

October 23, 2006
MINUTES
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL
U.T. System Administration, Austin TX

EAC New Member Orientation was held Oct 23, 2006. Executive Officers in attendance were Ann Tate, Chair; Glen Worley, Vice-Chair; and Melanie Loving, Historian.

Ann Tate did a Welcome for all new members, introducing the Executive Officers. The new members introduced themselves. Glen Worley gave a history of the EAC. Melanie Loving discussed the initiatives that the EAC has been working on. Ann gave a brief talk about the future of the EAC. Meeting was adjourned at 8:55am.

Submitted by Melanie Loving

Employee Advisory Council Meeting was held Oct 23, 2006.

PRESENT: Loretta Barker, Kim Caperton, David Casillas, Claudette Clay, W. Dennie Clemons, Corliss Denman, Chris Dickson, Patricia Dunn, Olga Garcia, Teresa Garcia, Dexter Jones, Debra Linzer, Melanie Loving, Karen Martinez, Efrain Molina, Cynthia Orth, Rochelle Pena, Rick Peterson, Randolph Scott, Valarie Sinor, Janice Smith, Michael Swindle, Ann Tate, Pep Valdes, Erin Waneck, Glen Worley, Aziza Young

VISITORS: Kathy Mayes, Dan Stewart, Jana Pankrantz, Dr. Geri Malandra

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Ann Tate at 9:10am. Minutes from the July meeting were discussed and approved. Motion made by Randy Scott, seconded by Teresa Garcia. Next order of business was electing a new Secretary, nominations were taken and Randy Scott was elected as the EAC Secretary

Ms. Tate introduced the new EAC members.

Welcome and comments by Mr. Dan Stewart, UT System liaison.

Mr. Stewart welcomed the EAC back to UT System. He indicated that his office was preparing for the legislative session and the number of bills that they would be following as well as providing information or testifying at various legislative committees.

Sharepoint/Website Presentation, Jana Pankrantz, UT System

Ms. Pankrantz introduced the EAC membership to this new tool for communication within the council. Sharepoint facilitates the exchange of information within the committee. If anyone has problems using the site, you can contact Jana Pankrantz at either 512-499-4214 or jpankrantz@utsystem.edu .

Review of Current and Recent Topics—Ann Tate

Ms. Tate discussed the reorganization of EAC to be more responsive to issues brought by members. A successful example of an issue is the UT System Retirement Website which resulted from collaboration of UT System and input from EAC. The EAC decided to reinvent ourselves by establishing topic based committees of variable duration depending on the topic and complexity of topic/issue. The changes to the structure of the EAC will make the committee more effective in adapting to employee issues.

The UT System Strategic Plan had input from EAC. Now that it's out, EAC will need to identify opportunities to provide input or facilitate attaining goals.

Dan Stewart complemented EAC for the three ways we support UT System

Reaction: EAC formally reacts to official actions

Projection: EAC led issues to come up which we initiate or support

Group Flexibility: EAC willing to change/adapt to be more effective

Review of issues and new system—Ann Tate

There were 8 issues submitted by members after the request for topics was made to the EAC membership. The new forms expedited consolidating the topics and identifying and evaluating overlap. The committee decided to table the issues about retirement so that the new website has a chance to address some of the issues raised. After review, the remaining topics were consolidated into three: 1. Employee tuition/fees initiative; 2. UT Strategic Plan Review & Implementation; and 3. Employee Grievance Policies & Ombudsman. EAC members were asked to select/rank their interest/willingness to participate in these new topic committees. The executive committee assigned committee memberships based on evening the number in each committee and attempting to get members into their first or second choice. The committees were announced in the afternoon session.

Review of UT System Strategic Plan—Dr. Geri Malandra, Executive Vice Chancellor

Dr. Malandra thanked the EAC membership for participating in the preparation of the UT System Strategic Plan. She distributed copies of The University of Texas System Strategic Plan, 2006-2015, Executive Summary. The full text of the strategic plan is available on the UT System website. Dr. Malandra summarized several aspects of the strategic plan and emphasized the importance of the university staff, especially employee retention, education of staff, and diversity of staff as it relates to recruiting. She closed by thanking the EAC again and indicated a continuing interest in issues brought forward by the EAC.

Lunch in meeting room

Annual Picture of EAC Members

Adhoc Committees for Current Topics

UT System Strategic Plan & Implementation

Michael Swindle, Chair	UTPB
Claudette Clay	HC-Tyler
Patti Dunn	UTSA
Dennie Clemons	HC-Houston
Pep Valdez	UTMB
Valerie Sinor	HC-San Antonio
Efrain Molina	Pan Am

Employee Grievance/Ombudsman

Debra Linzer, Chair	UT-MD Anderson
Rochelle Pena	UT-Dallas
Erin Waneck	UT Austin
Terrie Garcia	Pan Am
Dexter Jones	HC-Tyler
Karen Martinez	UTPB

Tuition for Employees

Nancy Sutherland, Chair	UT System
Corliss Denman	UT-MD Anderson
Olga Garcia	UT-Brownsville
Rick Peterson	UT-Tyler
Loretta Barker	UT-Arlington
Janice Smith	HC-San Antonio
Cindy Orth	UTSA
Arziza Young	UT Southwestern
Chris Dickson	UT-Dallas
David Casillas	UTEP

The three committees immediately began work with continuing work to complete before the next EAC meeting.

From Michael Swindle for the UT Strategic Plan committee: “The group will read and review the Strategic Plan and then divide the plan between the six members. Members will keep two questions in mind while reviewing. 1. How can the EAC help to implement the plan? 2. Identify areas of concern facing staff and offer advice on how to improve the plan.”

From Randy Scott substituting for Nancy Sutherland for the Tuition for Employees committee: “The committee decided to study the documents previously prepared by Chris Dickson. The committee also decided to research peer institutions to see what was done in this area. The committee discussed several other aspects including impact on employee quality and retention, financial impact on institution, and availability due to geographic distribution of academic and health related institutions.”

From Debra Linzer for the Employee Grievance/Ombudsman committee:
“Subcommittee decided it needed to look at policies of both types
(Grievance/Ombudsman) in all components to determine 1. Which institution has
what, 2. What is outstanding about each institution’s response, and 3. Review
written policies.”

The EAC came together for short initial reports from the committees.
The March 2007 meeting will be at UT Southwestern in Dallas with details to follow.
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Report to The University of Texas Board of Regents by the EAC Executive
Committee, November 15, 2006, 3:40 pm**

Regent Craven chaired this session and welcomed the EAC Executive Committee.
Each member of the committee was introduced. All of the EAC Executive
Committee were present: Ann Tate, Chair; Glen Worley, Vice-Chair, Randy
Scott, Secretary, Melanie Loving, Historian

Chair Ann Tate spoke first. Her notes: “The Employee Advisory Council (EAC)
greatly appreciates the presentations made to us over the last year and especially
appreciates the opportunity of providing feedback on these presentations. We
also appreciate being asked to suggest critical issues to be considered in the
development of the strategic plan. As we said in our last appearance before the
Board, communication is a two-way process, and this shows that UT System is
committed to keeping the lines of communication open between staff and
administration.

On behalf of the EAC, I would offer the following comments on the presentations
that were made.

President’s Volunteer Service Awards Project

We feel that this project, while done with the best intentions, does not
really encourage volunteerism and some staff might actually feel that the
organization is trying to make itself look better by taking some credit for
volunteer work done by individuals.

Retirement Program

The EAC wishes to thank UT System HR for listening to our concerns
about the Retirement Program options for staff. The new Retirement
Program addresses many of the concerns we raised when we were asked
for our input on this important matter. The new retirement program should
be much more attractive to staff looking for additional savings or
retirement vehicles beyond the standard TRS deduction. We hope that UT
System and the UT institutions will continue the excellent work in this
area. One of the efficiency strategies in the Strategic Plan was the

possibility of severance incentive packages to encourage higher paid workers to retire. We would suggest that a long-term strategy should be to actively promote the Retirement Program options such that employees nearing retirement feel financially secure enough to clear the way for new workers.

Strategic Plan

As mentioned previously, members of the EAC appreciate the opportunity we were given to submit our critical issues for consideration for inclusion in the Strategic Plan. Now that the Plan is out, we have assigned a committee to look at the plan in detail and offer our comments and suggestions. These will be offered to the Board at a future date.”

Glen Worley then went into a fuller discussion of specific aspects of The University of Texas Strategic Plan and the EAC’s desire to help attain goals and implement the plan. He also discussed that a committee of EAC was to address the strategic plan specifically.

Ann Tate then described the reorganization of the EAC to efficiently and effectively address current topics of interest to the BOR and the university community. She went into some detail about the purpose of longer overlapping terms and topic based committees.

Board response:

Chancellor Yudof responded to three areas that had been presented. He expressed an interest in having better financial advice available for employees and indicated that the idea behind the volunteerism presentation was not to get inappropriate credit for employee volunteerism, but for the institution to recognize that current employees do actively volunteer in their communities. He also indicated some interest in the topic of tuition assistance for employees. He supports exploration of the opportunities.

Regent Craven ended our report to BOR with a sincere appreciation for the Employee Advisory Council. She indicated it was always wonderful to hear the good, positive work being done on behalf of the staff employees and with the university administration. She complemented the EAC Executive Committee and EAC for maintaining good lines of communications and indicated one of her favorite reports each year was from the EAC.

Respectfully Submitted,
Randolph (Randy) H. Scott
Secretary