

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COUNCIL MEETING

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Thursday, October 21, 2021

via Zoom

Members attending: Melita Rector, Mark Stotts, Susan Gutshall, Cindy Williams, Megs Hazare, Laneeta Derrick, Juanita Wade, Shirley Hatfield, Sarah Wetherill, Cathy Eppinger, Terri Bearbower, Nancy Rogers, Sharon Thomas

Others in attendance: Laure Pou, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources' Julie Brown, Director of Employee Relations; Janice Michaels, HR/OEI Assistant

Call to order: Ms. Rector called the meeting to order.

Minutes: The minutes for the September meeting were distributed and approved electronically.

Blue Ribbon Award: Sarah Canatsey, Instructional Developer in the Rollins College of Business, was the recipient of the Chancellor's Blue-Ribbon Award for August 2021.

Guest Speakers: Will Walker & Alorah Colwell, Aramark

Ms. Lightfoot gave a brief overview of her background and the newly created Division of Diversity & Engagement.

A few goals in her new position are:

- To establish and execute diversity, inclusion and engagement goals identified in and inspired by UTC's (pending) strategic plan
- To foster a more inclusive and welcoming campus community
- To advance diversity, equity and inclusion at UTC
- To create and support opportunities so that all students, faculty, staff and leadership are able to thrive, be engaged and feel a sense of belonging.

The new division currently has 7 staff members:

- Stacy Lightfoot, Vice Chancellor
- Rosite Delgado, Director
- Charlene Ragland, Recruitment & Employment Specialist
- Kris Swanson, Compliance Investigator & Inclusion Strategist
- Anitra Barret, Compliance Investigator & Equity Consultant
- Cindy Smith, Administrative Assistant
- Coordinator of Civic Engagement (currently vacant)

First year goals for the new division include:

- To have the campus & community better understand DEI

- Increase the number of students who enroll in the University, especially those from minoritized backgrounds
- Recruitment and retention for faculty, staff & leadership, especially those from minoritized groups in areas where they are underrepresented
- Enhance & inform policies & procedures
- More resources & partnerships to increase engagement opportunities for faculty staff & students.

During her first 90 days, Ms. Lightfoot has spent an average of 35-38 hours per week in meetings, talking to and learning from people on campus. She will now spend time codifying that data to make informed decisions to better be able to serve the campus and community.

Her next steps will include presenting her findings and sharing her recommendations with the ELT, faculty, staff, students & community members. To change the UTC culture in a positive way.

Other Issues

Ms. Rector called for a vote to change the ERC By-Laws to reflect that groups with 70 or more members should have 2 representatives & 2 alternates. The vote was carried 10-0.

There was also a discussion to move the time that the group meets from the afternoon hours to the morning hours to allow for those that leave work earlier to participate. ERC members were asked to think over the proposed new time and further discussions will take place in early 2022.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Thursday, November 18 at 2:00 p.m. with Tom Elis and/or Dany West as our guest speaker.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Michaels
HR/OEI Assistant