



Staff Senate Meeting

May 30th, 2024 – 2-3pm

Zoom

Moderator: Kimberlee Norwood

Representatives Present: Kimberlee Norwood, Debbie Long, Terri Fought, Shannon Brown, David Meyer, Janna Hays, Elaine Robinson, Jessica Ross, Katora Jones, Ramona Jackson, Kyle Smith, Patti Smith, Peter Hunter, Shenicia Richardson, Cynthia Tooley, Yin Su, Janette Smith, Sarah Cheon

Representatives Absent (excused): Keshia Giboney, Peggy Reisser

Representatives Absent: Ann Fields, Flavenia Leaper, LaTisha Williams

Minutes Secretary: Sarah Cheon

Visitors: Chandra Alston, Cindy Davis, Sarah Dunnavant, Sharlet Alexander, Lisa Bronte, Megg Doolin, Linda Johnson, Lee Weaver

Meeting Agenda and Minutes

- 2:00 pm** **Welcome – Kimberlee**
- 2:05pm** **Roll Call**
- 2:10 pm** **UT System Workforce Review Summary—Chandra Alston**
- 2:40 pm** **ERAB update**
- 2:45 pm** **Be One UT**
- 2:50 pm** **Discussion of hybrid Staff Senate meetings**
- 2:55 pm** **Senate Committee Updates**
- 3:00 pm** **College/Department Updates**
- 3:05 pm** **Campus updates**

3:10 pm Compliance Training reminder

3:15 pm Other business

Kimberlee Norwood began the meeting. Roll call was conducted by Sarah Cheon by writing down participant list of the Zoom call.

Kimberlee Norwood then put a motion to approve the minutes and asked if there were any corrections.

There were no calls for corrections so a motion to approve was put forward (by unknown) and then seconded by Terri Fought and Ramona Jackson.

Kimberlee Norwood then announced that Chandra Alston would go over the UT System Workforce Review Summary and that it would be followed by the Employee Relations Advisory Board update from the system wide meeting.

Chandra Alston then began by confirming that she had up to 30 minutes to go over the review. She began by saying that the slides she was showing was from Brian Dickens, the chief human resource office for the UT System, who was unable to join the meeting today. She reported that the top concerns were rising labor costs, rising benefits/health costs, rising HR function costs, and unclear revenue contribution. She also mentioned that the agenda included the future of work culture, AI—Human teaming, and employee well-being. On top of those items, UT Health Science Center has gone through a change in leadership which employees can find disruptive.

Chandra Alston then said the UT System ended 2023 with 13,800 employees with 13,400 FTE. She mentioned that when they were doing benefits, they were not just looking at the 3,000 here at the Health Science Center but the whole 13,000 through the system. UTK was the largest campus and UT Health Science Center was the second largest. UT Health Science Center's breakdown for faculty and staff and non-exempt was about equal. There are more female than male employees. Millennials make up 1/3 of the population, Gen X make up 1/3, and the rest are divided between Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Gen Z.

She also said that most employees have been here less than 10 years, and the service award programs are getting smaller at the higher levels. She then reiterated that in 2023, the UT Health Science Center had about 3,300 employees and UTK had about 5,900 employees. In 2023, 23% of employees were eligible for retirement. For recruitment, most people heard about job openings through the career site. The average amount of time to fill a job was 70 days, from posting to when the person accepts the offer. She also said that they would need to work to reduce that number. It also took about 93 days for a person to start the new job.

Chandra Alston also mentioned they were looking forward to going live in DASH in January to help streamline the application process. This will eliminate the need for applicants to create an account. Also new applicants will be able to apply directly from their phone so they can use their phone number or email address as a unique identifier.

DASH will also provide skill modules that should help identify potential employees find jobs that have specific skill sets. It should also help with interview scheduling and have a more user-friendly career site. There will also be a new HR help desk that will be available like the IT help desk.

New hires for 2023 included 499 faculty, 989 non-exempt, and 887 exempt employees. UT Health Science Center had many promotions but many separations as well. UT Health Science Center had a 25% turnover rate in 2021 but it has gone down 2023. She also mentioned that training and mediation services are available to the campus, as well as conferences.

There will be no increase to deductible co-pays or co-insurance. The state will pay 50% of dental insurance premiums, 100% of premiums for long-term disability, and 100% of premiums for basic life, accidental death, and dismemberment insurance. Effective January 1, 2024, ShareCare is the new wellness program. The 401k match will go down to \$50.

Chandra also said that there is a well-being agenda fueled by statistics that say 42% of people globally feel that their mental health is declining. UT Health Science Center in 2023 was a certified great place to work and people felt that they needed a fair sense of compensation, to be involved in decision making, and to share information more broadly. The McLean and Company survey showed UT Health Science Center employees felt better overall than the UT System as a whole.

Kimberlee Norwood then thanked Chandra Alston for her excellent summation.

Next, Kimberlee Norwood then gave an update on the Employee Relations Advisory Board. The ERAB met last week with Brian Dickens under the theme Be One UT. Brian Dickens wants the ERAB and Staff Senates to bring concerns to him. If it is a campus specific issue, then he will direct you to someone on the campus. But he wants common themes from the campus to be called to sub ERAB meetings where they can discuss the issue and bring it to President Boyd with data. This is to make meetings more efficient rather than throwing a question at President Boyd and him having to get back to the ERAB.

Kimberlee Norwood also said that other campuses are talking about going to the Staff Senate format and that she is giving information about how we did it.

Kimberlee then brought up whether the Staff Senate wanted hybrid staff meetings (where some would be in a room and some on Zoom) or continue with Zoom meetings.

She asked Sarah Cheon if people should vote in chat or if we should have a discussion.

Elaine Robinson said that there should be a way to poll and get the information. She also brought up the fact that the option for remote should be necessary both for those who can't leave their desks and those who are not on campus.

Kimberlee Norwood then agreed to a poll. Debbie Long then said she could make one.

Kristi Forman then stated that keeping it just Zoom could help with engagement. In hybrid situations, those on Zoom can't engage or be focused on as much as the people in the room. She also mentioned that she liked being in the room with people, but we do have staff across the state.

Kimberlee Norwood then said if we do hybrid, we will need to be cognizant of people online, especially if we allow the East people to join in on common issues. She also read comments on

chat where people appreciated the flexibility of Zoom and the fact that some people are still working remote.

The Zoom poll then came up for the Staff Senate participants. The options were hybrid, Zoom only, and quarterly hybrid.

Chandra Alston offered the fact that there is research that Zoom only meetings often have more attendance since people don't have to rush to attend. She also said that you could offer opportunities for the Staff Senate to get together outside of the meetings on campus for a separate activity. She said having four things (one a quarter) might be helpful for people to engage.

Kimberlee Norwood then said that she liked the idea of people coming together once a quarter with people who could not be in person Zooming in. She also liked that Debbie Long added the once a quarter option to the poll.

Kimberlee Norwood then asked Debbie Long if everybody had voted. Debbie Long responded that 19 had voted (out of 25).

Kimberlee then said Terri Fought had some senate committee updates.

Terri Fought said the membership and assessment committee was working on the special election for the open seats in dentistry, graduate health, medicine, and pharmacy. They had received enough nominations to fill all the open seats and ballots would be going out to the departments next week. They were still collecting information from the nominees to put on the ballot, so once received the ballots would be sent out and open until 5pm June 14th for colleges and staff to participate. This would allow the goal of having all the new senators in place by the July meeting.

Terri Fought also said that according to our bylaws, we must give two weeks after we notify everyone of the results before they're in place. So, June might not be feasible but July should be. She also mentioned if any senators have recommendations for edits to the bylaws, they could use a Microsoft form to send them for review by the executive committee.

Kimberlee Norwood then thanked Terri Fought for her update and notified the Staff Senate that the quarterly hybrid option had won with 40%. So, the meetings will stay Zoom monthly and once a quarter we will announce a hybrid option.

Kimberlee Norwood then called for other committee updates.

Debbie Long gave one for the communications committee on behalf of Peggy Reisser. The Staff Senate website is almost revised and will hopefully be live next week. The contact section just needs to be finished.

Kimberlee Norwood then asked for college/department/unit updates. She mentioned that the College of Medicine has a communications and marketing position that is posted.

Kristi Forman then said the office of student life in AFSA had a successful commencement event where over 700 students graduated. She also said if anyone is interested in being a part of the commencement crew, they would be happy to have volunteers for upcoming ceremonies.

Elaine Robinson said that in the College of Health Professions, the business manager position is posted.

Janette Smith then said she was no longer in Facilities and had moved to the College of Medicine. She is working with Dr. Arnold in Pediatrics.

Kimberlee Norwood then brought up that our annual compliance training is due tomorrow. She also mentioned the outside interest disclosure form had to be filled out.

Kimberlee then reminded us that as the Staff Senate, we are the voice of the staff on campus and the group where people bring up across the board issues. As an example, she brought up recent reorganizations that led some people being classified from exempt to non-exempt which lost those employees one annual leave day.

Kimberlee Norwood then asked if there was any other business to discuss. There was no response, so she then said to let herself or Sarah Cheon to know if there were agenda items to discuss in the future. She then concluded the meeting.