

The University of Tennessee
Employee Relations Committee
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
Thursday, July 20, 2017

Minutes

Members Present:

Dr. Tim Cross	Whitney Fair	Jane Barcroft
Angie Fox	Lyssa McKenry	Cory Malone
Kelly Grant	Jenny Jessup	Kaye Avrit
Susie Nicholson	Deneen Gault	Amelia Rader
Jenny Yeary	Jaime Norris	Angela Hyde
Danielle Browning	Larkin Maples	Stephanie Denton

Welcome

Meeting was called to order by Whitney Fair, Interim HRO. This was a face-to-face meeting in conjunction with a representative training held on the UTIA campus in Knoxville.

Chancellor's Update

Dr. Tim Cross thanked all the committee representatives for serving and their hard work to serve the staff and their concerns. He gave an update on the following items.

- Merit Increases - Emails and information have been sent out to employees from both him and Dr. DiPietro concerning merit increases. This year the Board of Trustees strongly encouraged to manage the increase as merit based, not across the board. Meaning not everyone will receive an increase, as it will be based on performance reviews. The Institute has set a threshold for non-exempt employees at \$600. Faculty will also be merit based, with no minimum threshold set. A question was asked from a committee member concerning performance reviews and how are supervisors trained on giving them. Dr. Cross explained that supervisory training focused on performance reviews is conducted. System HR is also actively evaluating the performance review system/process for ways to improve. Employees have the right to appeal the rating, by contacting HR to start an appeal process. By signing the review, the employee is not agreeing to the rating, but that the employee has received and been notified of the rating.
- Extension Dean – Dr. Cross is talking with employees to gain feedback, to go along with the feedback from the Search Committee, and evaluations. The announcement should be coming in the following week.

- UTIA Strategic Plan – The plan is currently internally focused. The team is currently looking into the units. Opportunities for engagement will come in the next few months.

HR Update

- HRO Search – Now that the Extension Dean search is coming to a close, the search committee is being formed for the HRO and EESD Department Head position. Look for the position announcement to be released soon with a potential start date near the first of 2018.
- HR Comp has a new team in place, updating the PDQ (Position Description Questionnaire) process (will now be referred to as just PD) to make it simpler and eventually tying it in with performance reviews. A new form was launched in early July. Training for the new process will be provided to those employees that will use the form.
- Whitney encouraged employees to make sure their emergency contact form and beneficiary forms are up to date. This includes the form for final paycheck, annual leave payout, etc., not just life insurance forms. These can be updated as needed by contacting HR.

Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting Report

- Carla Phillips' provided an update from the July 14th meeting. Notes from the meeting have been sent to the ERC representatives.

CAP Prep/Approval Guidelines

- Non-exempt employees with clerical duties/titles can receive a 9% pay increase when passing the Certified Administrative Professional certification ([Policy HR0465](#)). Employees can apply for the Career Development Fund to receive up to \$150 toward exam fees. Check with your unit for any guidelines and/or procedures for reimbursement. Extension employees can apply for funds up to \$800 to assist in covering the cost of the exam (1st sitting only), books, classes/programs. The guidelines, application form for pre-approval of reimbursement, and the reimbursement request form can be found by going to the UT Extension home page – Faculty and Staff Team Site (under About) – Faculty and Staff Resources – Career Development Program.

Office Hours for Extension Agents

- As Extension Agents are exempt employees, they sometimes may not have the normal 8am to 5pm office hours. Their arrival/departure time to/from the office may vary depending on programs, meetings, events, etc. taking place during the evenings and weekends. However, communication is expected to always be open with the office staff from the agent

on these matters. This allows the administrative support to properly and professionally respond to clients on behalf of the agent.

CVM Compensation Policy for On Call Staff Employees

- Whitney will do some research on this matter and report back.

Annual Leave Accrual for Administrative Assistants

- The annual leave accrual for The University mimics the leave policies for the State of Tennessee. Exempt staff have greater leave accrual hours due to not being eligible for overtime pay.

Other questions/concerns

- When does a verbal complaint become official? It is recommended to always make a note of day/time/topic when you tell your supervisor about a complaint. At that point The University has been notified. Remember to always work in the chain of command first.

Next Meeting October 11, 2017

The University of Tennessee
Employee Relations' Advisory Board Meeting
July 14, 2017
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Eastern
Video Conference Agenda

Welcome and Introductions

Linda Harig

- *Guests: Chris Cimino and John Rich*

Opening Remarks

Joe DiPietro

- *BAG Metrics--using for the next 2 years. Cap was \$3.77M reduced to \$1.72M.*
- *Tuition Increase – 1.8% Lowest ever increase*
- *Title 9 Commission Update – Recommendations have been received, posted a position for on campus –Looking to place by 01/01/18, not sure we can meet this deadline. More information will be released soon.*
- *Salary Increase – 3% Merit and Market based. No across the board increase this year.*
- *Outsourcing – Working with CBOs to identify what will happen.*

1. Salary Increase Update

Tom Anderson, UTK

Voiced concern that there was no minimum or across the board increase system wide. Stated that we desperately need an across the board, especially for the lower paid employees. Chris Cimino addressed questions about the increase.

It was stated that we need more training on performance reviews. Employees need a better understanding and so do supervisors since we are moving more toward a merit based increases.

2. IRIS Questions

Kimberlee Norwood, GSM

Question regarding the structure and naming conventions of IRIS reports. John Rice explained that some of the reports are stock reports from SAP and some are UT. He gave a handout of how to make favorites and explained that you can change the name when you save a favorite.

Question about IRIS access across departments. Example, a student assistant is responsible to two accounts, this was in regards to Payroll. Another example was travel reimbursement with split appointments, who is responsible for entering the travel. Can the entity that the travel was for enter the reimbursement? John is going to research this answer and it will be published in the final minutes.

3. Other Business

When will electronic ledger verification be mandatory?

Answer: No date as yet.

○ **September 12, 2017**

- In-Person Meeting
- 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. (Eastern)