



May 16, 2022

Dear President Jacobs and OHSU Board of Directors:

This is the third monthly report from the co-chairs of the Oversight Committee about the shared work now underway responding to the Covington Report. A monthly report is called for by our committee charter.

This month, the first collaborative undertaking between the two committees regarding a Covington recommendation—the position description for the new Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Chief People Officer—reached a mutually satisfactory conclusion and the national search was launched.

This was a very successful outcome of the work between the two committees. Further, the process to develop the position description offered the opportunity to pilot and refine a trauma-informed systems change model. Because of this foundational work, the Oversight and Implementation committees are better positioned to collaboratively develop specific plans targeted to meet the remaining recommendations.

In this report, we provide detail on this and several other items, including a summation of the progress of both committees and what we have requested and anticipate in the coming months.

We are encouraged and optimistic about the collective efforts to respond to the recommendations outlined in the Covington Report. We continue to be grateful for the robust engagement and thoughtful feedback that members of the Oversight Committee consistently provide to this process. Together, with the Implementation Committee membership, co-chairs and others across OHSU, we remain steadfast in our commitment to helping transform OHSU for the better.

All our very best,

Alisha Moreland-Capuia, M.D.
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Oversight Committee Monthly Report

Report #3 covering: April 2022

Submitted by: Alisha Moreland-Capuia, M.D., and Michael Alexander, M.S.S.

1. HIGHLIGHTS

The Covington Oversight Committee held its third meeting on April 14. During the meeting, Co-chair Dr. Moreland-Capuia presented a mini-lecture about trauma-informed systems change in which definitions and examples regarding *vicarious trauma*, a phenomenon often experienced by people involved in health and other helping professions, were presented. During the meeting, committee members considered edits to the position description for the executive vice president overseeing human resources, a high-priority Covington recommendation. After the Oversight Committee completed its feedback on the EVP position description, the nationwide search was launched, as announced by President Jacobs in an all-OHSU message on April 29. The process to meet this EVP recommendation helped to establish the trauma-informed approach that is now being employed to develop specific proposals for the remaining recommendations. During April, the Oversight Committee also reviewed and considered changes to its founding charter. Committee co-chairs presented an update to the OHSU Board of Directors at its April 22 public meeting. A video of the presentation was posted to both the OHSU intranet (O2) Covington response website and to the OHSU public-facing website. Looking ahead to May, the expectation is that the Oversight Committee will offer feedback on two or more proposals under development by the Implementation Committee to meet Covington recommendations.

2. ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

The activity of the Oversight Committee this month focused on five areas, listed here and discussed below:

- The third meeting of the Oversight Committee
- Trauma-informed systems change training (vicarious trauma)
- The executive vice president for human resources recruitment
- The review of the Oversight Committee Charter
- The co-chairs presentation to the OHSU Board of Directors

The third meeting of the Oversight Committee. The full Oversight Committee met virtually on April 14, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Thirty-two of the 36 members were present. The agenda and supporting materials were sent to committee members on April 4, in keeping with the co-chairs commitment to provide these items to the committee no less than ten days before each meeting.

Dr. Moreland-Capuia opened the meeting asking the group to reflect on a quotation from Dr. Maya Angelou: “Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” Co-chair Alexander then reiterated the meeting community standards, which was followed by the second presentation to the committee (the mini-lecture for trauma-informed systems change) on the topic of “vicarious trauma” by Dr. Moreland-Capuia. More information on this is provided below.

Following the mini-lecture, the co-chairs provided the group with an update on the revisions of the position description for the executive vice president overseeing human resources. This second phase of revisions had occurred in between meetings so this was an opportunity for in-person commentary. The position was formally titled the Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Chief People Officer. Committee members had some additional questions and suggested edits, which were subsequently shared with the Implementation Committee. Committee members then broke into nine groups to discuss the charter. This agenda item was in response to prior feedback from members related to the issue of how accountability is defined in the charter. More information on both the status of work related to the EVP position description and the charter review is provided below.

The meeting concluded with an accolade to Jennifer Gossett, who has represented the Ability Resource Group, and will be transitioning off the Oversight Committee. Holden Sanders has been identified by the Ability Resource Group to represent its voice on the committee going forward.

Trauma-informed systems change training. As noted in February’s committee report, to help establish a common baseline of knowledge and vocabulary about this topic, Dr. Moreland-Capuia will spend about 10 minutes at each full Oversight Committee meeting providing a mini-lecture on key facets of trauma-informed systems change principles.

On April 14, Dr. Moreland-Capuia presented the second of these mini-lectures: *A Pithy Introduction to Vicarious Trauma*.

Vicarious trauma is exposure to the suffering/trauma of others through seeing, hearing, reading about and/or responding to traumatic events. Vicarious trauma is often experienced by people in helping professions or who work in public-facing positions. This sometimes manifests as “compassion fatigue.” In turn, this can show up in individuals in variety of physical and emotional ways. Dr. Moreland-Capuia described how a trauma-informed organization provides individuals dealing with vicarious trauma with tools and space to focus on their own wellness. Vicarious trauma can also show up collectively at an organizational level. Like people, organizations (a collection of people) can and deserve to heal, and trauma-informed leaders exhibit the ability to act with humility and establish the conditions that support healing. Dr. Moreland-Capuia noted that the OHSU President and University Cabinet have received trauma-informed training and that the OHSU Board of Directors will participate in this training in June.

The slides from this mini-lecture about vicarious trauma were subsequently posted on the Covington response webpage on OHSU's intranet (O2), along with other resources for OHSU members to learn about trauma-informed systems change. Committee members were encouraged to share this information with the cohorts they represent.

The executive vice president for human resources recruitment. The first phase of the bi-directional process between the Oversight and Implementation committees regarding the development of a position description for the new Executive Vice President for Human Resources and Chief People Officer was completed in April. Subsequently, President Danny Jacobs, in an all-OHSU message distributed on April 29, formally announced the launch of the nationwide search, using the opportunity to describe the two-committee process to OHSU members:

“The collaboration between the two committees, intentionally working past traditional academic hierarchical thinking and across historically separate entities, used a diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging ‘lens’ to review and revise the EVP for Human Resources and Chief People Officer’s job description. This illustrates how a trauma-informed systems change model can be brought to life.

This level of involvement and oversight, I believe, is a first for OHSU. More importantly, however, I believe the job description and expectations for this position now more accurately reflect the voices of all our members. As a result, the probability of finding the right person is substantially increased and recruiting that person will, in turn, facilitate additional improvements and enhancements at our university.

Now, after working to develop this process, every proposal generated by the Implementation Committee and reviewed by the Oversight Committee will be considered using the same trauma-informed, collaborative model.”

While the two-committee work to develop the position description is complete, the role of the Oversight Committee in this recruitment continues. In April, committee members were invited to meet virtually with representatives from the Furst Group, the recruiting firm conducting this nationwide search on behalf of OHSU. During these meetings, committee members had the opportunity to learn more about the search process and to offer individual observations and insights into the institutional context and related topics. Several Oversight Committee members commented that they found their meetings with the Furst Group valuable.

The review of the Oversight Committee Charter. During the April 14 meeting, committee members broke into nine groups to review the committee’s original charter. This agenda item was in response to prior feedback from members requesting to review the charter relative to how it articulated responsibilities regarding institutional and committee accountability. The members were asked to consider the following prompt in their small group sessions: *What does accountability look and feel like? How should it be represented in the Oversight Committee charter?*

The committee members met in small groups for 30 minutes, after which they reconvened to share feedback. Common themes emerging from these group discussions about accountability in the charter were that it should: 1) provide a formal means to share information about how the Implementation Committee overall is conducting its work; 2) provide greater clarity on how recommendations are prioritized for action by the Implementation Committee; 3) articulate the methods by which the six-month review of both committees will be carried out; 4) define the “end-point” of the committee work; and, 5) articulate more fully the responsibilities of the co-chairs of both committees.

Cutting across these themes was also the topic of the pacing of the work within the Implementation Committee, a sentiment captured by one committee member with the comment that there was a readiness to take on the “heavy lift” and to move more quickly. Given the time constraints of the full committee meeting, Dr. Moreland-Capua and Mr. Alexander addressed this in a follow-up email message to the Oversight Committee members. The message focused on the need to “honor the process,” reaffirming that the “how” of OHSU’s transformation is an important element of becoming a trauma-informed, culturally responsive organization, noting the need for time *and* practice.

The full feedback from the review of the committee charter was captured and shared with the co-chairs of the Implementation Committee for their input. The next step is that the Oversight Committee co-chairs will integrate all the feedback and make suggestions on responsive updates to the charter, which will be discussed at the May 12 meeting.

In the interim, going forward, to meet Oversight Committee members’ interest in more direct input from and insight into the Implementation Committee, an arrangement for one or both co-chairs of the Implementation Committee to attend part of the Oversight Committee meetings henceforth has been formalized.

The co-chairs presentation to the OHSU Board of Directors. The co-chairs of both the Implementation Committee and Oversight Committee presented an update to the OHSU Board of Directors regarding the work responding to the Covington Report recommendations. These two presentations were made on April 22 as part of the Board’s regularly scheduled public meeting. Members of OHSU, the public and the media were invited to attend.

Oversight Committee co-chairs describe the principles underlying trauma-informed systems change and the process by which these principles are being operationalized in the work responding to the Covington recommendations. The co-chairs provided background on the Oversight Committee members broadly, noting that collectively they have both “seen a lot and expect a lot” from OHSU and this process. They shared that the early days of the work has been focused on supporting the co-creation of a safe and unrestrictive environment for the group. The co-constructed community agreements for meetings were reviewed for Board members, along with a summary of the communications infrastructure and an overview of next steps. A recording of both Board presentations has been posted to OHSU’s intranet (O2) and the public-facing websites. A summary of the Implementation Committee co-chairs’ presentation to

the Board of Directors is provided in that monthly report for April.

3. PROGRESS AGAINST RECOMMENDATIONS

The application of the trauma-informed systems change model to meet the Covington recommendation to “conduct a rigorous, competitive and nationwide search for a highly qualified candidate for VP or SVP of HR with relevant and sustained leadership,” (page 44 of the Covington Report) was successful. The change model (the trauma-informed Situation, Background, Assessment, Recommendation, or SBAR model, described in the Implementation Committee reports for March and April) was refined and expanded from insights gained from this EVP bi-directional process and it will now be deployed to develop specific proposals to meet other Covington recommendations. This was a successful collaboration between the committees and a good model of trauma-informed systems change principles in action.

The Implementation Committee also mapped activities already underway in the Human Resources Department that align with or partly meet some Covington recommendations. This information will be integrated into the accountability dashboard, in which progress meeting all recommendations will be tracked. The dashboard will be released and posted to the O2 website in May.

4. ASSESSMENT AND LOOK AHEAD

Based on the activity during this reporting period, the co-chairs conclude that the work of both committees has been strong. However, it is important to address questions from some committee members and more broadly in the OHSU community that the work responding to the Covington Report recommendations is not moving quickly enough. The co-chairs recognize and respect the urgency expressed by some elements of the OHSU community but believe that at this point, the work is moving at a pace necessary to ensure that the ensuing culture transformation is meaningful, long-lasting and sustainable.

When an institution as complex as OHSU seeks lasting foundational change, the work can only succeed if it is grounded solidly in a model that reflects attributes of that desired change. OHSU has committed to becoming a trauma-informed culturally responsive organization, and this requires a keen and intentional focus on ‘how’ the change is being developed and managed, just as much as the ‘why’ and ‘what’ of that change. Applying the relevant trauma-informed principles takes time *and* practice. The Implementation Committee is proceeding thoughtfully, intentionally and diligently.

Recent communications to the OHSU community (including the April 29 message from President Jacobs) along with information in these progress reports are intended, in part, to provide this broader context. The Oversight Committee will work closely with communications

staff and others to ensure that this message about timing continues to be shared.

Looking ahead to May, we expect that the Implementation Committee will share at least two SBARs responsive to Covington recommendations. The Oversight Committee members will review these two provisional trauma-informed SBAR proposals and provide input and feedback reflecting the perspectives of the cohorts they represent.

The two SBAR proposals that will be reviewed by Oversight Committee are *“Realign the Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Department (AAEO)”* and *“Centralized Report Tracking – EthicsPoint.”* The SBARs address the following Covington Report recommendations:

- Establish AAEO as a separate, neutral, independent investigative and compliance function with responsibility for investigation of conduct that potentially violates Title VII or Title IX. To maintain its independence and neutrality, and ensure accessibility to students, separate AAEO from HR or CDI, which have fundamentally different objectives and goals. Instead, we recommend that AAEO report to Integrity, itself a compliance function, which reports to OHSU Legal. (Page 44 of the report)
- To reduce and focus the workload of AAEO investigators, consider transferring, with an appropriate transition and training plan, the handling of ADA employee accommodation requests from AAEO to HR (for the full lifecycle of a request through implementation of the accommodation). (Page 44)
- Promulgate clearer guidance concerning which investigations are to be conducted by AAEO and which are to be conducted by HR, as well as guidelines for when other departments, such as Legal, should be consulted in connection with investigations. (Page 45)
- Revise and streamline reporting and investigation procedures to ensure more clear and consistent processes for reporting parties, mandatory reporters and investigators (Page 45)

The Oversight Committee members will also continue their involvement in the recruitment of the new Executive Vice President of Human Resources and Chief People Officer as candidates are identified for consideration. The discussion about the Oversight Committee charter will continue until a revised charter is adopted.

In May, the focus on communications will continue and expand. The first of a series of all-OHSU forums about the response to the Covington recommendations will be held May 25. President Danny Jacobs will host the forums, accompanied by co-chairs of both committees. These forums will provide opportunities for OHSU members to learn more about the response process, ask questions and share feedback.

Finally, as progress is made on enacting the recommendations, a new framework to communicate details regarding changes to policies, procedures or practices affecting OHSU members is needed. Developing this staffing plan and framework will be a focus in May and June, in collaboration with the Implementation Committee and OHSU communications staff.