

The University of Tennessee  
**Employee Relations Committee**  
**INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE**  
Wednesday, January 10, 2018  
Room 102 Morgan Hall

**Minutes**

**Members Present:**

Whitney Fair                      Carla Phillips                      Lyssa McKenry  
Jane Barcroft                      Stephanie Denton

**Members Present via Zoom:**

Kelly Grant                      Susie Nicholson                      Deneen Gault                      Jaime Lyn Norris  
Amelia Rader                      Jenny Yearly                      Jenny Jessup                      Kaye Avrit

**Welcome**

Meeting was called to order by Whitney Fair, Interim HRO at 2:03pm.

**Chancellor's Update – Dr. Tim Cross**

- A draft of the UTIA 10 year plan has been composed by the UTIA administrative team and has been presented to Regional Advisory Councils with positive feedback. It will be circulated to UTIA a week from Monday with a survey link for input. Dr. Cross would like to encourage everyone to read the draft plan and to fill out the survey with feedback, and all surveys will be anonymous. After the feedback is gathered, the plan will be sent to the Board of Trustees for approval at their March meeting. Once approved, the plan will be finalized and formally introduced with roll out meetings across the state for all UTIA faculty and staff. Dr. Cross feels the plan includes good for the future of UTIA and is a strong representation of all of UTIA.
- In 1968 UTIA was established making this year the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. This will be a great time to roll out the 10 year plan, highlight the last 50 years, remind elected officials and others of the impacts and accomplishments of UTIA in the last 50 years, and use this as a time to ramp up advancement efforts and funds.
- Plans are being made to kick off a capital campaign in the fall, possibly in conjunction with Ag Day. From now until then is a key time to be thinking of unique ways to answer “what do we need”, aside from more money. A statement using programing efforts and events, etc.

**HR Update – Whitney Fair**

- The next round of submitting PDs is coming up. A reminder this is due to System HR Comp wanting more market based titles in comparison with other universities. Whitney thanks everyone for their patience and support on working through this process. She also reminded that these need to be kept current for position and temp positions will also need a PD going forward.

- The termination checklist form that contains the list of departments/areas for employees to be cleared from (Lock & Key, Book Store, etc.) is becoming automated. The form will be electronic and will send an automatic email to all the departments/areas requesting clearance for the employee, and an email response will be sent back to the person submitting the form. Facilities Services have been testing and should finalize the trail run with feedback by late January. The process may be a little different for counties/center. More information and training will come later.
- Annual performance reviews are due March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Commission for Women**

- Lyssa McKenry provided a brief update from the December 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The meeting was with Provost John Zomchick and his team to discuss student affairs. The Provost's office is currently calling for a 3% student admission growth. UT recently increased the full load hours from 12 to 15 hours, which also increased tuition by 25%. UT currently has the highest tuition in the southeast, but the lowest rate of graduates with student loans.

### **Pay for Support Staff with Degrees**

- The concern is when a support staff (in a county office for example) earns 2 or 4 year degrees pertinent to their job, but not required for the position, and not receiving any kind of increase or promotion. Some have to pay out of pocket for classes or supplies. Also a concern is when a new support staff employee is hired in with a degree and receives higher pay than employee that has worked several years, with or without a degree. This is causing low morale.

### **Administrative Staff Career Ladder**

- There is currently no career ladder for administrative or support staff, and no plans currently down the line. This is also causing low morale and may increase turnover in counties/departments, but when you are hired in you currently have no opportunity for promotion within the county/department. Whitney asked for this item to be tabled for April meeting, as she will talk with Dr. Cross on the concerns.

### **Other**

- Whitney would like to gather some ideas on ways employees can be taken care of and shown appreciation. She will put together an email for the committee members to send out to their groups asking for their feedback and ideas.
- The interviews and seminars for HRO has some scheduling setbacks. The Search Committee will meet later this week.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018**