

# UHESA

## Minutes

November 17, 2000

Salt Lake Community College

### **In Attendance:**

SUU - Wes Brinkerhoff, Bill Moody

USU - Jim Reese, Dave Peterson (CEA); Teresa McKnight, Sydney Peterson, Shauna Crane (PEA)

U of U - Jim Cook (President-elect - UHESA), Bill Johnson

Dixie - Ed Rogers

SLCC - Luann Holden, Ron Giles, Lisa Arbon Tagge, Sherri Curtis, Wendy Johanson, Mike Thurman

WSU - Ben Read, Brooke Chase, Tamara Chase, Kay Brown, Jeff Martinez

UVSC - Merrill Oyler

**Guests:** Roger Bailey, Afton Bradshaw, Nancy Lyon, Dave Buhler

Review of Minutes - Changes needed: Barbara Mifflin - is WSU (not CEU); Weber state insurance costs are semi-monthly rather than bimonthly. *Aimee will make appropriate changes and post minutes on the UHESA Web site.*

### **UHESA Business**

August meeting survey - results from the survey taken at the August meeting were reviewed; some of the recommendations have proved useful and will be implemented.

Recognition - Plaques were awarded to Jim Reese and Leila Neilson for past service to UHESA.

Letter to the Governor - Wes reported that we received a rote letter from the Governor's Deputy Commissioner of Education in response to our letter to the Governor.

Amendment to UHESA Constitution - At the August meeting, there was concern that the constitution be written to cover all staff associations. Wendy has written the recommended language to accommodate this change. In by-laws section of the UHESA constitution; a brief version was chosen and voted on, unanimously. The constitution and by-laws will be amended. A grammatical change under Membership I is also needed; it was voted unanimously to make this change as well.

Legislative Analysis Committee - Bill Moody reported that a letter to the legislators will be modified to address newly elected legislators.

## **Institution Reports**

**SLCC -Reorganization:** have a new president as of July; his philosophy is to decentralize. SLCC will be divided into four campuses, each with an administrator, functioning similarly to a provost. People with terminal degrees were allowed to apply for the administrator/provost positions. Each one will be entirely in charge of their own campus. There will probably be job-alike councils across the campuses for coordination of efforts. The President's office will be off-campus and will be mainly in charge of development. The different campuses will be curriculum based. Staff are encouraged by the new President's leadership style. It is uncertain yet how this will affect membership with UHESA. This should be implemented in July.

**Benefits:** SLCC's holidays this year will be 12/24 - 1/4. A sick leave pool is being established; three days per employee per year can be donated to a pool - to be used by people with catastrophic illness needs. A person in the human resources department would determine who gets those days. People who are leaving are encouraged to donate their unused vacation days and up to ten percent of residue sick leave to the pool. There is no connection between donating to the pool and having access to it.

**USU** - has just appointed a new President - Kermit Hall from North Carolina. A medical benefit task force has been established to address a medical benefits funding shortfall. The task force plans to use efforts of staff associations to educate employees of cost-saving efforts.

**Dixie** - nothing new to report

**WSU** - Are looking for unification regarding the proposal addressing benefits and salary.

**U of U** - Employee contributions have increased because of hit to the reserves. Losses were within a four month period. A task force will work to get the cost to employees contribution back to zero. A staff advisory council is focusing on an annual president's staff Award for Excellence. Currently, faculty has a similar award which includes a five thousand dollar increase to their salary base; staff get \$1,000 gift that does not affect base. They will work on an equity issue.

**SUU** - A catastrophic leave bank policy was discussed but they found out the president has a sick leave grant possibility of up to ninety days that would not need to be made up. This eliminates the need for the catastrophic leave bank. The president has never denied a request for this, but it doesn't preclude the possibility, so they're not sure whether or not to pursue the leave bank.

**UVSC** - are looking at clerical staff equity - they currently have seven levels. They also hired a new human resources director. UVSC has formed a consortium to study benefits and it has been considered to combine efforts with SUU, Snow, Dixie and CEU. UVSC would address 40%, SUU 30%, smaller schools filling the remaining 30%. This is still under

discussion.

## **Legislative Training**

### Jim Cook - Building Legislative Relationships

When talking to your legislator:

- make it personal, let them know you are a constituent
- Numbers make a difference
- You need to be informed
- your school's needs may be unique; every school treats legislative relationships differently.

Some areas may have only one or two legislators and 400 phone calls could be a nuisance and accomplish the opposite of what was desired.

- All Utah higher ed schools have some common needs.
- we (UHESA) are the higher education grass roots efforts for today.
- it is possible to access to the legislators by e-mail, as well as access information about specific legislation.

He recommended that we all look at your own Web site to make sure it reflects legislative issues and provides easy access to the information.

### Roger Bailey - political consultant - hired by U of U

Roger introduced himself. He works for a business based out of D.C., but has background in Utah, and was political director of republican party in mid-eighties.

Comments about the current state of national and state politics: we're not very good at voting. The majority is being run by a minority (people who vote).

Higher education problems

- the ivory tower (we're smarter than you), misunderstanding of power.
- we think we're a priority - of 1000 bills in forty-five days - we're not a priority
- inability to show relevance to the legislator or people of Utah.
- perception the legislators have of higher education

Utah is a state that is largely controlled by rural legislators - they have more unity than suburban legislators. This speaks to the perception problem as well - that faculty are overpaid and underworked, and are whiners. There is a need for a proactive approach rather than defensiveness.

University systems are usually inept at the political process, mainly because of its hands-off

approach. Roger feels staff associations can become significant players in the process. There is a need for reward and punish systems for legislator votes. The common issue for groups that are legislatively effective is the reward and punishment factor. Staff associations should be making efforts to have people become politically involved.

Term limits are coming to Utah - we need to be in the forefront of setting up people to run for those positions. It will probably kick in 2004 or 2006. Getting to people you know and are familiar with your concerns to run or run yourself is the most critical component in the process.

Legislators juggle the gain of supporting a group versus the risk. We need to make the risk worth the gain by providing some motivation to vote our way.

Roger cited a survey that was done in thirteen states in the West. The survey showed that the existing perception is that most critical portion of education is elementary schools. People feel their kids should go to college, but they're not sure why. This indicates an awareness need.

Immediate needs (with the goal ultimately being to become players in the political system - to pass bills you want, or to kill bills you don't want):

1. Better define yourself - what are we, why are we relevant? How do we make lives better? This is something administrators can do - establish why higher education is important.
2. Build relationships with administrators - relationships tend to mean more than issues, and legislators vote this way. Don't start it January 5 when other lobbyists are doing it; it needs to be done year-round.
3. Build a political base - get people elected that understand our position and feel higher education is critical.
4. Build a network base - this goes back to relevance. 90% of advertisement is wasted. Neighbor networks are much more effective. People who have contact have credibility.
5. Focus on what is critical - university has not been good at this previously - have to focus on fewer, prioritized issues with a plan for the future.

Roger feels higher education is the sleeping giant in this state - he feels staff and alumni can wake it up.

He recommended two legislative tracks - in tandem. Also, institutions should work together - the stronger we are together, the more effective we'll be. Each institution brings unique strength to the pot.

Question: was involving the students in a rally at the legislature to address salary increases effective:

Answer: Engaging the legislators personally is critical; rallies have a good effect for engaging the group, but does not have much effect on the legislators. Rallies in a legislator's home district would be more effective, around people they know. Alumni and staff are the biggest asset to move things politically; the biggest weakness are faculty and students.

Having the students' parents involved is more important.

Roger recommended some action steps:

- \* See what UPEA is doing - their pact, interviewing legislators, etc. They have developed individual relationships and the association as a group has developed relationships as well.
- \* Deal with republican side of the house where the decisions are made. Friends of education are generally on the democratic side of the house - this is not where the effort should be spent.
- \* Recruit candidates.
- \* Involve alumni; ask them to contact legislators. Give them information to contact legislators with; and work for accuracy.

#### Legislative training efforts

Legislative Training Tour Dates:

Southern Utah Schools

SUU, Dixie, Snow meeting at SUU  
December 4, 12-2 p.m.

Central Utah Schools - at U of U

U of U, SLCC, UVSC, CEU  
December 6, 12-2 p.m.

Northern Utah Schools - at USU

Weber & USU  
December 8, 1-3 p.m.

Having these sessions in December is critical - before everyone else participates during the legislative session.

It is important that people who attend these trainings see the legislative contact at each school. Introduce common issues across the schools, and provide training on how to contact and build relationships. Take the lead on contacting the appropriate legislator and have a Q&A session at the training. Get an association relationship started. It must be positive - and the Q&A session must be controlled.

Possibilities of video-taping the presentation was discussed. ***Jim will check into this.*** ***Videotaping should not supercede the training we have scheduled.*** We could also increase awareness of UHESA web site [www.utah.edu/uhesa/rcard/main.html](http://www.utah.edu/uhesa/rcard/main.html) which gives legislative records. It could be a useful tool for the staff.

### Dave Buhler

Dave is a former legislator who has recently been hired by the Board of Regents as the lobbyist for higher education. He served 1995-1999 in Utah Senate. He spoke about his experiences as legislator and described who contacts who and about what. It is important to take the long view and maintain a continual process. Dave can be contacted at 801-321-7162; [dbuhler@utah.sbr.edu](mailto:dbuhler@utah.sbr.edu) He recommended that we communicate through staff association presidents.

### Nancy Lyon

Nancy represents U of U's perspective and is a former legislator.

Salary equity, libraries, and information technology infrastructure are priorities. She distributed good handout and offered it for use at individual campuses.

When writing a letter to legislators from UHESA, Nancy encouraged that it be less wordy. Follow-up information should be included in the letter (we will be contacting you during the session, and tracking your efforts during the year etc.).

### Afton Bradshaw - current Utah legislator

Afton said she is glad to hear that we are doing some organizing toward legislation issues. She is chair of higher education appropriations committee. She is a friend of higher education, particularly the funding portion.

She emphasized the need for grass roots efforts. She stated we need to have people attend the caucuses – important decisions are made there. Efforts should be made to acquire convention delegates. Take neighbors and kids and be elected as delegate. It is important to involved at that early stage.

A Higher Ed appropriations meeting was held yesterday to address upcoming issues. She is not optimistic about our priorities, but hopes there are good things coming down the pike.

Public education so far has done a better job of lobbying; partly due to their union and lobbying along those efforts – but these are not required to be effective. It is more important for individuals to be personally acquainted with representatives and senators in our area.

### Next Steps - Jim Cook

Jim mentioned that it might be useful for us to become familiar with the bills that go to the floor that affect higher education. We can find the bills and see what they are through the UHESA

Web site at <http://www.utah.edu/uhesa/> Legislative report cards will be linked geographically to senators and their voting records.

Training could include information about the most effective places to lobby and effect change. It was recommended that we utilize alumni to assist in these efforts.

Legislative information is available at <http://www.le.state.ut.us/> We can issues up by bill numbers, subjects, legislators, etc.

### **Leadership Training - Jim Reese**

### **Next Meeting**

The Spring Meeting will be held March 8-9, 2001 and will be hosted by Dixie.

Wes thanked SLCC for hosting this meeting. Jim and Bill were also recognized for their legislative committee efforts.

Please e-mail Wes ([brinkerfof\\_2@suu.edu](mailto:brinkerfof_2@suu.edu)) or Amie ([alauritsen@ceu.edu](mailto:alauritsen@ceu.edu)) and let them know of any agenda items and issues for the Spring meeting.