

# addenda



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**ANOTHER DEGREE** – UT Martin Chancellor Keith Carver presents Dr. Dan Pigg with his seventh master’s degree – this time from UT Martin – during the university’s 2022 spring commencement. This was his first degree earned from the university where he is an English professor and his 10th degree overall. Pigg is in his 33rd year of teaching for the university.

## Faculty member adds to his knowledge by degrees

Usually, faculty members who attend UT Martin commencements sit in rows of seats below the stage on the floor of the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center, but on the night of May 6, 2022, **Dr. Daniel Pigg**, UT Martin professor of English, walked across the stage as he received his master’s degree in higher education leadership. This degree marked his seventh

master’s degree and his 10th degree overall, and with another degree in hand, Pigg enters his 33rd year at his newest alma mater doing what he enjoys most – teaching English and literature and religious studies to UT Martin students.

Since he was a child, the Columbia, Tennessee, native was interested in being an educator. Between his grandmother being

a third-grade teacher and his childhood nickname, teaching was always the path he wanted to take.

“I knew I wanted to teach from the time I was eight years old. I had a relative who, in fact, dubbed me ‘The Professor’ at age eight, so this has been in the blood for some time,” Pigg said.

Pigg began his educational journey at Lipscomb University,

where he earned a bachelor’s degree in English. He then began his master’s and then doctorate in English at UT Knoxville, which he placed on hold in 1986 to complete a master’s degree in medieval studies at the University of York in England on a Fulbright Scholarship.

“It (the medieval studies

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degree) brought together an interdisciplinary way of looking at the world,” Pigg said. “I had courses in medieval Latin, paleography, manuscript studies, literary studies, art history, drama studies – it brought a number of things together.”

It was from there that Pigg began his career in 1989 at UT Martin teaching in what was, at the time, the Department of English. He knew he wanted to teach in multiple disciplines, and that opportunity arose through the secondary education program where he could teach both English and education courses. To qualify for a position, Pigg decided to begin his doctorate in curriculum studies at the University of Memphis.

To receive that degree, Pigg had to earn nine foundational credit hours at a different institution. When he completed those hours at Middle Tennessee State University, he was informed that he only needed 20 more credits to complete the Master of Education degree program. He finished his second master’s in 2002 and his second doctorate in 2003.

During his earlier studies, Pigg considered working toward a doctorate in biblical studies but ultimately decided against it. After the death of his father in 2005, he decided to begin a Master of Arts in Religion at Memphis Theological Seminary. Since then, Pigg has also completed a Master of Sacred Theology degree in

Biblical Studies (Hebrew Bible) from the University of the South in Sewanee and a Master of Theological Studies from Phillips Theological Seminary.

For Pigg, one of the most noticeable changes between when he began his academic career and now is the attitudes of both the students and educators. Namely, there is often a lot more communication between professors and students about deadlines and schedule conflicts.

“I never would have imagined as an undergraduate asking a professor to change the date of a paper,” Pigg said. “In a class in which I was enrolled in spring 2022, on the final class meeting, which was a class that met on weekends, several of us asked if the professor would change the due date for a paper because we were all in difficulty. It was no sweat at all for her to change that.”

Another noted change is the use of technology in classrooms and education in general. At the beginning of his educational career, Pigg could only supplement his presentations with handouts, and now online technology is commonly used in college courses, with entire courses even being held online.

The differences were especially marked when he was working on his most recent degree: his Master of Science in Higher Education Leadership. Pigg began his degree in 2020, and because of the program’s format and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, all his courses were held completely online, just like

the ones he was teaching for his undergraduate students.

“In some ways, it provided a kind of stability through some really, I think, emotionally wrenching times,” Pigg said. “It was so odd to be on campus, to be in my office and teaching students via Zoom, and they were sitting in their dorm rooms, and I never saw anyone in the halls. It was sort of like the day after the apocalypse, and everybody had disappeared. It was crazy.”

Two years later, Pigg finished his master’s degree at the university where he has devoted more than 30 years of leadership and instruction. For Pigg, the degree served to not only further his education but to give back to an institution that became such a major part of his life.

“It feels really nice to be a graduate of the institution where I have spent my teaching career. I didn’t know from the beginning that UTM was going to be my home for all of my teaching career, but that’s what developed, and it has been good,” Pigg said. “In some ways, doing the degree was my kind of ‘thank you’ to UTM.”

Currently, Pigg is working on his third doctoral degree from Phillips Theological Seminary. This degree seeks to combine curriculum theory with teaching Biblical Studies in various contexts – two of Pigg’s areas of interest.

For students entering their undergraduate experience, Pigg emphasizes the importance of reading about the experiences of others to understand what

to expect and how to build a support system to lean on in times of happiness and hardship.

“College is not a trailblazing experience whereby a person has an ax and hacks through a forest alone and comes out on the other side. That kind of going into the wilderness and surviving the wilderness mode is not a good paradigm for understanding what it means to be part of having a higher ed experience,” Pigg said.

For those beginning an advanced degree, Pigg urges students to keep their goals in mind and keep track of any debts that may be incurred.

“For those people who are thinking about going on to graduate school, I think the question is always, ‘Why am I doing this?’” Pigg said. “I think it’s always okay for a student to pursue a master’s degree in an area that they want, as a part of their own intellectual curiosity and development, if they want to do that. I think beyond a master’s degree, it becomes a very different kind of thing to decide.”

As the days until 2022 fall classes started ticking by one by one, Pigg prepared himself for the things that are unexpected as well as one thing that is expected: a little bit of first-day jitters.

“I’m looking forward to fall 2022, and just for the record, I’m always a little nervous on the first day of class. Never changes,” Pigg said. “I have a series of names and a series of people sitting in seats, and the fun begins.”



## GOOD FOOD

The latest issue of Our Tennessee, the UT System’s magazine for alumni, is out, and it contains a feature story about a UT Martin chemistry graduate who is finding ways to reduce the severity of food allergies. Physical copies are mailed to all departments on campus, and you can see the stories online at [our.tennessee.edu](http://our.tennessee.edu).

# YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff



**Dr. James Smart**, professor of biology, recently published a paper titled “Capacity and kinetics of light-induced cytochrome oxidation in intact cells of photosynthetic bacteria” in Nature Portfolio’s Scientific Reports. You can read his paper [here](#).

## In Memory

**Jane Miller**, a retired librarian from UT Martin’s Paul Meek Library, died Friday, August 26, at her home in Martin. Jane worked in the cataloging department from 1971 until her retirement in 1994. She was also an active member of the Martin Kiwanis club, and a member of First Baptist Church Martin.

Arrangements are being handled by Murphy Funeral Home in Martin. Visitation will begin at 10:30 a.m., Tuesday, August 30, and a graveside service will be held at noon at East Side Cemetery. More information can be found [here](#).

**Submit a YoUTM.**



**HONORING CHARLEY** – Dr. Charley Deal (center), vice chancellor for university advancement, was among four honorees recognized for service by United Way of West Tennessee during the organization’s Unitas community event held Aug. 18 at the Carl Perkins Civic Center in Jackson. He received one of two Joe Exum Service and Leadership Awards for his 12 years of involvement with the organization. Joining him at the Unitas event were (l, r) Virginia Grimes, WestStar Leadership Program assistant director; Chris and Petra McPhearson – Petra is UT Martin senior vice chancellor for finance and administration; Charley Deal; Shannon Deal, director and nurse practitioner, UT Martin Student Health and Counseling Center; Ben Jones, UT Martin director of development; and Kerry Witcher, vice president for development and alumni affairs, and president and CEO, University of Tennessee Foundation, Inc.



## WALK WITH CARVER

**WED., AUG. 31, 12 P.M.**

Meet in the quad in front of the Administration Building

UTM RESEARCH SERIES

**DR. TODD WINTERS**

PRESENTS HIS RESEARCH ON

## THE MAGIC BEAN:

Utilization of Soybeans & Effects on Mammalian Physiology

12:30 pm  
Thursday, Sept. 8  
Paul Meek Library



Co-sponsored by the Division of Academic Affairs and the UT Martin Libraries

PAUL MEEK LIBRARY  
731-881-7092  
UTM.EDU/LIBRARY



# UT MARTIN CO-SPONSORS 2022 TENNESSEE SOYBEAN FESTIVAL

UT Martin and other sponsors have again partnered with the city of Martin to bring the Tennessee Soybean Festival to Martin on Sept. 5-10.

More than 100 events for the entire family are scheduled during the festival, including appearances by the Puppy Pals Dog Show and the Jetpack Flying Water Circus. Labor Day children’s events include the annual sidewalk chalk art contest at the C.E. Weldon Building from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and the Mad Hatter Tea Party at 11 a.m. and Magical Martin Day from 3-7 p.m., both at the Martin Public Library.

**Dr. Todd Winters**, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, will kick off the UTM Research Series during the festival with a presentation titled “The Magic Bean: Utilization of Soybeans & Effects of Mammalian

Physiology.” The presentation will be at 12:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 8, at the Paul Meek Library.

A full concert lineup is planned on the WK&T Amphitheater stage at the Martin Public Library, and tickets are on sale now at [tnsoybeanfestival.org](http://tnsoybeanfestival.org). Chris Janson will perform beginning at 7 p.m., Sept. 8; 38 Special will take the stage at 7 p.m., Sept. 9; and Bohemian Queen, a Queen tribute band, will perform at 7 p.m., Sept. 10. Several free concerts are also scheduled, including a fireworks show and performance by the Martin Community Band at 7 p.m., Sept. 4, and Mike Snider and the String Band at 7:30 p.m., Sept. 6, all at the WK&T Amphitheater.

The first Tennessee Soybean Festival was held in 1994 through the joint efforts of

city leaders and UT Martin officials. Through the years, the festival has sponsored events such as a tractor rodeo and toy pedal tractor pull to showcase

the tradition of celebrating agriculture and one of the country’s biggest cash crops is still at the core of this weeklong celebration.






**THE BEAN RETURNS** – (top) 38 Special and Bohemian Queen perform at the Tennessee Soybean Festival in 2018 and 2021 respectively. (above) UT Martin students ride a ride on the festival’s midway.

the spirit of agriculture that is prevalent today. The festival has grown since 1994, but


A complete schedule of events and concert ticket prices are available at [tnsoybeanfestival.org](http://tnsoybeanfestival.org)

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
<b>VOLLEYBALL</b> vs Southern Illinois 6 pm	<b>SOCCER</b> vs Austin Peay 7 pm	<b>FOOTBALL</b> vs Western Illinois 6:30 pm	<b>VOLLEYBALL</b> vs Alabama A&M 12:30 pm  <b>VOLLEYBALL</b> vs Western Illinois 6 pm	<b>VOLLEYBALL</b> vs Arkansas State 1:30 pm  <b>CROSS COUNTRY</b> at Memphis Twilight Classic	<b>SOCCER</b> at Murray State 1 pm

**THIS WEEK IN SKYHAWK ATHLETICS**



**View more UT Martin photos  
online at [utm.edu/photo](http://utm.edu/photo).**



## You Tell Me

- **Question** - Is the Recycling Facility open the weekends that the university observes a holiday?
- **Answer** - The Recycling Facility will be closed on the holidays that the university will be closed. Using the upcoming Labor Day weekend as an example, recycling will be open Saturday but closed Monday in observance of the holiday. Recycling also has new hours of operation: 7 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday; recycling is closed Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. The facility was originally built in 1976 as part of the National Guard Armory and transferred to the university in 2008.

*Submit your questions anonymously to the Suggestion Box link at [www.utm.edu/suggestionbox](http://www.utm.edu/suggestionbox).*