

Minutes of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee  
University of Kentucky Board of Trustees  
Friday, June 22, 2018

The Human Resources and University Relations Committee of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees met on Friday, June 22, 2018, at Lewis Honors College.

A. Meeting Opened

Kelly Sullivan Holland, Chair of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee, called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

Chair Holland asked Viki Martorano, Executive Assistant for the Vice President of Human Resources, to call the roll.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the Board of Trustees answered the call of the roll: Kelly Holland, Ben Childress, Angela L. Edwards, Robert Grossman, David V. Hawpe, David Melanson, Sandra R. Shuffett.

Other Board Members present included Jennifer Yue Barber, Lee X. Blonder, Edward Britt Brockman, MD, Cammie DeShields Grant, Elizabeth McCoy, Derrick K. Ramsey, Barbara Young, Claude A. Berry III, James H. Booth, Mark P. Bryant, Michael A. Christian, and Robert D. Vance.

C. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Trustee Shuffett to approve the minutes from the May 1, 2018, Committee meeting. Motion was seconded by Trustee Edwards. Motion carried, minutes approved as written.

D. 2017 UK@Work Engagement Survey Results Overview Follow-Up

Chair Holland introduced and welcomed Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Vice President for Institutional Diversity and Amberlee Fay, Employee Engagement and Work-Life Director for Human Resources.

Amberlee Fay reviewed the 2017 UK@Work Engagement Survey Diversity and Inclusion Overview/Deeper Dive that was requested by Trustee Barber during the May 1, 2018, Board of Trustees meeting. Ms. Fay noted that there was not much variation between the female and male faculty categories, and how each gender category compared with the all faculty category in the 2017 survey. Ms. Fay then compared the 2015 vs. 2017 survey results to highlight the percentage point improvements made since 2015. The increase was noted to be a statistically significant difference.

Dr. Sonja Feist-Price reviewed Race and Ethnicity as it relates to faculty and compared responses and perceptions across different demographics. Dr. Feist-Price noted that while there is still work to be done, significant progress has been made since 2015. The University of Kentucky is committed to continuing the journey for inclusive excellence and to making sustainable changes over time. The Office for Faculty Advancement and the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning are working intentionally throughout the summer to impact the campus community. Dr. Feist-Price spoke with the Board of Trustees about Dr. Damon A. Williams visit with the UK campus community and the focus on Inclusive Excellence versus Diversity and Inclusion. Dr. Feist-Price reiterated the University of Kentucky's commitment to working toward Inclusive Excellence - recognizing that success is dependent on how the University values, engages, and includes the rich diversity of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni constituents.

At the conclusion of her presentation, Dr. Feist-Price asked Committee members for questions and comments. There were no questions or comments.

Chair Holland thanked Dr. Feist-Price for the follow-up information provided to the committee. She then called Tom Harris, Vice President of University Relations, to come forward and introduce the presenter for the University Relations Brand Strategy Project.

Tom Harris explained the need for a new brand strategy for the University of Kentucky, and then introduced Suzanne Oldham from Suzanne Oldham Consulting to present the University Relations Brand Strategy Project.

Ms. Oldham thanked the Committee for the opportunity to speak with them about this Brand Strategy Project. She then provided her educational and business background, as well as her branding experience.

Ms. Oldham started by sharing the challenges and opportunities realized by the project team throughout the process from a brand perspective, as well as the project objectives:

1. To define a unique brand strategy for the University of Kentucky that is relevant and compelling to both internal and external constituents – current and prospective students, staff, faculty, donors, alumni, and patients.
2. To have the brand strategy spring from where UK is today, but to also be aspirational for tomorrow.
3. To have the brand strategy act as a North Star for University messaging.
4. To have the ability to galvanize all University stakeholders behind a unified purpose and promise.

Ms. Oldham then reviewed what a brand is, “Simply put, your brand is your promise to your stakeholders. It tells them what you can expect from your products and services, and it differentiates your offerings from your competition.” She then stated that, “a brand is derived from who you are, who you want to be, and who people perceive you to be.”

The University of Kentucky is in a category that needs a strong brand because of rising costs, a shrinking base, and a ton of competition. Ms. Oldham shared the benefits of a strong brand:

1. Drives choice.
2. Engenders loyalty.
3. Commands a premium price.
4. Builds Trust.
5. Protects against bad Public Relations.

A brand is not a tagline, but it informs a tagline. Ms. Oldham reviewed the example of Apple's brand strategy "Imagination, Design and Innovation" versus its tagline developed from the brand strategy - "Think Different". She reminded the Board of Trustees that today's presentation is about brand strategy, not the tagline.

Ms. Oldham asked the Board of Trustees if there were any questions at this point.

Q. Trustee Blonder asked if Ms. Oldham had any experience in University branding.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that this was her first University branding project. She has worked with many other accounts such as UK HealthCare, restaurants, sporting goods, and retailers, and that the branding process was the same across industries.

Q. Trustee Grossman asked if Ms. Oldham had worked with non-profits.

A: Ms. Oldham confirmed that she had.

Ms. Oldham reviewed the process utilized for this brand strategy.

1. There were more than 90 interviews conducted with current and prospective students, alumni, staff, faculty, Board of Trustees members, and administration.
2. Existing research analysis was conducted to determine the attributes that are important to students when choosing a certain university, in addition to proprietary UK research.
3. An analysis of UK current messaging was completed (how UK is expressing itself in the market).
4. A competitive analysis on how similar sized universities are presenting themselves.

Ms. Oldham then reviewed the Six Key Learnings, derived from her team's research analysis, with the Board of Trustees.

1. UK is a tale of two brands. In a narrow sense, UK is a strong and enabling brand in the Commonwealth. In a broader sense (outside of Kentucky), UK is complacent, traditional, and ordinary.
2. "See Blue" achieved its narrow goals of being the clear #1 choice (87% will consider submitting an application to UK, 43% say it's their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice) of prospective students inside the state of Kentucky. However, outside of Kentucky, "See Blue" has failed to drive preference for the University of Kentucky (7% of students say it's their 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, largely unchanged in the last 12 years).
3. "See Blue" and other related marketing efforts have not driven an understanding of UK on college choice attributes: Quality of Academics, Quality of Faculty, Personal Attention, and Grad Success. On these attributes, UK is rated as "just good".

4. “See Blue”, while intended to be an admissions campaign, has over time become the UK brand and a welcome mat for the University. However, it lacks meaning and relevance and has been overused to dilution.
5. The time is right externally and internally. The UK product house is in order and in great shape. Great time to shine a light.
6. University branding is essential because of the category issues of rising costs, a shrinking base of high school graduates, and a ton of competition. Ms. Oldham highlighted Purdue’s branding as being the STEM institution as an example of branding amongst peer institutions.

Q. Trustee Melanson asked if Ms. Oldham had arrived at this takeaway from those 90 interviews or if was there other data involved.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that all syndicated and UK research done was quantitative, not qualitative.

Ms. Oldham opened the floor for any comments or questions regarding the Six Key Learnings.

Ms. Oldham then reviewed the Seven Brand Imperatives – what the brand strategy must achieve for the University of Kentucky. This new brand strategy must:

1. Change perceptions of a prospective student who believes UK is ordinary, limiting, traditional, and complacent while staying relevant to our raving fans.
2. Motivate perspective students and faculty to choose UK rather than settle for UK.
3. Raise the regional and national profile of UK to match the esteem of UK inside Kentucky.
4. Create a clear understanding of the value and return on investment of a UK education.
5. Provide the lens for a successful, comprehensive campaign.
6. Have the resonance to galvanize all internal UK audiences.
7. While the prospective student is the priority of the new brand strategy, other entities - Athletics and Healthcare will coalesce around the new brand strategy in the future.

Q. Trustee Blonder asked how the new brand strategies involving prospective students will relate to the law, medical, nursing, graduate, professional, and doctorate programs at UK.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that while the quantitative research was focused on undergraduates, when they say perspective they don’t mean only undergraduate students, but all the categories of students at the University of Kentucky. Brand strategy should be relevant to the graduate student as well.

Q. Trustee Young asked how the competing brands within the University will be able to pull all the branding together under one brand strategy, using UK Medical Center and Athletics as examples.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that the branding team worked on developing a unifying strategy that worked for all three entities to live and pivot within a flexible UK brand strategy.

Trustee Melanson commented on his experience with brand analysis for the College of Pharmacy, and the results of the analysis showed that while “See Blue” was effective for undergraduate admissions, it was not successful for Pharmacy.

Q. Trustee Christian asked Ms. Oldham about her experience dealing with entities merging all brands under one umbrella.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that merging brands is a pacing and sequencing process, and how it is important to show how powerful it is to be under one umbrella. She commented on the UK HealthCare Power of Advanced Medicine marketing campaign and how it pulled numerous service lines under one strategy.

Ms. Oldham then spoke about the equities/attributes that are unique for the University of Kentucky and are relevant to the target audience. The interviews showed the special nature of UK. The role of University brands is a significant category in individual identity.

Insights from interviews that led to the brand strategy and promise that is being recommended.

1. Transformation – transitioning from home to away, experiences where passions and skills are stoked and ignited, and a time when tastes and values expand, shift, and gel.
2. Safety and Expansion – UK is perceived as being a safe, nurturing institution that provides opportunities for expansion and to be challenged.
3. Community and Autonomy – acceptance and belonging to the Big Blue Nation, which is reinforced by UK Athletics. Also provides opportunity to “be who you are”. Perceived as a come from behind brand, with grit, and hard work. UK punches above its weight.

Ms. Oldham asked for any questions or comments from the Board of Trustees before continuing to the brand description.

Q. Trustee Edwards asked about the diversity of the group that was interviewed.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that 10-15%, maybe up to 20% provided racial and gender representation.

Q: Trustee Grossman asked if Greek Life was involved since it fosters an intense belonging experience.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that Greek Life was part of the community piece along with extracurricular activities as to how you can always find a place to belong at the University of Kentucky.

Ms. Oldham then shared the brand description, “Grace and Grit”, with the Board of Trustees. She reminded the Committee that this description is not the tagline, but is used to inform the UK Brand Promise – “Achieve More Through Grace and Grit”.

- Achieve More – relevant to what students want from the college and post-secondary experience. Bold and Confident; defines UK’s unique value.
- Grace and Grit – speaks to the culture of the University of Kentucky, and speaks to our unique way of delivering education (rare part) and is authentic to who UK

is today. All good brands spring from authentically who you are, but are aspirational for tomorrow. Emotionally resonant.

Ms. Oldham asked for any questions or comments from the Board of Trustees.

Q. Trustee Blonder asked Ms. Oldham what the definition of grace is for this purpose.

A: Ms. Oldham responded, “a commitment to community, a generosity to our colleagues and peers, self-reliance without selfishness, diversity without divisiveness”.

Q. Trustee Bryant asked Ms. Oldham if this is what University Relations had settled on as brand strategy and Ms. Oldham confirmed that it was. Trustee Bryant then asked if there had been studies on how long it takes to develop a fondness for a brand strategy, after you see something and don't like it.

A: Ms. Oldham reminded Trustee Bryant that “Achieve More Through Grace and Grit” is not a tagline.

Q. Trustee Melanson asked if the UK Brand Promise had been tested on undergrads or prospective undergrads to see if it resonates.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that the Brand Promise had been shown to several people and that it resonated. However, only 5% of projects are tested because consumers react better to executional elements rather than strategy.

Q. Trustee Hawpe asked why grace was listed first in the Brand Promise and grit second.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that the statement flowed better using grace and grit vs. grit and grace.

Q. Trustee Brockman read the definition of grace from the Miriam Webster's Dictionary to the Board of Trustees. “Unmerited divine assistance given to humans for the regeneration or sanctification; a virtue coming from God”. Trustee Brockman asked Ms. Oldham if the religious connotation has come up in discussion.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that it had, but that was why the team had defined grace as what was shared earlier - “a commitment to community, a generosity to our colleagues and peers, self-reliance without selfishness, diversity without divisiveness”.

Q. Trustee Young stated that she sees grace and grit as atmosphere and drive, but wondered where academics fit into this Brand Promise.

A: Ms. Oldham reiterated that she was presenting a summary of this brand strategy, which is a product of academic excellence and inspiring a path forward in order to achieve more through the culture of grace and grit.

Trustee Ramsey stated that outside of Kentucky, the University is known for its sports and a few select programs. Grace and grit is more of a southern thing that speaks to the people of Kentucky. If he was from New York, it would not interest him at all.

Ms. Oldham responded that her team felt that grace and grit are universal truths that stretch beyond the borders of the state because of the persistence and perseverance this statement makes.

Trustee Ramsey reiterated that he would also like to see academics front and center just as Trustee Young had mentioned earlier. People need to know more about the University of Kentucky's athletics and academics.

Trustee McCoy explained that "Achieve More Through Grace and Grit" is not what will be seen but what is the brand promise behind the future tag line.

Chair Holland reminded the Committee that there was five minutes left for the remainder of the presentation.

Trustee Hawpe complemented Ms. Oldham and her team on the brand promise and commented on the tension between grit and grace and the fact that the University of Kentucky does both.

Trustee Grossman commented on how grace and grit encapsulates how he works with his students and colleagues.

Q. Trustee Melanson asked Ms. Oldham about the next steps in the process.

A: Ms. Oldham responded that once the brand policy is approved, the brand will be executed first internally and then work will begin with agency partners to create the tagline. It will be used in materials for prospective students and alumni.

Trustee Vance commented that he liked the word grit and the definition from Google – "courage and resolve, strength of character."

President Capilouto thanked Ms. Oldham for her work on this project and spoke about why this brand policy will resonate with the elected officials and donors. President Capilouto referred to publications that reference higher education as being a place that coddles students and raises snowflakes who are ill-prepared for the real world. He then commented that in his experience, those who face challenges at the University of Kentucky pick themselves back up and make it, and to be able to tell that story under a unified umbrella is important. Grace and Grit is viewed to have a yin and yang to it, and then referred to an article in the New York Times by David Brooks about comparative virtues (competitive vs. cooperative). President Capilouto closed with a statement that the University of Kentucky, working with faculty, staff, and students, can more fully evolve to message this.

Chair Holland commented that she sees both grace and grit at the University of Kentucky, and thanked President Capilouto for sharing his thoughts with the committee. She called for other Committee business.

Motion was made by Trustee Shuffett to adjourn and seconded by Trustee Melanson.

Meeting adjourned at 9:31 AM.