along with names we already have, for you to reach out and ask about the implementation.

We feel will be better if the questions come from you as EAC members, it might help us and lets them know that we are on their side and trying to help them. Our goal is to get this out to you in the next two weeks and provide a proposal of best practices by the end of October or early November so that this will be ready in time to implement, or at least, address the issue.

We will continue to build the handbook throughout the year. As implementation continues, we will be asking: How did it go? Where did we miss on what we identified? How can we improve for the next implementation?



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Laurie Thompson posed a question: Will the objective of this committee also address the burnout of those who are being left behind?

Rochelle Pena: Yes, this will address the issue of total employee burnout. The people who not involved now will be your first burnouts because they will be frustrated as a result of not knowing what to do. And, if they have been long-term employees, they are going to decide that they do not want to stick around after this. We do not want a lot of our history and knowledge leave us – this is what we are trying to avoid.

- Group #4: Connect the Dots – Beth Payne

This committee will plan for the launching for UT System day and implement a “Connect-the-Dots program (to bring us together as a family).

Objective: Since the first UT System day is November 8, 2013, we have a strict deadline; therefore, for the planning of launching this event, we have set a deadline of October 18, 2013. We will compile an email, send it to the chancellor to review. It will contain a message of who we are, where we are from, and why we are all a group. Upon approval, that email will go to your individual presidents to be shared on your campuses. We will ask that your local campuses do the following: 1) display “It’s UT System Day” on its homepage of their website and on their marquees, 2) ask everyone to wear their local campus t-shirt, and 3) possibly, have a message orated by the chancellor and/or the chair of the Board of Regents. The email will be very specific in its description of these objectives. These ideas are for the first UT System Day. In turn, we will ask for feedback from all of you and build upon it from year-to-year.

Connect-the-Dots: We will build a campus collage – all the pictures, when they were founded, how many employees they have. The dimensions will be 30” x 30” and one will be sent to each campus to be placed in the most visible location so that people and employees know about us and what we are about. It will also include University Lands and the Winery.

The final part of our project, due next July, will be to create an app that will be free for distribution to employees/students. It will be an app of all the UT campuses and institutions containing fun facts, mottos, etc.

Finally, we want to identify your longest standing employees at each of your institutions and interview them. We want to ask them why they started to work at UT and why they stayed. We will compile this information so that you can put it on your websites.

There were no questions posed for this committee by the council.

JoAnn encourages the council to collaborate and work together as a group and to share suggestions if they have any although working in their own individual committees. We want to utilize the resources with have in each other to do an amazing job in completing our projects.



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Gerald reminded the council that committees as a whole have a responsibility to participate and to complete tasks. The committee chair and vice-chair are not the sole ones responsible for doing so. Please make every effort to provide information that is needed and be available for the conference calls. We need to make a commitment to be involved and engaged.

9:22 AM: Next Steps – Board of Regents Presentation in November – JoAnn Rios

We have a Board of Regents meeting coming up in November 2013. Dennie Clemons, Shawna Ridley, and Joleen Gould will present all their hard work from the 2012-2013 year to the Board of Regents.

Dennie: We had a great executive committee last year and everyone worked so hard. We had the following committees: 1) Wellness, 2) Worklife, 3) Recruitment and Retention, 4) Career Planning and Reemployment (CPR), and 5) Policy and Procedure.

The executive committee will present their recommendations for each of these committees to the Board of Regents. This session will be streamed live and all can watch.

9:40 AM: System Updates – Dan Stewart

Dan welcomes the twelve new members. To his knowledge, this is one of the largest infusions of fresh ideas.

Dan opens his speech with a demonstration by walking over to a wall and pushes it with all his might. Then he asked the council if the wall was moving. And, of course, it did not move. The purpose was to demonstrate to the council their role.

What the regents want out of the council is not that we tried or that we got energized. They only care if we “move the wall”. It is so easy to get caught up in a group like that this about ourselves, what we contribute, how we push, how we look, how we sound, how we do things, etc. At the end of the day, what matters is that we “move the wall”. So, when we gauge ourselves in terms of assessing ourselves, we should consider our purpose and if we are actually doing something. Think about that wall – if we don’t make it “move”, then we are occupying space and eating up money – precious money like JoAnn talked about on the first meeting day – money that is not going into merit pay.

In no way is this to make anyone feel guilty or not worthy to be on the committee. It is just to say that we are here for a purpose and our purpose is pure and simple – to “move the wall”. That wall does not have to move as a result of the regents taking action – although that could be the case. If we have something that we are recommending to them that actually improve the lives of our employees and campuses, then that is what they are looking to take an action on. But, more times than not, the fact that we go to them and say we are already moving “something” – that we have already taken an idea, a best practice, or exchange of information and, consequently, suddenly a campus is better off than they were the day before because of exchange of ideas amongst the council demonstrates the “wall of movement”. Think about



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that – think about why we are here – it’s that “wall”. And, it can move in so many ways and plenty of directions. It just has to move.

When you consider where we are today, we have a unique opportunity as the EAC from one specific standpoint. We all have this in common – we are living in an unprecedented austere environment – one in which half of our presidents have not taken any pay raises. But how does that reflect on the EAC? It goes back to that old adage that austerity breeds creativity. There are things that the EAC will come up with that actually improve our standing, improve the standing our institutions; and, you thought of those things because we do not have a lot of money to work with – we are just making what we have work better.

Give that some thought from the standpoint that there is no better idea that could come out of this group whether it is actionable by the regents or by you to each other, than ideas that really that do not cost a lot – just exchanging good ideas that actually make a difference. It might even save someone’s job or help a program. So, it will not always be the case when it does not cost anything; but, I would not exclude any ideas on the basis that it does not cost anything. Perhaps, this is a good place to look. What can we do as a group that does not burden the regents with an even larger deficit by doing something that we want opposed to what can be done right now.

The regents, earlier this year, agreed there should be a review of the organizational framework for excellence; therefore, the council has been encouraged to read this document so that we are familiar with this document. This will help us to align what we do and measure up to its expectation. Be familiar with it as it relates to the things we discuss as a committee.

11:00 AM: Meeting Adjourned