Task Force on Appropriate Employee/Student Relationships
Charge

Board of Regents Vice Chairman Paul Foster will lead a committee to review and make recommendations to the Chancellor and Board of Regents on the issues surrounding inappropriate relationships between U. T. employees and students across all 15 institutions. The review group is charged to look at all existing programs directed at preventing such inappropriate relationships and shall include the issues of preventing and addressing sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and other inappropriate relationships to ensure a safe, healthy environment for students.

This committee should address current campus practices and attitudes surrounding these topics and identify ways to create a culture of no tolerance for inappropriate relationships with students. It should review policies and practices across the 15 institutions of the U. T. System, including how allegations of sexual misconduct between employees and students - specifically between faculty and students and between athletic professionals (including coaches) and student-athletes, student volunteers or student employees - have been handled over the past five years.

The committee will look at best practices across the country and work to define prohibited behavior in a clear and unambiguous way as necessary to create meaningful and well-designed model policies. The committee may involve national experts in the related fields to help understand the full range of issues and problems related to such conduct and its impact on student health and safety.

Inclusive in this task will be a review of best educational efforts for both students and employees. As keys to prevention, such things as awareness, training, support, and annual acknowledgments and commitments to the highest integrity should be considered.

Finally, the committee will look to enforcement practices, which might include mechanisms to require, encourage and ensure reporting, how investigations are conducted, compliance with policies, and, ultimately, how appropriate disciplinary actions are best determined and imposed.

The committee has been asked to provide an interim report in May 2013 with a goal to provide final report and policy recommendations to the Board in August 2013.
Task Force on appropriate employee/student relationships

Committee Members:

Paul L. Foster, Committee Chairman

Ashley Purgason, Student Regent

Ms. Helen Bright, Managing Attorney, The University of Texas System

Dr. Kirk Calhoun, President, U. T. Health Science Center - Tyler

Elizabeth Heise, Assistant Professor, The University of Texas at Brownsville

Ms. Lynn Hickey, Director of Athletics, U. T. San Antonio

Dr. Wanda Mercer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, The University of Texas System

Dr. Robert S. Nelsen, President, U. T. Pan American

Ms. Kristy Orr, Assistant General Counsel to the Board of Regents, The University of Texas System

Dr. Gage Paine, Vice President for Student Affairs, The University of Texas at Austin

Jacqueline Rochelle, Manager, Equal Employment Opportunity, U. T. M. D. Anderson Cancer Center

Mr. Dan Sharphorn, Deputy General Counsel, The University of Texas System

Dr. James Wagner, Associate Dean for Student Affairs, U. T. Southwestern Medical Center

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