

These Minutes were approved at the July 2006 meeting of the EAC.

MINUTES  
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL  
MARCH 21 – 22, 2006

PRESENT: Marisol Avitia, Kim Caperton, Claudette Clay, David Casillus, Beth Condry, Corliss Denman, Olga Garcia, Teresa Garcia, Sandee Goertzen, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, William Hinton, Debra Linzer, Melanie Loving, Karen Martinez, Cynthia Orth, Jana Pankratz, Rochelle Pena, Rick Peterson, Pamela Pipes, Velinda Reyes, Randolph Scott, Janice Smith, Ann Tate, Brigitte Tolson, Pep Valdes, Janis Walkup, Erin Waneck, Venetta Williams, Glen Worley

VISITORS: Kathy Mayes, Dan Stewart

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Ann Tate. She introduced Dr. Gwin Morris, the Vice President for Public Affairs at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston who welcomed us to Houston and talked to us about the medical center. We also had a video presentation entitled “The Future of Health Care Starts Here”.

Other presentors were: Dr. Sue Day spoke on Reducing Childhood Obesity; Dr. Caskey spoke on New Frontiers in Medicine; Dr. Byrne spoke on Memory and How it Works; Dr. Brosnan talked about the new School of Nursing, its new building and new programs.

CHAIR REPORT:

The new members were introduced.

Ms. Tate announced that the July meeting is most likely to be held on July 27-28 in Austin. We will be using the Radisson Hotel. It is not as convenient as the Stephen F. Austin, but has better facilities. If anyone has a problem with the walk from the hotel to the System offices, please let Kathy Mayes or Ann Tate know and arrangements will be made.

Ann reported that Geri Malandra, who spoke to the EAC a few months back and wanted feedback from EAC, was most impressed with all the input she got from us. She wants to come back to the EAC, probably in July, to talk to us further about her special project.

## MINUTES

One correction was made to the October, 2005 minutes regarding U. T. Tyler's child care center. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed.

## BOARD OF REGENTS PRESENTATION

Sandee Goertzen gave an overall briefing on the presentation to the Board of Regents at their meeting in November 2005. Other former officers of the EAC gave a brief description of what they presented to the Regents. Glen Worley spoke to the topic of Staff Councils for every school in the U. T. System. Pep Valdes spoke to the topic on diversity. Melanie Loving spoke on behalf of Janet Cole, who had presented the topic of making our Best Practices a living document and putting it on our EAC website. The Regents seemed impressed with what the EAC is doing and recommending. They agreed to let us put the Best Practices on our web pages, to be kept up by the EAC. Regarding the Staff Councils at all institutions, they, of course, were most interested to see which institution did not have a Staff Council. We received good feedback from the Regents on our presentation.

A request from the EAC was to put the presentation on the web site.

A request was also made to put on the web site the fact that the members are having a three year term.

## COMPONENT ROUND TABLES:

U. T. El Paso: Their wellness program has been approved. They have received a grant for funding exercising, nutrition training, etc. They will be distributing the information via their college administration officers.

U. T. San Antonio: Staff Council has gotten a wellness program approved to focus on employees well being, including ergonomics and workplace environment. They also implemented a scholarship.

U. T. Tyler: They had a one day staff workshop which included lecturers on staff improvement. They are participating in the Texas Roundup for 150 minutes a week. The University appreciation week is scheduled for April. They are having an issue with parking being brought before the Council to get ideas as to what they can do.

U. T. Brownsville: They have awarded twenty book scholarships each semester to staff. They also are having Stephen Covey via teleconference, free to staff, to speak to the campus.

U. T. Austin: They have had a grievance procedure for one year and are in the process of evaluating this procedure. They are getting feedback and working on a measure of success. They are studying the merit policy and evaluation process and looking at the possibility of changing the merit policy.

U. T. Pan American: They have lost their Provost and looking for another. There is a marketing initiative to staff members regarding what issues they are interested in. There were 291 responses to their survey. Their administration also conducted a compensation survey last fall. The Staff council has asked for a copy of that survey, but hasn't had a response yet.

U. T. Dallas: There is a new President, Dr. David Daniel, and a new Vice President for Business Affairs, Dr. Larry Terry. The Staff Council had a representative on both of these search committees. The Staff Council gave out four scholarships to staff and six CARE Awards. As a result of a new administration, there are a lot of infrastructure changes being made.

U. T. Arlington: They have a new logo for the school. There has been a big marketing campaign to introduce it and to let people know about U. T. Arlington. No longer UTA – going to U. T. Arlington. They are retaining the Mavericks as their mascot.

U. T. Permian Basin: They had elections recently. They are doing a community project by collecting blankets or money.

UTHSC Houston: They will have their Staff Council workshop. They are expecting 250-300 members. The theme is “Who is Behind Your Mask – Free Yourself”. Several administrators will participate in the panel discussion with the staff. One part is on mentoring and there will be discussion developing the person behind the mask. The Staff Council scholarship program for children of Staff Council members has been established. They are awarded by academic performance. They are also giving the annual STAR Awards and over 420 people were honored. Their leadership forum, which is for A&P staff will be taking place soon. They have been mandated to set aside a 2% pool for merits for next year and you will spend it or it will be taken away.

UTHSC Tyler: They have a Corporate Council, but the President of the Institution appoints the Chair. They have given MVP awards and there will be a \$500 award for the one person that was most outstanding. They are having problems with their Council and

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the processes with the Council. The officers do not have meetings with their representatives. They only correspond via e-mail.

UTHSC San Antonio: It was reported that they just started their partners with employees program. They are planning some special events such as financial fiesta, retirement planning seminars, wellness fair, etc.

M.D. Anderson: They just completed an all employee survey and had a 58% return. The formal results are being sent out. They will be having their all employee awards.

UTMB at Galveston: Their support staff conference was in March. The theme was "Leaving Legacies". They had health and fitness lectures including relaxation, stress, yoga, belly dancing, and a health walk. They had a "Smile Campaign" – your attitude has a big impact on your health. They have had a Weight Watchers on campus for some time now and the cafeteria is working with weight watchers for meals. They do an employee satisfaction survey every year. They give away a free cruise as an incentive to participate in the survey. They are having a year long series – one a month – called "Healthy, Wealthy and Wise."

U. T. Southwestern Medical School: They had a staff appreciation day with the President sponsoring a lecture series. There has been a group of eight people put together to start looking at bylaws, etc., for a Staff Council. The Vice President of Human Resources is working with them.

U. T. System: Nancy Sutherland of the U. T. System is working with the state air fare contracts. They will be working on the car rentals contract in April. The special legislative session will be starting soon. They will be using a new software program called Gallery Watch for the legislative bills. They are participating in the Texas Round Up. System allows four hours leave for those that complete it. They have a search committee for the new Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to replace Terry Sullivan who will be leaving U. T. System June 1<sup>st</sup>.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**SUGGESTED SPEAKER:** There was discussion about why some schools can give cash to employees as a prize when others cannot. It was suggested that we get a speaker from System to talk about this difference.

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The Committees were assigned meeting rooms for their meetings. They were asked to have an open discussion about what they felt their committees should do for the future. Should the committee remain a regular committee, should it be an ad hoc committee? Is it needed or not. Should it be different now that the EAC is five years old? The committees were asked to discuss this and bring back their responses to the meeting on Wednesday.

The meeting was adjourned for the first day.

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

The meeting was called to order and the Chair introduced Dan Stewart who is EAC's liaison to the U. T. System. Dan gave a brief history of the EAC for the group and how it came to be. The founders of the EAC recommended that the group be left open and formed the current committees. Dan said that he felt the EAC was developed to be a listener and to be a voice for the 160,000 staff members of the U. T. System. Being a listener would entail listening to the various campus employees and then the voice would be to say what do we do with it. Information in, condensed in some fashion and then information out in the form of a policy, etc. But, that's not enough. We're missing two very important ingredients: observe and execute. Dan's key words are: Listen - observe - voice - execute (LOVE).

The Best Practices document is great, but what we should probably do is go outside the U. T. System to see what they're doing. Ideas that perhaps have failed or ideas that have succeeded. Employees depend on the EAC for the improvement of their lives, but what we're doing is probably not enough. Business and private institutions do a lot of things for their staff that probably wouldn't cost a lot of money, we just need to search them out.

Should we create forums or focus groups to discuss changes? Executing means more than just listening and going home. We should go outside of UT System to observe what they are doing; i.e. Duke, Harvard, Stanford, etc. What issues are they talking about at their institutions?

An average meeting: we eat well, we are entertained, go on tours, listen to guest speakers, get together another day to talk about this issue or that issue; but have we gelled to the point of what to do.

We need to refocus as to what is the business we are doing in relation to the employees and are they trickling down to the employees.

We need to do a little more work of gathering information or research before we get to the meeting and then use the meeting to discuss them. Networking within the committees should take place via e-mail between the meetings.

Dan told us about the Management Leadership Training Program at U. T. System. This is a great program, but how are they benefiting the campuses. He went to the Best Practices to see if anything there applied. They built on the best practices at various institutions.

We need more confidence. We have new topics, we just don't know how to deal with them. We need to decide how far we want to take a topic. Is it worth doing and do the staff that we are representing want us to do it

One possibility is changing our meeting days from two days with two nights of hotel to two days with only one night of hotel. This change might possibility free up some funds so that committees might be able to meet outside of the main meeting, or even travel to some other institution to meet with them about a possible program we might be interested in.

The Committees were then asked to speak to the results of their meetings.

#### BENEFITS COMMITTEE MINUTES

PRESENT: Debra Linzer, Vice Chair, Kim Carpenter, Beth Condry, Rochelle Pena, Randolph Scott, Janis Walkup

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chair- Debra Linzer. Discussion was focused on the committee structures. Members of the committee agreed that there should be a "Benefits" committee in some form or another. But, the topics should be derived from the entire EAC.

#### COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MINUTES

PRESENT: Cynthia Orth, Chair, Mary Avitia, Sandee Goertzen, Rick Peterson, Pamela Pipes, Janice Smith, Pep Valdes, Glen Worley

The meeting was called to order by Cynthia Orth.

Old Business:

The meeting highlights that we created as a communication aid to committee members were not distributed to the membership as we had intended (the plan was to provide the highlights to Ann for distribution to the membership within two weeks after the meeting of the Employee Advisory Council meeting). Cynthia stated that she would reiterate the purpose of the highlights to Ann. Janice agreed to write the meeting highlights and forward them to Cynthia.

New Business:

Discussion was held concerning the maintenance of the EAC website, namely, who should have the responsibility. Sandee explained that a System employee used to be on the committee and was supposed to take care of the site. When she failed to do this, committee member Ehren Wixson took it over. When Ehren left the committee, Pep volunteered. Pep explained that he is still willing, but would love for System to reclaim the site. It was also pointed out that Pep will not be on the committee forever, and for the sake of continuity, it was decided that the best option was to have an employee of UT System take responsibility for updating the website. Current information on the website that would require regular updates include meeting agenda/minutes, annual report to the Regents, photo of committee, roster and committee assignments, and the best practices document. This would be relatively easy to update if the information was provided in the proper format. Cynthia stated that she would talk to Ann and together they would approach Dan to request a formal arrangement with System for website maintenance.

Discussion was held concerning what information should/could be added to the website. Suggestions included upcoming meeting information including hotel information and dates and select presentations made by speakers (if in Power Point form or some other easily uploaded format). It was decided that speaker presentations should be added to the website only if the information was of benefit to the employees of the Institutions.

Discussion was held concerning the need for written committee procedures. It was decided that the development of procedures, such as how to submit web updates and in what form, solicitation of presentations for posting to the website, the production of meeting highlights for use by the members of the EAC, and any other task the committee decides to take on, would be of great benefit as membership in the committee changes from year to year. It was stressed that written procedures did not need to become part of the bylaws, nor should they.

## COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

PRESENT: Velinda Reyes, Chair, Claudette Clay, Olga Garcia, Melanie Loving, Erin Waneck

### Topics discussed:

- Best Practices Document
  - Committee decided that this document is important and should remain a “live” document.
  - Recommendation made by Melanie Loving to update the document to a new format- possibly a numbering system or something for a much easier search of information. Melanie will take lead on this.
  - Committee Chair to provide a reminder to the EAC members of updates needed by May 31, 2006 to include a review of current information and include any new additions. A request for changes or deletions will be required via email to Compensation Chair.
  - We will work with Communication Committee in getting updates to website.
  
- Discussion on Compensation Survey done in Nov. 2005
  - Results provided to the committee members for review.
  - 100% response
  - Only issue committee saw that could be reviewed was the Cost of Living.
    - Recommendation made to have EAC Executive committee report to Board of Regents and ask the following “How can we propose a cost of living mandate for higher education every other year?”
  
- Discussion on role of committee as requested by EAC Chair
  - Consistency of committee members present to keep Compensation Committee active
  - Discussion was made on topics that committee might want to explore and agreement was made that a topic should be always available for exploration for the next academic year. Also, recommended that committee members or at least one try to remain on committee to keep the progress going and the committee updated on what has happened in the past.
  - Discussion was made on overall EAC meetings. There was a consistency to increase meetings to 4 or 6 (example Sept., Jan., Apr., and July). Also, it was recommended that committees remain active through email correspondence and/or telephone conference calls.

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### **Actions required:**

- Provide committee notes to Sandee Goertzen- Velinda
- Send email out requesting update on Best Practices with May 31 deadline via EAC Chair- Velinda
- Review reformat of Best Practices document to be lead by Melanie Loving and assisted by committee members.

### **POLICY COMMITTEE**

Present: Venetta Williams, Chair, David Casillas, Teresa Garcia, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, William Hinton, Karen Martinez, Jana Pankratz

- Introduction of new members

- Teresa Garcia accepted nomination for Vice Chair

- Venetta Williams asked the committee to examine the following: Policy Committee's purpose, function, goals. What impact does the Policy Committee have with the EAC. Should the Policy Committee become an Ad hoc Committee.

#### **Policy Committee Purpose**

- research and collect data from UT System, other UT institutions and various universities across the country on various affecting staff

#### **Function**

- review data collected, present an issue paper to the EAC Advisory Committee for review on such issues that affects staff

#### **Goals**

-standardize UT System/Institutions' guidelines for Staff

#### **Communication**

- - there are only 3 meetings during the year, how do we continue communication with each other as a group when not at EAC meetings

Solution - communicate as a group via e-mail - Share Point (UT System has license)

Wednesday, March 22, 2006 Attendees: William Hinton, David Casillas, Karen Martinez, Brigitte Tolson, Teresa Garcia, Venetta Williams, Juan Miguel Gonzalez

What impact does the Policy Committee have with the EAC?  
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- Policy Committee review policy and/or issues assigned by the EAC and provide procedural recommendations for approval to the EAC.

Policy Committee – Ad hoc Committee?  
recommend - change name of Policy Committee to Issues Committee

Questions -  
Does everyone feel comfortable in our current environment?  
What are our relationships with our Councils/HR Directors?  
Do we work on assigned task from the EAC?

#### ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION

The Employee Advisory Council Advisory Committee should set policy within the EAC, not the Policy Committee establishing policy for the EAC. Help/advice from former members for informational and historical purposes. Employee Advisory Council members should present issues that should be reviewed by the Policy Committee not the Policy issue giving issues to the EAC.

It would be better to set the topics before the meeting starts as opposed to talking about it after the meetings.

There was some discussion regarding the Policy Committee's report, Dan offered the solution that perhaps this committee should be called the Issues instead of Policy Committee.

Dan suggested we have standing committees like Communication and Compensation and then a renamed/revamped Issues committee. First thing – what did we do last time, second what are the issues of today. Category A – what things the issues committee would work on Category B – a quick fix issue. Category B would not be a full time issue. Other issues may not fit but might fit next year.

As you hear speakers as experts it might bring up issues for this group. How impressive it would be if we had an issue that hadn't even hit the campuses yet, but we were a step ahead.

There was an inquiry from the Board of Regents a couple of months ago. It was sent to the Chair to complete and return to the Regents. Perhaps it will be easier to respond to in the future if we change our process of dealing with issues.

A proposal was given to start the meetings at 1:00 and then meet all the next day. How prepared are we when we come to meet.

Committees need to carefully appoint their Chairs and Vice Chairs and they need to be aware of what are to be expected of them.

When we have meetings at a host institutions we should allow them to showcase their institutions; but perhaps we could have their speakers come to the dinners, or working lunches or cocktails parties instead of taking time out of our meetings for them.

Perhaps committees should be broken into a long term issue and a short term issues committee. We should also try to utilize those with expertise in the EAC

Dan suggested we use the July meeting for organizing and leave it the two day meeting. We could start maximizing the meal times for speakers.

Dan said keep in mind that what makes this group so successful is the Board of Regents presentation. The current Executive Committee members here and the past ones have done an outstanding job and have separated themselves from other committees by the way they have approached the Board, the knowledge they have of their subjects and they appear to be very structured and very organized, we don't want to change that. But how powerful would it be to go to the Board of Regents and say that we have been working all year long, working with other groups about what is important to us and tell them what we have been doing, rather than asking for something.

Glen offered to send a copy of the form that the U. T. Austin's Issues Committee uses to get suggestions turned in to them that has a place for them to write down the expected source of action, etc. The Issues Committee then decides if it is an appropriate issue for the Staff Council to work on. If so, who would they recommend the topic be sent to. That is the Issues Committee's only job. The Staff Council then gets to vote on it. Glen will send a copy to the Chair to mail it out to everyone.

The Executive Committee should meet to review the topics. It was also recommended to reach out to former members as resources, members as well as institutional Staff Councils.

We need to have an "outcomes" as well as an "action plan". Become more confident with ourselves. Stop saying "there's nothing we can do about that". There's plenty we can do, but we may choose to not do anything about it.

It was recommended that we do a survey to identify three or four strategic items that we could do as a group and then set our goal for the year and then focus on getting those things done and then that will be the response to the Board of Regents each year. We can't solicit issues every time.

Discuss the variations on the way we take the materials back to the various institutions. It probably varies from not a lot, to taking it back to the HR Director. We should work on the strategies on how we take the information back.

Everyone should send in to the Executive committee a proposed issue before the next EAC meeting.

This will be a proposal to be voted on at some point, either at the July meeting or via e-mail. Ann committed to sending out a plan to the EAC by the second week of April.

#### U. T. SYSTEM REPORT

Dan Stewart gave a brief report on what's happening at U. T. System. He said that there is a Wellness Program initiative by System to create and coordinate a statewide program on Wellness. This will be a huge initiative by System to actually coordinate programs statewide. A meeting will be held with the Commissioner on Health.

20% of our people drive 80% of the cost of insurance. The 20% need help and more than 50% of the time their problems relate to the lifestyle issues. Focus on ways we could help people help themselves. The strategy to get to them to change is not through their pocketbook, it is really through guilt.

The HMO is still being negotiated.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra K. Goertzen  
Secretary