

UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES

June 17, 2021

Attendees: Phil Phillips, Connie Horton, Danny DeWalt, Donna Nofziger Plank, Greg Ramirez, Hung Le, Lauren Cosentino, Lee Kats, Maretno Agus Harjoto, Matthew Midura, Michael Feltner, Nicolle Taylor, Michael Feltner, Lauren Cosentino, Jim Gash, Jay Brewster, and Gary Hanson

Absent: Rick Marrs and Marc Goodman

I. UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CALL TO ORDER:

Chief Operating Officer Phil Phillips called the University Management Committee meeting to order. The meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, June 17, 2021. Associate Professor of Accounting and Finance of Pepperdine Graziadio Business School Maretno Harjoto opened in prayer.

Chief Operating Officer Phillips requested to amend the meeting agenda to discuss the potential of including Juneteenth as a University holiday.

II. MEETING MINUTES:

Upon the motion duly made and seconded, the University Management Committee minutes of the April 15, 2021, May 12, 2021, May 19, 2021, and May 27, 2021 meetings were approved.

III. UNIVERSITY JUNETEENTH FEDERAL HOLIDAY RECOGNITION:

Chief Operating Officer Phillips explained it was expected that President Joe Biden would execute and immediately recognize Juneteenth as a new federal holiday and sought the Committee's approval to adopt it as a University holiday. The Committee discussed various operational, academic, and pay considerations; agreed that being an early adopter of the holiday was important; and considered various potential observance dates. Alternatives to immediate implementation were assessed to reduce potential operational and academic impacts due to the lack of time available for planning. The Committee agreed departmental supervisors and faculty members would have the autonomy to determine the best course of action for their respective circumstances.

A motion was duly made and seconded to adopt Juneteenth as a paid University holiday immediately and for 2021 only to: 1) provide department supervisors the ability to determine whether giving their staff the day off would work operationally, and 2) leave it to faculty members discretion whether their individual classes would be able to adjust allowing for the day off. The Committee approved the motion.

The Committee requested that Human Resources and Integrated Marketing Communications assess equity issues and draft messaging clearly stating the University's strong encouragement to observe the holiday while maintaining essential University services.

IV. **TELECOMMUTING POLICY:**

Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Business Services Sean Michael Phillips sought approval for an amended telecommuting policy, intending to adjust it such that it appropriately accounts for present and anticipated circumstances and continues to operate for the benefit of the University and its employees. He noted the COVID-19 pandemic spurred an increase in telecommuting requests.

The University's telecommuting policy consists of three components: the policy itself, its procedures, and an accompanying agreement. Associate Vice President Phillips reviewed the proposed amendments to the policy, including that the criteria for telecommuting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis where supervisors will determine whether a given position is conducive to remote work with appropriate supervisor oversight. This amendment removes the reference that telecommuting is a rare circumstance and is assessed based solely on the individual employee.

He then reviewed the five notable proposed changes and clarifications to the telecommuting procedures as follows:

1. Clarify that Pepperdine will provide necessary equipment for telecommuting staff members and that any additional items will require supervisor approval before the additional expense is incurred;
2. Add a note that employees who telecommute two or more days a week may be required to use a shared workspace while working on campus;
3. Implement a requirement for telecommuting employees to use University-owned and managed equipment, except for cell phones, while performing work duties and for all devices, including smartphones, to receive appropriate security updates;
4. Add a requirement for telecommuting employees to notify the University if they plan to work outside of California; and
5. Clarify that the University may modify or terminate telecommuting arrangements at any time unless an employee telecommutes exclusively and does not have a dedicated on-campus workspace.

Further, the agreement that accompanies the policy was retitled as a telecommuting "request" since the policy now requires supervisor, Steering Committee, and Human Resources approval before implementation.

Associate Vice President Phillips reviewed the role and responsibilities of Human Resources to ensure that telecommuting is mutually beneficial for all parties, which includes 1) approving requests, 2) training for telecommuting best practices, 3) facilitating hybrid engagement, 4) providing annual assessment opportunities of the arrangement, 5) conducting annual demographic assessments ensuring equality, and 6) ensuring benefits and pay compliance. In addition, the Committee discussed potential impacts to 1) employee connection with the University's culture and mission, 2) employee performance and potential implications arising from supervisor-required travel to the University for specific purposes, 3) and other logistical and financial considerations brought forward when considering approval of the amendments.

Associate Vice President Phillips advised the goal is to effectuate the policy before the new fiscal year. Messaging to communicate the policy amendments would be included in the return-to-work communications planned to be distributed as the University reopens. A Committee member asked about removing the requirement to use University-owned equipment to reduce potential financial implications; however, security concerns prevent it from being an option, thus instigating a discussion for alternative arrangements. Further, it was recommended that Human Resources work with Information Technology to allow for a rental, or similar arrangement, for telecommuting employees to use University-owned equipment if it is not readily available within their department.

Upon the motion duly made and seconded, the amendments to the University's telecommuting policy and procedures and request forms were approved as presented with the amendment that Human Resources will address technology availability issues through arrangements for rentals or another similar process.

At this time, Associate Vice President Phillips left the meeting.

V. CONTINGENT INTEREST LOAN:

Vice President and Chief Business Officer Nicolle Taylor sought approval for the University's Contingent Interest Loan (CIL) policy. She defined a CIL and reviewed the program's history, emphasizing its importance to recruit and retain key faculty and staff. She reviewed the process for obtaining approval for and reviewing CIL applications along with associated responsibilities for funding departments and the Real Estate Operations office and noted the components of the CIL include the principal loan amount, fixed interest, and contingent interest. She shared key policy terms, the conditions which would trigger the termination of a CIL, and the process of approving a CIL offer. Approvals require written authorization of 1) the Provost or Dean of the requesting School (for faculty) or departmental Steering representative (for staff), and 2) the Chief Financial Officer, or Chief Operating Officer, or President.

Vice President Taylor noted recent policy amendments, especially related to approvals, were put in place to limit exceptions and improve visibility of granted exceptions, the

University's loan portfolio, and the University's outstanding liability in this program. She explained the Committee should anticipate the opportunity to annually review the material changes to the policy and the maximum loan amount.

The Committee discussed the approval process for offering a CIL and how a CIL could be approved in an expedited manner by seeking preauthorization for faculty recruitment purposes, thus addressing the potential need for urgent approvals. Vice President Taylor advised she will meet with the Dean's Council, where the Committee-approved policy will further be discussed.

Upon the motion duly made and seconded, amendments to the University's CIL policy were approved as presented with the amendment that any approval by a Dean would need to occur in conjunction with consultation with the Provost.

VI. PORTABLE AIR CLEANER UNIT POLICY:

Chief Operating Officer Phillips reminded the Committee that the Portable Air Cleaner Policy was presented by Executive Director Carly Mischke at the April 2021 Committee meeting, during which various adjustments were requested. Since then, the agreed-upon suggestions were implemented and the policy was circulated to the Committee for final policy approval. The Committee discussed whether it was appropriate for this policy to include personal mini-refrigerators. After the discussion, it was determined mini-refrigerators would not be addressed in this policy. Upon the motion duly made and seconded, the Portable Air Cleaner Unit Policy was approved as presented.

VII. COVID-19 VACCINE POLICY:

Chief Operating Officer Phillips re-raised the COVID-19 vaccine policy per the Committee's request at the last meeting on May 27, 2021. He emphasized the objective is to ensure a high degree of health and safety while faculty and staff continue to deliver their academic and operational duties with excellence. A policy may be a means to that end. Chief Operating Officer Phillips shared the Division for Fine Arts' circumstances as an example. An indoor, in-person environment is imperative for the division and its students to deliver and receive an optimal experience. He observed that the COVID-19 vaccine mandate may be a tool, but such a policy would not necessarily make a material difference in achieving the objective. This is because there will always be community members with various circumstances preventing them from being vaccinated.

The Committee engaged in a discussion about additional community feedback gathered and a member noted that many faculty members were in favor of implementing the mandate. A lengthy discussion ensued about various topics, including 1) the importance of all views being taken into consideration, 2) concerns about some not getting the vaccine unless it is mandated, 3) research about other organization's positions on vaccination mandates, 4) the urgency of a decision, 5) a mandate's alignment with the University mission, 6) the importance on communicating the proportion of community

vaccination, and 7) potential vaccine incentives. A COVID-19 vaccine subcommittee member raised they will be providing information and guidance on the Committee's direction to those attending the Dean's Council meeting.

The Committee continued to discuss whether to mandate the vaccine. After much deliberation, the Committee summarized its position as follows:

1. The University will develop a message stating it expects community members to be vaccinated upon return to an in-person environment (assuming at least one vaccine enjoys regular FDA approval) unless one secures an exemption;
2. If one is unvaccinated, heightened restrictions, including masking and testing, may apply;
3. Incentives will be implemented to encourage the community to get vaccinated;
4. Concise and clear messaging will include statements regarding each person's responsibility to promote the health and safety of the community and the general public, address misconceptions, and promote the University's objectives;
5. The University will impose a requirement to report one's vaccination status; and
6. The University will communicate the collective vaccination rates of students, faculty, and staff in messaging to the community.

The Committee agreed to postpone voting on the proposed messaging until a draft is circulated. At this time, there was no further discussion.

VIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. Unless otherwise notified, the next meeting will be held on July 15, 2021.