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Annual Report, Chancellor's Response 1979 - 1980

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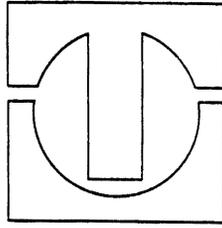


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Office of the Chancellor/The University of Tennessee, Knoxville/527 Andy Holt Tower/Knoxville, Tennessee 37916

December 4, 1980

TO: Members of the UTK Commission for Women
FROM: Jack E. Reese *JER*
RE: Responses to Recommendations of the 1979-80 Commission

Attached are responses to the eighteen recommendations which appear on pages 15-18 of the 1979-80 Annual Report. The numbering of the responses conforms to the numbering of the recommendations.

kkp

attachment

cc w/attachment: Dr. Luke Ebersole
Miss Betsey B. Creekmore
Ms. Thomasenia P. Robinson

1. I believe that we are all agreed that, while the focus of the Women's Center is appropriately students, there is opportunity and responsibility to operate programs in which a broad spectrum of the University community would wish to take part. It is my understanding that both Mr. Scheurer and Ms. Redmond have indicated to the Commission that the sphere of activity of the Women's Center will be broadened and that efforts will be made to involve faculty and staff along with students in Center programming and activities. I hope that members of the Commission will advise Ms. Redmond and Mr. Scheurer about possible activities and will continue to support the Women's Center. After the scope of the Women's Center programming has been broadened, we should probably discuss the role of the Center again. For the present, however, I believe we need to give the Center staff time to effect the changes they have proposed.

2. Dr. Ralph Norman has been asked to take responsibility for examining possibilities for regular, part-time professional employment at UTK in response to both the Commission's recommendations and those received from the Faculty Senate. He intends to make a study during the Winter Quarter, which will include interviews with part-time faculty and staff. His study certainly will take account of the Commission's recommendations from last year, and he would be glad to receive any additional suggestions which members of the Commission may have. We anticipate that his study will be completed during the Spring Quarter. The Commission might want to invite Dr. Norman to a meeting to discuss the study either while it is in progress or at its conclusion. We will look to the Commission for reaction to the study and will welcome the counsel of the Commission.

3. Flex-time scheduling has been adopted by several UTK Departments already, and the official UTK policy statement (copy attached) is in the process of distribution for inclusion in policy manuals. In addition to flex-time scheduling, a flex-year concept has been under consideration and is now a UTK policy (copy attached). This program was begun in September, 1980, and there are currently six employees working on a flex-year basis.

4-A. The combining of positions and redistribution of funds to reclassify or to upgrade salaries of employees who assume additional responsibilities has been undertaken successfully in some UTK units, such as the bookstore and the College of Business Administration. Such action is, of course, not always feasible, and the consequences of such a change need to be examined very carefully prior to making formal or informal commitments to this type of program. The UTK Personnel Office is now prepared to provide consultation to any unit which has a vacancy in the support staff area in order to see whether the work of the unit can be restructured with attendant increases in salary and classification of continuing employees. I have asked Vice Chancellors to inform unit heads in their areas that the Personnel Office should be consulted if there is a possibility that a unit could combine positions, and I believe that a gradual increase in flex-year employment may also help to make funds available within units for upgrading support salaries.

4-B. The personnel policy setting the conditions under which employees may receive increases in pay when they transfer within the University is a University-wide policy. I agree with the Commission that the current policy can serve to penalize transferring employees, in some cases. Ms. Dadisman has requested that this policy be reviewed at the Winter meeting of personnel officers of the entire

University system, and I shall indicate my support for modification of the policies in the direction the Commission has suggested.

4-C. There is no one more committed than I to raising the pay for nonexempt staff to levels competitive with other businesses and agencies in the area. The fifth floor of the Andy Holt Tower, my office included, suffered massive turnover in secretarial and clerical personnel in the year that the 2.5% pay increase was ordered by State government. It is not an abstract, philosophical view, therefore, that I have of the problem.

While our salaries remain noncompetitive in most areas, we have emphasized each year the need to provide greater percentage increases to persons at the lower end of the pay scale. The inflexibility which we have encountered because of guidelines requiring minimum increases which leave very little money to be added because of merit has indeed been troublesome. I too believe that there should be some reward for excellence, rather than rewarding only longevity. We will continue to make this point to THEC and to the Legislature, but to look forward to any significant change in the next year or so would require extreme optimism.

In connection with pay levels of nonexempt staff, it might be of interest to the Commission to know what our plans are for meeting the new Federal minimum wage levels which will become effective in January, 1981. In January, the minimum wage will rise to \$3.35 per hour. Raising the wages of only those employees who are beneath the new minimum and beginning to hire at the new level inevitably erodes differentials in salary which are a result of length of service and/or merit.

The institution does not have enough money to increase the salaries of all non-exempt employees by the same percentage that employees in the lowest-paying jobs will receive by being brought to the \$3.35 per hour rate. We have, however, adopted a plan under which there will be a "ripple" effect for all staff non-exempt employees which we believe will minimize erosion of legitimate pay differentials.

The minimum payment for each grade level will be raised an average of six percent, and the salary of any employee who is not making the new minimum for his or her grade level will be raised to the new starting level. Every nonexempt employee will receive at least a 1.8% salary increase under the plan adopted.

Our plan is not perfect, and some inequities will undoubtedly be magnified. We hope, however, that differentials reflecting merit and longevity can be restored through the regular budgeting process, if guidelines from State government allow.

5. The matter of "credit" or "recognition" for University service is a very complex issue. Service on committees and commissions or informal advising and counseling of students are, for example, important aspects of the collegial governance of the institution and of the educational experience a student has at UTK.

We are aware that expectations of service to the institution have a disproportionate impact upon both women and Blacks, particularly Black and female faculty.

Vice Chancellor Herndon has discussed this with the Deans as a follow-up to Professor Black's meeting with the Deans last year. He also, at the request of the Commission, asked units to indicate the ways in which institutional service is accounted for. It may be that the Commission would want to invite Dr. Herndon to a meeting to discuss responses to his memorandum.

The standards for professional competence and achievement, however, have evolved within disciplines, and we cannot and should not attempt administratively to dictate the criteria for advancement or eminence within disciplines. If expectations for professional activity are to be changed, such changes must emanate from the faculty.

What we can and will do centrally is to continue to stress our belief that institutional service activities are essential to the unique participatory processes by which, in a university, issues are examined and decisions made, as well as educational experience for students enhanced. We will also work harder in trying to see that all persons who are asked and agree to provide service to the institution receive appropriate recognition for their activities and know that their service is appreciated. We would welcome any suggestions the Commission has about how we can emphasize the value of institutional service.

6. As you know, every staff exempt and staff nonexempt employee who leaves UTK must go through a check-out procedure which includes the opportunity for an exit interview or preparation of an exit questionnaire. I understand that members of the Personnel Office staff have discussed with the Commission the follow-up activity they undertake based on comments either in the interviews or on the questionnaires and the summary report which has been devised. Dr. Herndon has been requesting all regular, full-time faculty who leave UTK to fill in a questionnaire, but will institute a check-out procedure for faculty which will afford the opportunity for exit interviews during this year.

The distribution of information suggested by the Commission has been adopted by the Personnel Office and, if there are ways in which data obtained from faculty can be displayed without identifying people, the information can also be distributed as suggested. The information from interviews and questionnaires from both staff and faculty will additionally be summarized in the annual report on affirmative action.

7. We intend that deadlines for decisions on faculty promotion and tenure be honored, and Vice Chancellor Herndon will again stress to the deans the need for assiduously following the procedures established in the faculty handbook and deadlines established by the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

8. In accord with the analysis forwarded to the Commission by Vice Chancellor Ebersole in May of last year (copy attached) we will again run actual and "predicted" salaries of all UTK faculty under two methods. We will utilize one model which employs the AAUP methodology and uses the UTK variables. We will use as a check the straight AAUP model. Since 1973, the salary of every female faculty member and every staff exempt employee has been reviewed by Dr. Ebersole with the appropriate Vice Chancellor who, in turn, asks for a review and recommendation from the appropriate department head and dean. Since 1978 when the Office of

Institutional Research began to provide actual and "predicted" salary comparisons, department heads and deans have been asked specifically to review the salaries of all female faculty which fall below the predicted level and to determine whether the salary represents a professional judgment and is properly placed in comparison with male and female colleagues or whether an adjustment for possible inequity should be made.

We believe that we are following the procedure suggested by the Commission. We will add a regression analysis with a directional hypothesis and one-tailed level of significance test in the data included in the annual salary study which compares male and female faculty salaries. In accord with the analysis forwarded to the Commission by Dr. Ebersole last spring, (copy attached) we believe that it will be necessary to run all regressions separately for full-time and for part-time faculty because of wide variance in the allocation of "percent full time" recorded for part-time faculty.

9. Sexual harrasment, both subtle and overt, is absolutely contrary to the policies of this institution. Any employee who has experienced sexual harrasment should be urged to discuss the incident with either Ms. Robinson or Dr. Ebersole. Students should be urged to discuss any occurrence of sexual harrasment with Dr. Aldmon. We are committed to ensuring that persons who complain of sexual harrasment are not subjected to retaliatory actions, and complaints will be investigated. In cases in which it is found that sexual harrasment has occurred, we will at least take appropriate measures to see that such actions do not reoccur.

10. I believe that the Commission has provided an extremely valuable service by sharing informally with Vice Chancellor Ebersole information about possible problem areas. By alerting us to a perceived potential problem, we can be more sensitive to variations from established procedure and can be more diligent in monitoring all personnel actions.

At the same time, one cannot take any direct action unless an employee who has been the object of sex discrimination is willing to discuss the matter with the Affirmative Action Coordinator and begin the complaint procedure which is spelled out in the Affirmative Action Plan. That procedure has a provision for informal resolution and almost every complaint which has been reported has been able to be resolved satisfactorily without a formal investigation. We really cannot act on anonymous accusations or generalized allegations. To do so would be to invite warlock/witch hunts.

11. We recognize the special problems which older, returning students have as they reenter collegiate study. As you know, the Reentry Committee continues to work toward making adjustments in processes which will make it easier for such students to reenroll and to examine a variety of other possible actions which could be taken on behalf of reentry students. We hope that the Commission will keep itself apprised of the work being done by that Committee and advise it and us if there are areas which should be examined more fully.

The provision of child care for employees and students has been much discussed and much studied. The fact remains that this is an extremely expensive undertaking for which we do not receive funding. We simply cannot afford to operate

child care facilities other than those of the College of Home Economics, which are directly related to the instructional mission of the University. It is our understanding that Dr. White plans changes in operation of the nursery school and day care centers which may help to alleviate some of the problem. We have done some preliminary talking about a proposal under which we would provide the land for building a child care facility which would operate during EXPO and continue to be operated (by persons not associated with the University) after EXPO. The possibility of this coming to pass is tenuous, and, if it were to happen, the advantage to our students and faculty would be in the location of the facility at the edge of the campus. The facility would need at least to be self-supporting.

I don't want to cut off discussion about child care opportunities. I recognize the problem, but I do not see solutions other than the changes which will be implemented by Dr. White's Department.

12. We are committed to full compliance with Title IX regulations regarding funding of women's intercollegiate athletics. We must still determine the long-range source of funding for the women's program and shall try to do so during the present academic year. We cannot continue to meet escalating costs from State funds or from Student Programs and Services Fee collections.

13. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration intends to have the "Annual Report on Affirmative Action" available as soon as possible after receiving data which allows for monitoring of progress towards goals and of promotion/termination/ transfer/new hire activities. The Office of Institutional Research has regularized the scheduled reporting, but because of the need to develop additional tracking programs it is a bit unclear how soon after January 1 the report can be prepared. As soon as the data are available, however, the preparation of the report will be the top priority of the Office.

14. Vice Chancellor Ebersole has requested implementation by the Office of Institutional Research of a system devised by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Planning and Administration which will allow for monitoring of major personnel activities. With the institution of this system, it will be possible statistically to monitor promotions, transfers, new hires, and terminations. The data will be summarized and analyzed in the "Annual Report on Affirmative Action". The system is designed to fulfill the letter and spirit of requirements of "Revised Order 4" as well as in response to the Commission's continuing interest in examination of patterns of professional advancement of women faculty at UTK.

15. With the institution of the new system of monitoring promotions, transfers, and new hires, the Office of Institutional Research will be asked to prepare an annual report. This cannot be started until 1981, because the data will need to be reviewed and the format for regular reports determined.

16. We will make every effort to appoint the chairperson of the Commission for Women for 1981-82 by the end of Winter Quarter, 1981, and to appoint Commission members for 1981-82 in Spring Quarter, 1981.

17. This has been accomplished.

18. The distribution requested is the usual distribution of the CFW "Annual Report" except that copies are also placed on reserve in the UTK library, sent to members of the EEO Committee, the Chairperson of the Commission for Blacks, and Chairperson of the Faculty Senate.

attachments