Employee Relations Council Meeting
Minutes
July 22, 2016

I. Welcome and Introduction - Phil Bright

Lisa Kinkade Administration
Erin Chesnut Administration
Angie Gertch Administration
Debra Hunter Brehm Hall, EPS Bldg., Fine Arts & UTM Farm
Brenda Mason Brehm Hall, EPS Bldg., Fine Arts & UTM Farm
Susan Lemond Business Administration Bldg., McCombs Center, Reed Center & Sociology Bldg.
Stephanie Sellers Extended Campus and Online Studies & Gooch Hall
Phyllis Hammer Children’s Center, Elam Center, Fieldhouse, Football Bldg., Recreation Wellness Facility & Student Life
Jeffery Hart Housing
Karen Elmore Library
Amber Varvaro Extended Campus and Online Studies & Gooch Hall
Vickie Hardrick Custodial Services
Diane Marks Governor’s School, Student Success, Healthy Start, Humanities
Teresa Vancleave Student Health, Counseling Services & University Center
Thomas Martin ITS
Tim Nipp Physical Plant
Marsha Davis Human Resources
Phil Bright Human Resources
Petra McPhearson Finance and Administration
Dr. Bob Smith Chancellor’s Office
Dan Trentham Manager, UT Services Center

II. Human Resources Call Center (Dan Trentham, Manager, UT Services Center)

Dan Trentham attended the ERC meeting, he serves as team leader in the Human Resources Call Center. The Human Resources Call Center is here to help UT employees. You can call for inquiries about benefits, policies, employment and training opportunities. The Call Center staff is committed to providing the best service to you.

1-888-444-UTHR

From 865 area code, call 946-8847

Available 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. ET Monday – Friday

III. The State of Tennessee and UT guidelines on voting and campaigning that affect UT employees. (Phillip Bright)

UT employees may not use university time, funds or equipment to engage in any type of campaign activity, and campaign promotional items are not permitted on university property. Employees may participate in campaign activities on personal time and may display campaign promotional items on personal vehicles which are parked on university property.
Objective:

To encourage all university employees to vote in state, national, and local elections.

Policy:

1. All university employees who are registered voters in the state of Tennessee may receive reasonable time off, not to exceed three hours, between the opening and closing of polls, to vote in an election held in the state.

2. A request to be absent must be made to the employee's supervisor before 12:00 noon the day before the election. The supervisor may specify the hours during which the employee may be absent.

3. If the polls open three hours or more before the employee's work schedule begins or if the polls close three or more hours after the employee's work schedule ends, the employee may not receive time off to vote.

IV. Construction update (Tim Nip)

Capital Projects under Construction

- The football Press box is taking shape as the Skyhawk season opener of September 17 quickly approaches.

- New roofs are being installed on Sociology and Crisp prior to school starting in August.

- Four sorority lodges at the University of Tennessee at Martin opens Fall 2016. Chi Omega, Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Omicron Pi and Zeta Tau Alpha will use the lodges for; recruitment activities, sisterhoods, meetings and other functions, but most importantly the chapters will have a place to call their own. The new lodges are located on the southern edge of campus near University Courts. Each sorority has committed to pay close to $500,000 for their new lodge, which will be two stories and about 3,800-square feet.

Maintenance Highlights

- Demolition was completed on the old Elam Center tennis courts (north side of Pat Summit Drive). The aging courts were past repair. This site will be reutilized for recreation space.

- Work is progressing on the Business Administration parking lot. The lot will be ready for use in mid-August.

- The Physical Plant completed 723 work orders in the month of June.
Richard Gibson, Grounds Department. The Grounds staff has worked tirelessly in making our campus beautiful.

Let us know how we are doing! Please visit our survey site http://www.utm.edu/departments/physplant/survey.php We value your opinion.

V. Ban the Box on employment applications is Tennessee law (Phillip Bright)

As mandated by state law and effective in March of this year, employment applications may no longer ask applicants for information on criminal convictions for misdemeanor or felony offenses.

The new law is referred to as, Ban the Box which will affect state employers. This law was signed by Governor Bill Haslam, legislation (SB 2440), the new law prohibits a state employer from inquiring about the criminal history on the initial job application for new applicants. Background checks can be performed after the initial screen of applications, this will provide a non-discriminatory procedure at the onset and provide applicants a chance to explain a conviction and demonstrate their skills during the interview and different phases of the hiring process.

These boxes have been removed from the online Taleo applications, but if your department uses a separate application of any kind it must be removed there as well.

Contact Phil Bright in the Office of Human Resources at 731-881-7846 to obtain updated application materials

VI. Summary of the University of Tennessee guns on campus policy –addenda publication (Phillip Bright)

On July 1, a new state law takes effect. To implement the changes, UT has adopted a new safety policy, which also takes effect July 1. Safety Policy 0875 addresses how UT applies the many different state laws regarding firearms and clarifies when an employee may and may not legally carry a handgun on University property. The policy expands on the following key provisions of state law:

•Full-time UT employees with valid Tennessee handgun-carry permits may carry handguns on UT property, if: ◦They are not enrolled as students; and

◦They notify the law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the UT property on which they will be carrying a handgun

•Employees must display their handgun-carry permits on request of law enforcement officers

Employees must not:

◦Carry a weapon other than a handgun

◦Carry a handgun openly or in any other manner in which the handgun is visible to ordinary observation
Carry a handgun at certain times and locations, such as:

- Stadiums, gymnasiums or auditoriums where University-sponsored events are in progress or in meetings regarding disciplinary matters or tenure

The UT Martin addenda featured an article about a new law and the Employee Relations Committee discussed the article and law.

Some of the rules that should be followed and noted on UT Martin campus discussed by the Employee Relations Committee:

1. Employee’s interested in carrying a weapon on campus will contact UT Martin safety and security.

2. Limitations as to where you can carry a gun should be followed.

3. Valid permit holders cannot bring a weapon into a stadium or gymnasium during school-sponsored events or in meetings regarding discipline or tenure.

4. Students, are not included in this bill. The bill does not allow students, including those with permits, to carry guns on campus

5. The campus carry law requires campus employees with permits to carry their guns concealed, even though Tennessee’s handgun-carry permit law allows open and concealed carry.

All employees are encouraged to review the policy in its entirety and answers to frequently asked questions provided here:

http://policy.tennessee.edu/safety_policy/sa0875/

Policy Home » Safety Policy
SA0875 – Firearms
Effective: July 1, 2016

Additional information about implementation efforts will be shared soon by each campus and institute. Questions can be directed to the law enforcement contacts listed within the policy.

VII. Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration (Petra McPhearson)

The year-end process is still underway. Employees should have received written notification of a two percent across-the-board salary increase approved by the UT System, effective July 1. Other salary increases are possible, depending on fall enrollment numbers.

The Fair Labor Standards Act has been finalized, and employees who currently have exempt status must make at least $47,476 per year to retain that status. Employees who do not meet this threshold will be transferred to non-exempt status effective Dec. 1. Some changes could be seen in the amount of annual leave accrued each month, depending on the employee’s years of service.
Effective this fall, all employees will be required to update their outside interest disclosure forms annually, regardless of whether or not your situation has changed since last year. Notices and instructions to update this form will be distributed via email in the coming weeks.

VIII. Comments from Chancellor Smith

Twelve candidates for the position of UT Martin Chancellor will complete airport interviews Aug. 1-3 in Nashville. This interview process will narrow the candidates to four or five applicants who will visit the campus in early September. All employees are urged to attend the open forum sessions and give feedback on each candidate. UT System President Joe DiPietro plans to announce the new UT Martin chancellor at the UT Board of Trustees meeting in October. Interim Chancellor Smith will remain through the end of the fall semester, and the new appointee will begin in January.

Plans are proposed for a new convention center, conference venue, offices and hotel to be built at the corner of Skyhawk Parkway and Hyndsver Road, additional information will be provided in the future.

A second engineering building has also been proposed to house corporate innovation space where all types of businesses could contract with UT Martin faculty and students to assist with product testing, innovations and development.

The first draft of the SACSCOC report to defend our accreditation status has been drafted and edited, and outside reviewers are confident in our improvements. A SACSCOC team will return to campus Oct. 4-6.

A new campus entrance has been financed and will be located at the intersection of Skyhawk Parkway and Hawks Road across from the Hampton Inn hotel. This will be pedestrian-only and allow easy access to shopping and conveniences on Skyhawk Parkway.

The Chancellor invited the entire campus to attend the fall faculty meeting at 10 a.m., Aug. 17, to hear the “State of the University” address and participate in an open forum conversation about changes taking place at UT Martin.