

Minutes of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee
University of Kentucky Board of Trustees
Thursday, September 15, 2022

The Human Resources and University Relations (HRUR) Committee of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees met on Thursday, September 15, 2022, in the Gatton StudentCenter, Harris Ballroom.

A. Call to Order

Sandy Shuffett, chair of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and asked Paige Noland to report the attendance.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee were in attendance: David Melanson, Paula Pope and Sandy Shuffett. Cathy A. Black attended the meeting via Zoom.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Shuffett reported that the minutes of April 29, 2022, HRUR Committee meeting had been distributed and called for a motion to approve. Trustee Black moved approval of the minutes and Trustee Pope seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Chair Shuffett called for a vote and the motion passed without dissent.

D. Support and Resources for Faculty and Staff

Chair Shuffett introduced Acting Vice President for Human Resources and Associate Vice President for Finance and Administration Gina Dugas.

Ms. Dugas explained that the role of Human Resources (HR) is to be the first point of connection for faculty and staff who need support or have questions and concerns. She stated that the HR team looks internally and collaborates externally across campus to direct employees to the appropriate support.

Ms. Dugas shared that workplace concerns are something that HR remains focused on to make sure appropriate support is provided. When a staff member has a concern related to the work environment, the employee relations area of HR can provide several options for the employee. "They do a fantastic job of making sure that they can help to educate and coach, not only employees but also administrators and supervisors."

Ms. Dugas continued by acknowledging an additional resource provided by HR - the Employee Relations and Leave Administration. This team helps employees

understand their eligibility when it comes to certain types of leave including family medical leave.

Ms. Dugas described the partnership that HR has with other offices such as the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity (OIEEO), Office for Institutional Diversity (OID), Office for Faculty Advancement and the Violence, Intervention and Prevention (VIP) Center. She explained that OIEEO promotes an environment free of discrimination and inequity. OID enhances the diversity of the university and provides rich diversity-related experiences. Office for Faculty Advancement offers resources for faculty advancement and development and works to recruit, retain and support diverse faculty. Lastly, the VIP Center supports and sustains a culture of accountability and focuses on eliminating violence and oppression at UK.

Ms. Dugas explained that there are always well-being concerns, and the university provides an array of benefits and well-being resources for employees. The university is specifically focused on mental health and well-being. She continued by discussing the internal team of therapists available and the partnership with the College of Social Work which provides three additional therapists who offer counseling services. Additionally, there is a live telehealth option with zero copays for staff and faculty enrolled in UK health plans.

Ms. Dugas identified other resources made available to employees including work-life support which focuses on helping employees integrate work and personal responsibilities, and the multitude of different resources for financial well-being. “Those include programs to pursue student loan forgiveness, debt management and many others.”

Ms. Dugas introduced Acting Associate Vice President for the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity (OIEEO) Thalethia Routt.

Ms. Routt explained that “OIEEO is charged with upholding the university’s commitment to equal opportunity for members of the university community and its academic programs, research, service and employment.” The office monitors the provision of equal opportunity across the university and serves as the institutional representative to state and federal agencies including the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), the Kentucky Human Rights Commission and the departments of labor and education. OIEEO also serves as the Title IX coordinator and Americans with Disabilities Act coordinator, trains university employees and students, administers two university regulations, manages the UK affirmative action program and upholds the university’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive living, learning and working environment.

Ms. Routt shared additional information about the two regulations administered by OIEEO, Administrative Regulation 6:1 and 6:2. Regulation 6:1 prohibits protected-class discrimination and protected-class harassment. “This policy covers over twenty protected

classes including race, religion, age, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and disability to name a few.”

Ms. Rount continued by explaining that discrimination means that someone is being treated differently or negatively because of their protective class and that harassment is unwanted or unwelcome behavior. The two types of harassment that OIEEO deals with are quid pro quo and hostile work environments including sexual harassment.

Ms. Rount explained that retaliation which occurs when someone takes adverse action against a covered individual because he or she engaged in a protected activity, such as reporting discrimination or taking part in an investigation, is strictly prohibited. Retaliatory behavior is not limited to behavior by the accused individual and includes all participants and third parties (such as friends of the accused or complainant) and can occur even if a policy violation is not found.

Ms. Rount clarified that anyone could make a report of discrimination by contacting any dean, director, faculty member, department head, manager supervisors or any other individual with administrative responsibility. “All faculty and staff are mandatory reporters unless they work in the counseling center, Violence, Intervention and Prevention Center (VIP), University Health or somewhere in UK HealthCare and they are only made aware of the complaint while they are providing treatment.” Ms. Rount explained that members of the Board of Trustees are also mandatory reporters.

Ms. Rount shifted the focus to Administrative Regulation 6:2, sexual harassment under Title IX and sexual misconduct. Similarly, to 6:1, all faculty and staff are mandatory reporters unless they work in certain areas on campus and are providing medical treatment. “Any university employee that is a witness to or is made aware of an incident of sexual misconduct has to report that misconduct.” Reports need to be made to the University Police Department or the Title IX coordinator as soon as possible.

Ms. Rount described the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The OIEEO serves as the ADA coordinator to ensure the university is complicit with the ADA, which prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with a disability. She stated, “A qualified individual with a disability is entitled to reasonable accommodations as long as they can perform the essential functions or requirements of their job.” The OIEEO works hard to ensure all employees can be a success at the university.

Ms. Rount opened the floor for questions.

Chair Shuffett asked how OIEEO makes sure reporters are not getting retaliated against. Ms. Rount explained that the person being accused is given explicit notice that they are not to retaliate and make that clarification again in the closing letters.

Chair Shuffett asked what steps are taken to re-educate a person who was found guilty to make sure that person stays on track if they are a valuable employee. Ms. Rount

explained that OIEEO does not look to see what status the respondent is, but once the process has been completed some recommendations do include training.

Chair Shuffett asked why everyone in the Counseling Center and in UK HealthCare are not mandatory reporters. Ms. Routt clarified that not everyone is considered a mandatory reporter if they are given information while treating someone medically or confidentially.

Trustee Black asked if there was consideration for an employee resource group outside of HR for those that are not comfortable going to HR or bringing in a third-party group to examine and see if policies are being followed. Ms. Routt explained that there are cases when faculty and staff are referred to the Office of Faculty Advancement to have issues addressed. Ms. Dugas elaborated and detailed the partnerships between HR and OIEEO. Dr. Monday explained that there are additional services offered in the Office of Faculty Advancement and the Office of Institutional Diversity.

Chair Shuffett thanked Ms. Dugas and Ms. Routt and introduced Vice President for University Relations and Acting Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement Tom Harris.

Mr. Harris announced the next topic, enrollment management and outlined the growth that has been made over the past few years. Mr. Harris introduced Senior Associate Provost and Executive Director of Analytics Todd Brann who discussed the data and analytics process with respect to enrollment management.

Mr. Harris introduced Chief Enrollment Officer and Associate Vice President for Student Success Dr. Christine Harper and Chief Marketing Officer Julie Balog.

Dr. Harper explained that tremendous work had been done thanks to a collaborative effort and “Strategically aligning resources, expertise and effort towards the common goal of bringing in great classes, both at the freshman and transfer level, and making a great mix for our undergraduate population.”

Dr. Harper stated that the colleges are at the center of the work being done in undergraduate admissions and enrollment. “We worked tirelessly through the pandemic, starting in 2018, to build the foundation.” Dr. Harper described the opportunities for strategic enhancement, operational efficiencies and putting together an infrastructure that has gotten the university to where it is today for continual growth.

Dr. Harper highlighted that the focus is on recruitment but that all information gathered from as early as middle school through the application process is used to retain students to graduation and on. Dr. Harper explained that communication with current high school students, parents and families of prospective students, prospective international students and high school counselors is critically important. The level of knowledge about the university varies across the country and therefore communication has to be tailored to the individual.

Dr. Harper outlined the student journey from awareness to consideration to decision to matriculation to loyalty. Communication from the university to the student is very important throughout these stages so that the student stays committed and loyal to the university and believes that they are making the right choice in attending UK.

Dr. Harper explained that a new communication plan was launched in 2019 for over four hundred thousand sophomores and juniors in high school to start telling them about UK and why it is a great choice. This communication continues to happen each year with a new group of sophomores and juniors.

Dr. Harper stated that seven new markets have been added over the last four years along with two new diversity recruiters. Additionally, more recruiters have been added who live in the areas in which recruitment is being made. Significant efforts have been focused on increasing applications and overall awareness, so students get a sense of who the university is.

Dr. Harper acknowledged the work done to improve the consideration phase, “We have implemented new platforms and created efficiencies that took the timeline from the decision in 2018 to twenty-two days to make a decision down to now this past cycle, averaging five to seven days from the time a student’s application is complete to when we notify them that they have been admitted.”

Dr. Harper recognized the new High School Council Advisory Board and the critical role advisors play in providing information about UK to students who are interested in applying to colleges like the University of Kentucky. Counselors are one of the best resources to provide feedback about the effectiveness of the university’s communications.

Dr. Harper explained that this is the third year for the test-optional approach to admissions and scholarships. The colleges set guidelines for admissions based on analytical data they were given to determine who would be admitted if test scores were not provided. “Because of great collaborations and communications with all of the teams, and particularly the relationships with the colleges, that went exceedingly smooth, and we are very pleased with the outcomes we have seen.”

Dr. Harper described the personalized outreach that is necessary during the decision and matriculation phase. “Incoming students regularly comment that a phone call, handwritten note, a follow up individualized email to a question or concern that they had was unlike what they had seen from other institutions, and it made them feel more a part of our community.”

Dr. Harper stated that the alumni association is utilized during the loyalty stage to write handwritten notes to admitted students. This allows the student to feel personalized attention and is also a way for the alumni to give back.

Dr. Harper explained the Perpetual Assessment Cycle which includes admissions, enrollment, retention and graduation. These processes are informed by gathering information in Student Academic Progress/Student Lifecycle Management (SAPSLcM), Salesforce Customer Relationship Management (CRM), Student Financial Aid Management (ProSam), BBNInvolved, Handshake and Slate. "All of that data comes in different ways and is reported out in different ways, and then can be used to do things like trend analysis, return on investment and periodic assessments of where we are."

Dr. Harper described how the data gathered is used to target students who are on the fence about attending UK. The colleges are given information about which students are still deciding so that they can make calls or personalized notes to shift them from being on the fence to definitely attending.

Dr. Harper concluded her presentation and introduced Ms. Balog for her report.

Ms. Balog explained that the university receives lists from 36 different groups that translate into over a million records in UK's marketing pool. "We have to integrate those, we have to make sure that we are loading them correctly, that we are identifying those key metrics that will help us." This information is used to progress students through the phases discussed by Dr. Harper.

Ms. Balog stated, "One of our mantras is right message, right person, right time." She explained that people must be contacted multiple times in multiple ways to ensure they progress through the stages and determining the appropriate message for each person is very important.

Ms. Balog recognized that UK is getting the attention of people in higher education because of the signature elements done to increase enrollment. "We have built a marketing automation system for prospective students called Marketing Cloud, Nineteen Different Prospective Student Journeys. Every single college is integrated into those journeys and what makes us very confident that it is a strategy that is working is that our average open rate on those emails is 54, and our click-through rate is three percent. That is significantly higher than the national average."

Ms. Balog described the intentional ways that the university takes the prospective student through their individual journeys. She explained that getting students on campus allows them to see their why and how and allows them to see they can be successful at UK.

Ms. Balog discussed how the colleges are essential in the decision stage and closing the deal. "Research shows us that when students can connect with a faculty member, they really feel that." This personalized outreach allows them to see themselves on the university's campus.

Chair Shuffett opened the floor for questions.

Trustee Swanson asked about the larger number of female students than male students and how the university can better reach young males. Dr. Harper explained that it is a national trend that there are more females enrolled than males and that research is being continually done to try and enroll more males.

Trustee Swanson asked if the community colleges are communicated with to recruit those students. Dr. Harper stated that UK works very closely with numerous community colleges including Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC), Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and strong feeders in Florida and Chicago. Dr. Harper explained that they are continuing to work on recruiting adult learners.

Chair Shuffett thanked the presenters. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:54 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Paige Noland