The mission: "The Office of Human Resources [OHR] strategically leads and partners with our community to provide the diverse workforce and organizational capabilities that drive excellence in the University." The key words are "strategically" and "diverse," Vice President Brown said. With respect to the former, HR has been seen as functional, getting paychecks out and the like; the idea is that HR will work with campuses and colleges on their HR needs, what they need to do to achieve them, and planning for doing so. Diversity and inclusion are key concepts, also driven by changes in the demographics of both employees and students.

They chose five words to identify the values, Vice President Brown related: "Integrity, Service, Innovation, Collaboration, Responsibility." Integrity in all aspects and when working with employment information; service to support the mission; innovation, which is necessary to improve services, accommodate changes in technology and different expectations of the younger members of the workforce (the Millenials); collaboration by partnering with everyone, especially the Board of Regents, the President and administration, and employees: and responsibility to empower thoughtful and accountable decisions.

The vision is to "create the diverse workplace of the future where people are engaged, connected, thriving, and achieving." The literature on the workplace of the future suggests that it will be more diverse and that it will not consist of people who all spend time in their work space every day. People will be on mobiles more (and similar technology), and with flexible workspace. Research shows that employees, who are more engaged and connected, achieve more.

Strategic directions for OHR are fourfold: Define the role of OHR, Simplify the processes, Empower people to lead, manage, and do their work, and to Deliver on key processes such as job classifications, payroll, benefits, labor relations, etc.

To define the role of OHR means to re-imagine the OHR portfolio of services defining HR systems, and clarifying roles, responsibilities, and priorities of central OHR in relation to campus/college/unit HR. There are core business functions that must be done at the central level, such as benefits, Vice President Brown said, but everyone is hired at the local level, not by OHR, so they need to support what units must do at the local level. It will help to have discussions about what is local, what is central, and how they can support each other. Defining the role of OHR also means improving HR professional skills at the central, campus/college/unit level and providing thought leadership and encourage best practices in HR systems and service delivery for the University.

Professor Cramer said that he has been at the University for 20 years and has not ever interacted with an HR person in his college. What is an example of a local decision? Vice President Brown pointed out that all faculty members are recruited and hired at the local level. If one is in a department with support staff, someone is evaluating them and he could be asked to participate in the review. He is perhaps supervising employees and students, Vice President Brown said; it is the process of selecting and managing people that is at the heart of employment—managing and assigning work. "So we are all HR," Professor Cramer commented. Vice President Brown agreed and said the way people feel about their work is perhaps 90% due to local elements, not the central OHR.

Professor Luepker commented on the relationship between Vice President Brown's office and that of the units. The local HR staff report to the local chair or dean, not OHR, which leads to different practices in units. Vice President Brown agreed and said that is why discussions are important and why

OHR should establish a set of fundamentals about fair treatment, equity, legal issues, and standards the University believes appropriate to help create a University "brand" of employment. The role of central OHR is to provide a template, policies, and support so that local HR staff can act with confidence and clarity.

Professor Luepker asked about the perception that people receive different salaries in similar positions. The University has a central job-classification system with jobs with market-based pay ranges, Vice President Brown observed, not a system for each unit. Sometimes, however, colleges with more resources may pay at the higher end of the range and the colleges with fewer resources at the lower end, and colleges may hire at a higher level in order to pay the salary necessary to recruit the kind of people it wants.

Professor Bearinger inquired who is responsible for hiring faculty and abiding by University policies. That occurs primarily at the local and college level, Vice President Brown said. Some colleges have a strong HR capacity and some do not, so there has been some variability in practice. This needs discussion because there are things that central OHR can do to help. The appointing authority, supported by the local human resources staff, is responsible for compliance with policies and ensuring that a search is conducted correctly. The appointing authority would be the department chair and dean, Professor Luepker observed. Vice President Brown concurred and added that she is not certain that every appointing authority at the University understands the rules. She agreed with Professor Bearinger that the HR staff should help interpret policies, identify needs and special issues, and then provide support in the hiring process.

Professor Ben-Ner said it would help to delineate the scope of responsibilities of central OHR versus the Provost and what being a partner means. This Committee is concerned mostly with academic appointments and sees OHR as more involved with compliance, not strategy. There is nothing controversial but many have questions about what OHR strategy means for faculty appointments and promotion, matters that have been traditionally the domain of academic affairs officers. The discussion today is at a high level, Vice President Brown said, and the questions he raises fall under the concept of defining OHR. She agreed that OHR and the Provost's office must work together. In hiring, the policies are HR policies, but the decision on hiring is made by the appointing authority in the academic department and/or college. Once a faculty member is hired the management of promotion and tenure is through the academic department, college and the Provost's office. Concurrently, benefits are administered through OHR; the compensation plan historically is determined jointly by OHR and the Provost. Sabbaticals are through the academic unit, with support from HR. The Center for Teaching and Learning reports to central OHR; her office also offers other professional-development programs jointly with the Provost, such as that for new chairs and the CIC academic leadership program. It is neither one nor the other exclusively, which is why defining the relationship between the two offices is important, to ensure that everything gets done and that there is not unnecessary overlap.

Have she and the Provost identified domains where there needs to be more or less cooperation or where there is overlap, Professor Ben-Ner asked? With the transition to the new provost, she is waiting to talk with Provost Hanson, Vice President Brown said, and has let her know that there are issues that need discussion. She has had conversations with Vice Provost Carney. It is not a problem to make a presentation to the Board of Regents in February, she added, because the questions that have been raised her are more a matter of implementation.

Professor Chomsky said that there needs to be clarification between the provost, Human Resources, and the Office of Equity and Diversity. Given Vice President Brown's emphasis on diversity, that point should be highlighted. Vice President Brown agreed.

Professor Brothen noted that appointments are subject to the approval of the Board of Regents; are there intermediate steps in the process? Vice President Brown explained that the Board of Regents has delegated responsibilities to the President and others but has retained the authority to appoint the president and other senior officers; others have been delegated appointment authority and there is a file of delegations that have been made. The president delegates authority to the provost and the provost delegates authority to the deans. The same is true in University Services and other vice-presidential areas. The final authority for appointments varies with the area. But the Board of Regents still controls the award of tenure, Professor Brothen said. Vice President Brown agreed.

Professor Bitterman asked "who owns equity?" The dean hires a person and sets the salary, and the data are clear that subsequent salary will be driven by the starting salary. Does anyone look at salaries? Some could be higher, some lower, and there could be systematic biases in appointments. Who helps the dean know that salaries could be higher or lower? The dean is delegated hiring authority, Vice President Brown said, and they set salaries. One would hope they would do so with principles of equity in mind. The University is completing a gender-equity study of faculty salaries, ultimately driven by the provost's office in response to questions raised by the faculty. The provost is responsible for the academic side of the house and undertook the study. If someone believes he or she should be paid more, the issue should be taken up with the dean.

Professor Bitterman said he was asking if there is a way to avoid the problem if it could happen subliminally; is there a way to calibrate salaries? There is no band for faculty salaries, Vice President Brown responded.

Professor Cramer reported that the steering committee for the salary-equity study talked about the issue Professor Bitterman raised. They agreed that there should be an independent and periodic equity check across the board. He noted that Vice President Brown has indicated that OHR can help with the data, practices, and policies, but they are not second-guessing the appointments or acting as police. Vice President Brown agreed and observed that OHR does not make decisions about faculty salaries.

Vice President Brown returned to the four strategic directions (define, simplify, empower, and deliver) and explained that "simplify" means simplifying HR policies and administrative procedures and streamlining HR processes and management.

"Empower" means

-- Increase capacity and accountability of leadership and management
  – Anticipate and prepare for the diverse workforce of the future
  – Provide best practice methodologies for problem solving, change management, and risk assessment
  – Support leading more from shared principles and less from rules (this ties to simplifying, Vice President Brown explained; they do not want to be the "HR police," they want people to act on principles of fairness and equity and with good judgment.)

– Provide access to improved HR data that is accurate, relevant, and appropriate for planning, decision making and required reporting

-- Provide the tools and resources that empower employees, within the constraints of job requirements, to optimize their employment experience providing the services they need, when and how they need them

-- Support a culture in HR of being mission driven, business oriented, proactive, responsive and responsible

"Deliver" entails:

-- Operational excellence and quality assurance in core HR business functions; HRMS (the enterprise system), payroll, job classifications, compensation and benefits, labor relations (e.g., every unit cannot negotiate labor contracts)

-- Talent Management (that is, how to hire and engage people)--improved processes that support:

– The hire of diverse, qualified people in a timely way
– Employee engagement with the University
– Employee development and progression throughout their University career

-- Strategic organizational development advice and practice (if units are thinking about reorganization or redesign, OHR can help).

Vice President Brown explained that the next steps include continued consultation on, and refining of, the strategic directions; starting with "define" and "simplify," beginning to build out strategies and tactics that support each direction; and align HR work and structure so that everyone is going forward in a synergistic fashion.

If a group of people in a unit feel they are being treated inequitably, how do they address the problem or who do they go to so they are not endangered or face more discrimination, Professor McCulloch asked? There are laws against retaliation and that is something she feels strongly about, Vice President Brown said. Do people feel that, Professor McCulloch asked? It varies, Ms. Brown said, and the University must be sure that people feel free to raise questions. She said she is not naïve; she knows that some people may be in situations where they do not feel free to do so. In substance, if anyone or a group of faculty members has a problem, they should go to the chair or the dean, and then the provost. Professor McCulloch said she was thinking more about people who may feel less empowered than the faculty. There are processes for grievances for all employees, Vice President Brown said, and the Office for Conflict Resolution for addressing problems. There are avenues to bring a problem forward.

Professor Cramer said he has come to realize that "HR" is a series of practices, a framework, not central OHR in Morrill Hall, and considerable care should be exercised in oral and written communication to distinguish the two. In terms of interaction with HR, one deals with it at the point of hire, in orientation, and presumably one receives information then about recourse for problems. He said he suspects that many forget that there is a central OHR and many see only the department HR staff; is there a way to get reoriented on a periodic basis? The local HR staff should be able to help an employee with problems and identify a course of action, Vice President Brown said. Anyone can go to the OHR website to learn the policies and the recourse available, and they can go to the Office for Conflict Resolution. Unionized employees have stewards and business agents.

Professor Hayes said that she understands that there are processes in place but her impression, from talking with people across the University, is that processes exist but they do not work as they should. Sometimes faculty members have gone to their department head with a problem but have not seen a solution and HR staff have not been able provide solutions either. Maybe the faculty member does not deserve a higher salary, or maybe they do, but those with concerns do not feel the current process is working. Just having processes in place is not enough. The next step in the gender-equity study is to look at the processes, Vice President Brown said. OHR is not in a position to adjust salaries but it can help with the processes for evaluating them. This goes back to "define": OHR should work with the provost's office to develop a process that is effective in identifying problems.

Professor Chomsky referred to the next steps that Vice President Brown had mentioned, building out strategies and tactics. These are very general, she said; what is the process to build out the strategies and tactics? Most of the work will be done in HR, Ms. Brown said; she will appoint an advisory group to reflect on priorities and what the University needs. There will be a faculty representative on the group.

Professor Pacala asked what major performance measures Vice President Brown will use to be sure they are reaching their goals. Those have not been established, Ms. Brown said; once they have strategies and tactics they can act on, they will build metrics. What is the timetable, Professor Pacala asked? This spring, Ms. Brown said.

Professor Bearinger recalled that Vice President Brown had said, vis-à-vis the gender-equity study, that individuals could come forward to ask for a review. This Committee, however, has talked about a mechanism so that individuals need not do that. In terms of integrity and University needs, there has been drift at the unit level from uniformity in enacting policies; she said it should be a high priority to ensure uniformity in implanting policies. If the HR person in a college is hired by and reports to the dean, that can create a conflict of interest: Can the HR person tell the dean that he or she is not enforcing the policies? That may be the reason there is a lack of uniformity in implementation.

Professor Cramer followed up by asking Vice President Brown about the relationship between her office and that of the University auditor in enforcing policies. Ms. Brown said there was a payroll audit this fall. Much of HR is carried out at the local level, but her office needs to be sure it has oversight and that things are being done the way they should be. She said Professor Bearinger's point was well taken: There should be monitoring to be sure that units are adhering to policies.

Professor Cramer thanked Vice President Brown for her report and said there will be additional conversations with the Committee in the future.

2.   Discussion with Members of the Academic Health Center Faculty Consultative Committee

Professor Cramer welcomed Professors Gross, Lytle, Patterson, Olin, and Weckwerth to the meeting to discuss issues of concern to the Academic Health Center Faculty Consultative Committee (AHC FCC). Discussion focused on recent Minnesota Daily stories covering events in the School of Dentistry, AHC Departmental 7.12 statements, and decanal reviews of AHC deans. The Committee and AHC FCC members also discussed a possible topic for the upcoming AHC Forum.

Upon completion of the discussion, the Committee agreed that FCC leadership should discuss with senior University leaders some of the issues raised. The Committee also agreed to request additional

information about the decanal review process, noting that the incoming Provost may wish to make changes upon her arrival.

Professor Cramer thanked the members of the AHC FCC for joining the meeting and expressing views candidly. He adjourned the meeting at 2:15.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota