Financial Policy Task Force

Minutes 5-08-13

1. Make up of Task Force - 10 members representing all campuses and institutes. Members identified themselves. Jonee Lindstrom, Knoxville; Vanasia Parks, Chattanooga; Laura Foltz, Martin; Pam Vaughn and Melanie Burleson, UTHSC; Tim Fawver, Ag; Gail White, IPS; Doug Hawks, Audit; and Ron Maples and Mark Paganelli, UWA. The UTC, UTM and HSC members joined by telephone.
2. Charge – To review and reform all University fiscal policies. Ron stated that he believes this activity needs to be form over substance. If policy happens to look different when we are done, that is fine. The main thing is that we make it better.
3. Review of current policy process - Since June 2009 fiscal policy has resided in the Controller’s office and since that time, we have been sending out revised and new policies. Our group needs to look at the current process and determine if it is working, if not, what needs to be fixed , are the right people reviewing policy, is the review at the correct depth of the organization, is policy being communicated. (A list will be provided at the next meeting of all the policies we have touched in the last four years and perhaps a short description of the change that was made. )
4. The current policy web site was shared with the group and they were asked to review the policies. <https://my.tennessee.edu/portal/page?_pageid=34,140536&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL&p_category=2&p_type=alpha>

There are currently 58 fiscal policies. Are there 3 or 4 policies that are most critical that need to be revised? Are there any policies where we can get a quick win,; perhaps as Mark described on the moving allowance policy? Are there any policies we no longer need? As we review, we will reach out to subject mater experts. We will not review the policies that are subject to the ongoing OMB Grant reform initiative until the final rules are released. Mark and I will share the new policies and revisions that are in the approval pipeline.

1. Feedback from your campus/ institute. What are the policies that affect most of your people and which policies do you get the most complaints and push back about?  Are the complaints legitimate or do folks just not like to follow the rules? Please remember to share with your campus or committee what we do in this group.

6. Any other ideas you have for making policy better. Ideas that were mentioned were; some policies are too long, perhaps they can be shortened or divided; a good search engine for policy; review other schools web sites for “best practices”, Cornell and Minnesota were mentioned; we need to be sure that policy does not contain too much process and leave that for campus procedures; tailor policy to audience ,i.e., policy for PIs or department heads; is the look and feel the best it can be?