

**EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES – March 30 to April 1, 2005**  
**University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) – Edinburg, Texas**

In Attendance:

Diane Barrera, Minerva Castillo, Janet Cole, Beth Condry, Sandy Durr, Olga Garcia, Sandee Goertzen, William Hinton, Paula Holton, Daniel Kiley, Julio Ledezma, Melanie Loving, David Maldonado, Jana Pankratz, Rick Peterson, Pamela Pipes, Arturo Ramos, Velinda Reyes, Randolph Scott, Ann Bottenfield Seago, Suzanne Sifuentes, Michael Swindle, Ann Tate, Brigitte Tolson, Eduardo “Pep” Valdes, Janis Walkup, Lydia Washington, Ehren Wixson, Glen Worley.

Absent:

Mary Avita, Barbara Graham, Diana Hottle, Wendy Minix, Vanetta Williams

Others in Attendance:

Kathy Mayes, Executive Associate, Employee Services; Dan Stewart, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Employee Services;

Thursday, March 30

Call to Order – Sandee Goertzen

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Welcome Comments – Sandee Goertzen

Chairman Goertzen welcomed everyone and expressed sincere thanks to Arturo Ramos and Velinda Reyes for their hard work and efforts in making this visit to UT Pan American possible. Ms. Goertzen announced that this was the twelfth meeting of the EAC. The members introduced themselves.

Welcome by President Blandina “Bambi” Cardenas

Dr. Cardenas welcomed the EAC members and thanked them for the opportunity to show them the beautiful UTPA campus. Dr. Cardenas provided some statistics about UTPA and the region. The Rio Grande Valley is the 4<sup>th</sup> fastest growing region in the United States; the southern Rio Grande Valley region has a population of approximately \$1 million people; the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board predicts that UTPA will grow faster than any campus in Texas; UTPA’s mariachi band has won the national competition for six consecutive years. UTPA’s engineering program is nine years old and has graduated 4809 engineers, 95% of them Hispanic, making it one of the top producers of Hispanic engineers in the U.S.; UTPA has the lowest tuition rates of any campus in the UT System; UTPA provided \$77 million in financial aid last year for students.

U. T. Pan American Information and History

PowerPoint presentation given by Arturo Ramos and Velinda Reyes (Attachment 1)

### HESTEC Presentation

Ms. Candi Roxas, Executive Director of development gave this presentation about the Hispanic Engineering, Science & Technology program at UT PanAm and its phenomenal growth. Ms. Roxas pointed out that many corporations are eager to hire minority engineers to fulfill government contract requirements.

### Legislative Update

Mr. Dan Stewart gave the EAC an update on legislative matters. At the time the legislature was considering 5,000 plus bills that have been filed so far. Over 500 of these bills deal with health insurance or human resources issues. Governor Perry's primary objective is child and adult protective services. There has been a 4.5% state employee pay raise proposed but this does not include higher education employees. The Senate unanimously passed appropriations bill SB 1, that provides a 10% increase over the current biennium. There are projected increases in Texas Retirement System. Mr. Stewart provided the statistic that one out of two births in Texas is paid for by Medicaid. There is a tuition rider that limits tuition rates to \$94 at UT Austin. Health institutions will get \$117 million more than last fiscal year.

The Legislative Budget Board has come up with a number of cost savings proposals. Some of these are: eliminate state retirees dependent's health coverage; reduce state contribution for employee health insurance premiums; and, require state retirees under age 65 to pay a portion of their health insurance cost.

Some of the bills that have been filed, but will not necessarily be passed, are: a bill that would require that employees could use retail pharmacies for routine prescriptions instead of pharmacy benefit managers. The savings would be lost if our health insurance plan were required to do this. Pharmacy benefit managers regulation would fall under the Texas Department of Insurance. There is also a bill introduced that would take larger group insurance programs, such as ours, and put them under the administration of the Texas Department of Insurance. Currently, the law requires a 90-day waiting period for medical insurance for new hires, there is a bill introduced that would rescind this waiting period.

### Break for Lunch

Reconvene at 1:00 p.m.

Chairman Goertzen brought up several items to be voted on by the committee.

- Approval of the minutes from the last EAC meeting – motioned and approved
- Agreed to poll the hosting campus for guidance on proper attire for meeting and/or events. The committee agreed that in Austin, business attire was appropriate.
- Campus Life Committee - interested in issues that the EAC is interested in and common to all institutions. Member Randy Scott suggested centralized online compliance training.

- Board of Regents Presentation – current officers along with committee chairs will work to put a presentation together for Regents and the November 2005 Board meeting. It was agreed that both current and past officers should attend this meeting.
- Officer Elections – the committee members were asked to submit the names of anyone they wish to nominate for Chair by the first of June. Kathy Mayes is to email a list of members to the membership that will continue to serve on the committee.
- Website – Communications Committee chair will be responsible for collecting data for website and Dan will appoint someone at UT System Administration responsible for physically placing on website and maintaining the site.
- Spouse Invitations – the Executive Committee recommended that guests (including spouses) not be allowed to attend “official occasions” hosted by other institutions. However, when an event is not institution sponsored guests would be allowed. This motion was passed.
- Round Table Discussions – it was agreed that proposed discussion items would be sent from the committee members to the EAC Secretary prior to the EAC meeting. The group decided that two weeks prior to meetings, the Secretary would send an email to the committee requesting discussion items or ideas to share. One week before the meeting the Secretary will prepare a document containing these ideas in bulleted format and email to the committee.

2:00 p.m. Adjourned for Committee Breakouts

#### Friday, April 1

Meeting convened at 8:30

It was announced that the next EAC meeting would take place in Austin on July 21 & 22, 2005.

#### Committee Reports:

##### **Benefits Committee**

Present: Paula Holton-Chair, Pamela Pipes, Velinda Reyes, Randolph Scott, Ann Seago, Ann Tate, Janis Walkup

Results of Benefits Committee query to components on Mentoring programs available at each component were discussed. The results were heterogeneous as might be expected from components coming from different cultures and with wide ranging resources. Seven components did not offer any mentoring programs. Mentoring programs at the remaining nine components were primarily aimed at faculty and students, pairing new faculty or students with veterans. Three components have some history of Staff mentoring programs.

1. UT Arlington had a six-week pilot program for new staff. Janis Walkup’s personal experience was that there was a poor match up of mentor and mentee. Faculty and Student mentoring are still offered.

2. At UT Health Science Center at Houston The President's Award for Mentoring Women was initiated in 1995. This award and \$2000 is given to one University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston employee in each category: Faculty; Administrative and Professional staff; and Classified staff. The person mentored must be a woman.
3. UT MD Anderson Cancer Center recently expanded a formal mentoring program to include Staff in September 2005.

Possible recommendations to present to full council

Since not all components will have the resources to offer staff mentoring programs some recommendations might be:

1. Components document for job progression and title relatedness within and between job families.
2. Identify possible mentors within institution by expertise.
3. Components that already offer mentoring to Faculty and Staff should be encouraged to extend the program to include Staff.

Following report to full council we were advised to add Mentoring to the Best Practices Document

### **Communications Committee**

Present: David Maldonado, Wendy Minix, Michael Swindle, Ehren Wixson – Chair, Pep Valdes, and Glen Worley

1. Need to establish staff councils in all institutions
2. Need to update website before the next meeting
3. Guest speakers for July meeting:
  - FAC representative
  - Staff development

### **Compensation Committee**

Present: Minerva Castillo, Janet Cole, Beth Condry, Sandy Durr, Olga Garcia-Vice Chair, Melanie Loving-Chair

Absent: Barbara Graham and Diana Hottle

The chair of the committee posted the question to the campus HR Directors via email to ask permission to move the Best Practices document from the secure website to the

EAC website. Based on those responses, the Best Practices document will be moved to the EAC website with the assistance of Mr. Dan Stewart.

The committee recommended that each institution EAC representative submit any changes and deletions to the chair of the Compensation Committee. The committee decided on a due date for updates and/or deletions for the Best Practice document. It was agreed that the end of May would be the deadline. Chair Melanie Loving will send out an email to components that do not have information posted. The committee plans to have all the information ready and posted on the EAC website so it can be presented at the Board of Regent's meeting in the fall.

The committee decided to ask the Council if there were any issues to be addressed or presented by the Compensation Committee so that the Committee can begin research on specific topics, etc.

### **Policy Committee – *Not submitted***

### Liaison Report

Mr. Dan Stewart reported on benefits. He stated that currently in the legislature there were approximately 385 bills filed related to health insurance. Of those about 75 are being closely monitored. Dan emphasized that not all of the bills he described to us that have been filed are not going to pass; he was only giving us an idea of what kinds of things are going on. The appropriations of general revenue are up in the Senate 9% for FY06 and 6% for FY07, this represents a \$281.9M increase. Medicaid is where the bulk of Texas healthcare dollars are going. At UT 97% of the money received in premiums is used to pay claims. In addition, hospital costs and physician fees have gone up 10%; prescriptions have gone up 14%. This coming year we can expect no major health plan design changes. They are adding a 24-hour nurse hotline. The health program has an improved website and added a library.

Anyone that experiences problems with their Flexcard they should call Shaun Barnes or Laura Chambers with Employee Group Insurance Office.

The Disease Management Program was established to help policyholders with chronic diseases such as diabetes, congestive heart disease, etc. This is strictly a voluntary program. The program will contact the patient and see if they would like to work with them.

A new pilot program between the Texas Medical Association and Blue Cross/Blue Shield with UT System and HEB was described that will rollout this year.

Dan noted that any legislation that is passed effecting human resources or health insurance will be reviewed and carefully analyzed so that employees can be informed at

the earliest possible date in order to make the best personal decisions regarding their future.

### Component Roundtable

UT Austin – Reduced confusion about FLSA status by posting FAQ's and information about responsibility for timesheet accuracy on electronic timesheet. Staff Council is now the regular path of distribution for information to staff on campus. The Council has been included in recruitment process for important positions such as Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Vice Provost for Inclusion and Cross Cultural Effectiveness.

UT Arlington – Staff Council was included in Strategic Plan for the university

UT System – New employee performance evaluation form implemented. Huge push for Texas Roundup, the Governor's initiative for physical fitness.

UT Brownsville – Staff Senate working on a salary study adjustment to be recommended to the president. Staff Senate has increased the book allowance for staff by 100%. Some of the events this year have been: Sombrero Festival, water park event, and bowling. There was a retention meeting with the Senate Staff and the President. Items included: Mentoring programs, monetary rewards, and non-monetary rewards. Discussion of harassment issues (non-sexual) on campus.

UT El Paso – Staff Council held its annual Valentine's Day fundraiser. Funds from the sale of flower vases go towards the support of textbook scholarships for staff attending classes at the university. Approximately \$400 was raised.

UT Permian Basin – No report was given

UT Pan-American – Tuition is going up, although it is still the lowest in UTS. Staff Senate elections were held and awards presented to Encourage Supervisor / Customer Service. Childcare services will begin in fall '05. Wellness Fair / Health Fair. Institution has added an Advisement Fee that will allow additional advisors and human resources director. Quality Enhancement Program will include mentoring and self-study. Two senator representatives, one from IAC (Institutional Assessment Committee) and one from SPC (Strategic Planning Committee).

UT Tyler – Currently surveying areas for new smoking policy because there have been complaints of students having to walk through smoke as they go to class. Reported options have been sent to the chairs and will be presented to administration.

April 14-18: University Appreciation Week, "Red, White, & Blue and UT Tyler Too!" The theme will be patriotic and will honor the troops and veterans. It will include 5 days of activities. The last day the President hosts lunch for the employees and their families

with UT Tyler musicians providing the entertainment. Games and other activities will be available in the Health Fitness Center.

UT Medical Branch – Administrative Support Staff Conference will be in April, this is for all classified staff. It is a one-day conference that is repeated on 2 different days to allow all employees to attend. There are health vendors, business vendors, afternoon speakers, Seattle Fish Market. It is very successful and a boost to morale. Have implemented trolley service as a solution to parking shortage. Added Total Rewards Statement, this is a comprehensive tally of salary; value of benefits, merit increases, tuition reimbursement, etc.

UTHSC-Houston – University Classified Staff Council has completed their annual fund raising and is now accepting nominations for scholarships that are awarded to dependents of the staff. The awards are made at the annual University Classified Staff Council workshop. The 10<sup>th</sup> annual workshop on May 20, is entitled: “Going for the Goal-Embrace the Challenge and Seize the Opportunity”. Guest motivational speakers are led by Jim McIngvale of Gallery Furniture. The event is limited to 300 staff members who are rewarded for their efforts on behalf of the university. The university is honoring faculty, staff and student volunteers at an April 12 event. Volunteer opportunities underway: United We Stand, volunteer event led by students, is anticipating 200 students, staff & faculty. 10 sites in the TMC for volunteer activities. UT House Medics, faculty, staff and students volunteer as a team to repair a senior citizen’s home to make it safer and more enjoyable. School of Public Health Staff Organization, has joined forces with Small Steps Nurturing Center, a nonprofit program that work on the development of low-income children. The group’s most recent project is to outfit the therapy room of a new Small Steps school in a disadvantaged neighborhood. Committee on the Status of Women has sponsored Dress for Success Houston, they collect interview-appropriate suits and accessories to assist low-income women in transitioning into the workforce.

Newly revised annual performance and planning document for A&P evaluations are going through their first cycle of use to good reviews. Next project is revision of classified staff document and putting both online. Problem discovered in having an accurate supervisor list or “reports to” persons.

UTSA – Human Resources has added a slide show on the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) explaining the program. HR is seeking a rewrite of the performance evaluation form to record a more realistic evaluation of employees. UTSA Library is currently testing a time reporting system that will be implemented sometime in 2005. The Staff Excellence Awards, including: Rising Star / Leadership / Team Spirit / Extra Mile / Order of the Roadrunner. Each winner receives \$1,000.

UTHSC-SA – continuing to make strides toward establishing a Staff Advisory Council. We had gotten final approval for our bylaws and were working on a nomination process and representative constituencies.

The Committee was reminded to turn in their travel receipts promptly so that the travel expenses can be reimbursed.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully Submitted

Janet Cole