MINUTES

Attendance: Liisa Laine, co-chair; Grace Young, co-chair; Sarah Aneyci; Sarah Brown; Geeta Chougule; Dawn Cummings; Laura Dobler; Daisy Ferreira; Tara Greenwood; Marguerite Joutz; Michael Leitao; Derek Lisi; Kristine Newson; Abigail Peterson; Laura Pleasants; Jessica Pontarelli; Jennifer Quiroz; Felicia Raton; Maria Sokolova; Beth Travers; Ray Windsor

Absent: Yi Vizard; Annemarie Kennedy; Barbara Simoneau; Catherine Hanni; Joel Hernandez

1. Acceptance of meeting minutes: April 9, 2019
All present staff members voted in favor of accepting the minutes.

2. Staff Concerns

Other than a comment related to costs of parking passes not increasing in FY ‘20, no concerns were brought to the attention of the Council.

3. Staff Development Day Update

Grace Young - Following up with Staff Development Day (SDD) planning meeting with Communications Program Manager, Angel Hilliard. SDD 2019 is currently scheduled for Tuesday, June 11th. The planning committee acknowledges the feedback received related to last year’s SDD’s programming. In alignment with this year’s theme, “Engage, Discover, and Achieve”, programming will included community engagement opportunities, tours of Brown’s campus, as well as opportunities for senior leaders and staff alumni to interact with current staff. In terms of the day’s structure, HR is interested in pursuing three programming tracks, which will allow for those unable to take large blocks of time away from their desks, the opportunity to take advantage of offered professional development. Kimberly Roskiewicz, Asst. Vice President of Human Resources Operations, noted that emphasis for the day’s programming will focus on participant’s ability to either pick a track to follow for the day, or attend individual information/training sessions.

In response to the survey sent out to staff members last week, GY reports an interest in desserts and raffles during lunch in the Chancellor’s Dining room.
GY asked for three volunteers: Tara, Maria, Abby, and Ray offer their assistance.

GY asks if anyone has any recommendations for SDD speakers. Also referenced a need for staff with talent who may be able to contribute to the programming during lunch. Even though GY is unable to attend the next SDD planning meeting, she will keep SAC updated when speakers are confirmed.

GY will bring question related to dining services and facilities staff accommodations to attend SDD, as they may need to work the event or an alternate shift schedule.

4. Amanda Bailey, Vice President for Human Resources

Q: Why did you choose to come to Brown University?

AB: Was considering Brown and Brown was considering her, and upon learning more about Brown, found that they were as thoughtful in their considerations as she was. Has been in the Human Resources field for 24 years and built a career dedicated to the work (of HR.) Began her career in the private sector, working with two firms. “Fell into” Higher Ed HR working in employment relations. Worked for a region of a university system that comprised seven campus. Moved up the ranks over time and enjoyed the work. Eventually, moved into an area of HR professionals focused on data and metrics driven decisions making, which is not the traditional HR mindset.

As an industry, HR has moved in a direction away from administrative services and more towards looking at data, workforce skills, and handling the power it has as part of an organization. It takes a lot to embrace the kind of change and [Amanda] accepts the responsibility in her position as an advocate of employees, managers and senior leaders. Believes in talent development all the way through to the executive level.

Earned her Masters at University of Rhode Island, previously lived in RI, moved away and came back. Feels very fortunate to come into her role with the University and respects the level of trust it takes to create this new [HR] structure, not just with the UHR team, but its constituents and groups like SAC and the HR Advisory Board.

Q: What were your first impressions of Brown and how has it gone so far?

AB: Held a lot of meetings (91) in the first 80 days in her position to meet as many colleagues and learn as much as possible. Her first impression was realizing Brown is very large with very large operations. What Brown does best is maintain innovation at the forefront of research with top level curriculum delivery (for which Brown is globally known.) This means that everyone in the room has a tougher job. As a support, UHR needs to constantly think about keeping momentum moving. Spent a lot of time thinking about how her UHR could be more of a service to what staff advocates and hiring leaders need. Committed to hearing from all constituents and bring a balanced perspective from HR. Working to consider what they can do and explore questions around what they can’t do to come up with solutions in an effort to make right. Excited and feeling good about bringing her past experience into her current position and begin the shift in perspective in UHR.
Q: You initiated the updated Maternity Leave policy for Brown staff members. So many staff members are happy to see this change. The change was initially brought to your attention by SAC. How did your team work to enact this new policy?

AB: One of the 91 meetings in the first 80 days. Following the meeting, met with team members in HR who were able to present data to support a shift in the policy. The shift was 100% data driven.

Q: What data did you have?

AB: The Wellness team tracked data related to this issue on their own volition, for years, to track trends. They presented the data, excepted [Amanda’s] notes and moved forward to presenting to senior leadership. The process was quick because the data collection was already in place, the decision to move forward was based on data. The team showed initiative and presented easily digestible data. If anything, it was a matter of circumstance and timing that it moved so quickly. If this was a new idea, [Amanda] would ask for more data, which isn’t always easy to track. As with finance, there needs to be a certain amount of time data is collected for, then vetted and certified.

Q: Was HR tracking how many staff members went on leave? Were they looking at retention based on the previous policy?

AB: The data examined how many employees were out in a given year and for how long, the cost to replace the for said time period… Looked at the ways departments paid for covering positions temporarily, rather that working with temporary work agency partner NextSource. UHR saw there were many ways to cover one employee for one leave, and began looking into alternate ways to get the job done. Reducing the eligibility restrictions meant more people would take the time off.

The team looks at forecasting data, figured out assumptions related to time and resources and how to increase them to create a “bubble.” Looked to what peer institutions have in place, establish benchmarks based on industry standards. What came from this research was something more in line with the criteria and guidelines of our peers.

This type of work, data driven decision-making, takes a lot to be seen and perceived. It is daunting, there is greater responsibility in service leadership. UHR hopes that you trust them enough to bring ideas (like revisions to existing policies) forward for discussion and allow UHR to follow up.

GY reminds present council members that a form was set out, asking SAC to provide questions for AB to present on. AB will answer up to three, depending on time. Before questions, KR notifies the group of revised handouts / pages online, made available by the Wellness team.

[AB reads question related to Brown’s consideration of a ‘Sick Leave Bank/Pool’]

UHR is definitely willing to consider this idea, though it would face the same process as the changes to Maternity Leave. Data tracking, vetting, and certification required. While Brown does like to be in line with its peers, just because another institution doesn’t

AB references Brown’s ongoing 403b litigation
[AB reads question related to Employment Action Promotions]

Q: Who can staff reach out to if managers don’t follow up with procedures?

AB: UHR aware there is a class of employees who work past their current job duties. Looking into the existing processes in place to advocate for employees who go beyond their job roles. The Compensation team is looking at those who are working tasks that more than half the time, aren’t covered by the position description. Employees can assist with the process by talking to their supervisor and requesting a job audit. Sometimes, when the Compensation team conducts an audit, they will find there is a need for a different position title or change in compensation.

Feedback on the process indicated that employees weren’t receiving the change in pay or title after a job audit, and that managers claim HR won’t let them make the changes. UHR directors worked together to increase transparency of the process. They redesigned the reports which go to managers to be shared with employees, which lists out position benchmarks and the tasks the Compensation team performs during an audit. [Amanda] encourages employees to bring the results of the audit to the attention of your department/organizations senior leader or HR business manager if direct manager still doesn’t provide information needed.

Q: Should the HR partner reach out to manager directly?

AB: Depends on the HR business partner. As they are independent from UHR, their response is dependent on the culture of their department/division

[Question about changes to a job description per job audit results]

AB: Shouldn’t look to the job audit process hoping UHR will determine the work done by one employee should be done by four. By looking at the work done, the Compensation team may find the need to change a title or level of compensation. Often, changes are made which reflect the standards put in place by the Department of Labor.

Q: What about department budgets? When looking at what other departments are paying, they tend to offer more compensation for the same job titles/roles.

AB: Yes, the changes may be influenced or restricted by a department’s budget. The new forms should assist in eliminating questions around why determinations were made, but ultimately employees are welcome to continue asking questions related to their role, but stressed the importance of how the questions are asked.

[AB addresses restructuring of University Human Resources]

Reaffirmed the rebranding of UHR in the theme of “Engage. Discover. Achieve.” Also touched on the overlap between AB and KR’s roles and the development of new UHR senior leadership team. New Senior Director of Employer Relations to join Brown University in May.

Q: Will you be coming back to address the other questions asked? Will you share the links mentioned earlier?

AB: Links to be provided regarding diversity in hiring, information regarding NexSource, etc. Willing to return upon invitation to address other questions on the list SAC
Q: When going through the job audit, when does HR come into the process and advocate / discuss why determinations are or are not made. The only alternative to improvements should not be for the employee to leave their position.

AB: From her seat, HR has a dual responsibility. most impactful thing is having hr the relationship to coach the supervisor. really make sure they are comfortable with being candid around the results. 90% of why employees don’t get the follow up, they don’t know how to say that HR came back with results the employee may be unhappy with. Managers need to be able to speak about the components of the audit and HR should be able to assist with the communications.

The next SAC meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7 at Watson Institute, Room 353.