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of NORTH CAROLINA
at CHAPEL HILL

Higher Education Landscape: Workforce of the Future

Presented by:

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Topics

- Where we were (pandemic trends and challenges)
- Where we are (current trends and challenges)
- New tools and initiatives coming from the UNC System Office
- Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint
- Questions / Discussion

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Where We Were

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Where we were (pandemic trends and challenges)

- February 2020: Initial stages of the pandemic begin
- By December 2020: Estimated 473,000 fewer workers employed in higher ed when compared to 8 months earlier (nearly a 10% reduction that erased nearly a decade of job gains)*
- Statewide pause on non-essential personnel actions (e.g., position establishments, reclassifications, hiring, salary adjustments, etc.)

Where we were (pandemic trends and challenges)

- Impacts across the UNC System:
 - Faculty and staff burnout
 - Negative impact on overall mental health of faculty and staff
 - Significant increase in the number of requests for family medical leave and disability
 - New demands on managers and supervisors in overseeing remote work teams

Where we were (pandemic trends and challenges)

- Impacts across the UNC System (con't):
 - Negative impact on level of services provided
 - Supply chain disruptions
 - Record turnover:
 - Staff leaving for higher paying jobs offering more flexibility (remote / hybrid work)
 - Staff leaving their professions for other opportunities (e.g., career change, further education, changing family priorities, etc.)
 - Increase in retirements (loss of institutional knowledge and expertise)

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Where We Are

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Where we are (current trends and challenges)

- First 6 months of 2021: Higher ed workforce recovered 330,500 (70%) jobs*
- Next 14 months (July 2021 – Sept. 2022): Higher ed workforce recovered the remaining 30% job deficit (142,500 jobs)
- Historically low unemployment**:
 - Feb. 2023: 3.4% - lowest since 1968
 - Current national unemployment rate: 3.7%
 - Current rate in North Carolina: 3.4% (lowest ever was 3.1% in March 1999)
- Inflation, while on the decline compared to 2022, remains high

Where we are (current trends and challenges)

- Impacts to the UNC System:
 - Turnover continues: Staff turnover rate across the UNC System as of Feb. 2023 was 17.6% (retirements and voluntary resignations)
 - Highly competitive job market resulting in challenges with attracting and retaining top talent
 - Applicants and employees shifting from requesting flexibility to expecting it related to remote and hybrid work arrangements
 - Continual increase in demand for mental health services and support and wellness programming for employees

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New Tools and Initiatives

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New tools and Initiatives from the UNC System Office

- Sign-on and retention bonus programs for SHRA and EHRA employees
- Incentive bonus program for EHRA employees
- UNC System Office assuming authority for the creation and maintenance of salary ranges for EHRA and SHRA positions
- Legislation allowing for FLSA exempt SHRA positions to convert to EHRA (currently awaiting the Governor's signature)
- Implementation of a Labor Market Adjustment Reserve

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Impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

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Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

- Goal 1: Transformative Management,
 - Strategy 1:1: Prepare students, faculty, and staff to lead in areas of critical need.
- Key considerations:
 - Growing need for professional and leadership development programs will require investment in training and organizational development teams.
 - Must have the ability to track, measure, and report on professional development (Learning Management System).
 - What initiatives are needed to foster career advancement for staff?

Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

- Goal 2: Leadership and Innovation
 - Strategy 2.3: Recruit, retain and develop highly skilled, visionary faculty and staff to prepare students for impact through experiential learning, solution-focused research, creative endeavors and community engagement.
- Goal 3: Performance Excellence
 - Strategy 3.4: Attract, recruit, develop and retain an elite workforce through continuation of initiatives to facilitate excellence.
- Key considerations:
 - Expertise will be needed in recruitment and hiring, compensation and organizational design, and talent development (invest in HR!).
 - Where will there be critical skill gaps and how can they be filled (e.g., develop and promote existing talent, recruit externally, etc.)?.
 - Center staff and faculty compensation as part of the university-wide budget planning process.

Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

- Goal 3: Performance Excellence
 - Strategy 3.5: Foster a climate that promotes a culture of well-being, to include mental, emotional and physical health.
 - Strategy 3.6: Institutionalize a culture of excellence through The Aggie Experience (<https://www.ncat.edu/news/2023/05/aggie-experience.php>).
- Key considerations
 - Investment in wellness programming and mental health resources.
 - Investment in professional development programming that fosters a performance culture vs. offering training as a one-off solution.
 - Accountability for job performance and personal conduct.

Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

- Goal 4: Collaborative and Inclusive Culture
 - Strategy 4.3: Build a workplace culture that advances and supports the development of students, faculty and staff through diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) initiatives.
 - Strategy 4.5: Create an environment in which innovation is valued and “failing forward” is seen as a potential step toward success.
- Key considerations
 - How will the current and future legislative landscape impact the University’s ability to recruit and retain DEIB professionals?
 - Investment in management and supervisory skill and leadership development programs.
 - Leadership accountability – how are our managers and supervisors doing?

Potential impacts on Preeminence 2030: North Carolina A&T Blueprint

- Goal 5: Responsive Scholarship and Impact
 - Strategy 5.2: Foster innovative educational modalities that advance knowledge, teaching, training and workforce development.
- Key considerations
 - Needs assessment of the different campus employee populations and how they prefer to consume training content.
 - Ability to deliver professional development content in a variety of mediums (e.g., resource guides, real-time access, online and in-person training, etc.).
 - Staff shifting focus towards career growth and advancement
 - Many formal avenues exist for faculty mentorship – what about staff?

Questions / Discussion

Sources

* Higher Ed's Work Force Has Returned to Its Pre-Pandemic Size, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/higher-eds-work-force-has-returned-to-its-pre-pandemic-size>

** Bureau of Labor Statistics: <https://www.bls.gov/web/laus/lauhsthl.htm>



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