

KNOXVILLE ADMINISTRATION & STUDENT LIFE ERC

SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION & IPS ERC

Meeting Minutes

THURSDAY, march 18, 2021 | 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.

Via ZOOM

PRESENT

Mark Alexander, Brenda Bartram, Shannon Bruce, Jessica Cantu, Crissy Douglas, Darrell Easley, Nancy Gibson, Angie Holtzclaw, Mark Paganelli, Ryan Kemnetz, Ami McCarter, Phyllis Moore (Guest Speaker), Julie Roe, Leslie Valentine

ABSENT

Linda Arms, Yousef Baskin, Jen Benton, Andrea Brayton, Dedra Cotner, Mary Lucal, Iesha Shaw, Bethany Tozzi

1. WELCOME

Julie Roe, Sr. Employee Relations Consultant, welcomed the group to the February meeting.

1. UPDATES
   1. Division of Student Life Update – Mark Alexander, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Life

Mark Alexander greeted the group, and led by sharing news that Student Life will hold a [ribbon cutting ceremony](https://news.utk.edu/2021/03/24/student-union-celebrates-third-floor-opening-for-student-resources/) for new Student Union spaces including the Pride Center, Graduate Student Senate office, Smokies Closet and the Student Union Administration suite.

Mr. Alexander next announced that Student Life has two upcoming programs of note from Student Disability Services and the Pride Center. Haben Girma will be featured in an upcoming talk on March 23. Ms. Girma is a human rights lawyer who deals with disability justice and will speak on exploring the intersections of disability and design. torrin a. greathouse will be featured in a virtual reading event on March 31. greathouse, a poet, will read from their work, *Wound from the Mouth of a Wound*.

Mr. Alexander then announced that Student Life has created an agreement with Dollywood for discounted theme park and Splash Country tickets. Students, faculty, and staff can purchase discounted one-day tickets for $45 per ticket. Day passes can be upgraded to a season pass with the discounted ticket considered a full-price ticket. For more information, visit: <https://studentlife.utk.edu/dollywood-tickets-at-a-special-price/>

Lastly, Mr. Alexander closed by sharing that the [Big Orange Pantry](https://dos.utk.edu/big-orange-pantry/) is now open.

* 1. System Update – Mark Paganelli, Treasurer

Mark Paganelli greeted the group and began his update by noting he is busy onboarding [Martin Methodist College into the UT System](https://tennessee.edu/transparency/mmc/). He said work is going on to add the new campus to payroll, bill payment and student registration. He shared his excitement about the addition to the System campuses.

Mr. Paganelli next talked about the upcoming System Administration’s [move to the former TVA Tower](https://offices.tennessee.edu/). Plan design is underway with people providing input around spaces and the move itself. Jessica Cantu asked about the move timeline. Mr. Paganelli replied that they are looking to move the President’s Office into the top two floors by the end of August with the rest of System Administration moving in floor by floor over several months. Leslie Valentine asked who would be moving into spaces vacated by System offices. Mr. Paganelli said that is still being discussed.

Mr. Paganelli closed by discussing the new Enterprise Resource System (ERP) system, and said a consultant is being hired to come in to review business practices including HR processes like hiring and compensation, and finance processes including bill payment. He said the review will allow the University to hit the ground running once the new ERP system has been selected.

* 1. Human Resources Update – Darrell Easley, Director of Learning & Organizational Development & Employee Relations

Dr. Darrell Easley greeted the group and began his update by sharing his optimism for Governor Lee’s proposed budget. He said it is exciting to see investment in higher education and shared his hope that the budget will be approved.

Dr. Easley closed by touching on Chancellor Plowman’s recent email about Zoom bombings and security. He noted that, for future ERC meetings, representatives should sign into Zoom via single-sign-on.

1. GUEST SPEAKER
   1. [UT Retirees Council](https://alumni.utk.edu/s/1341/2/20/interior.aspx?sid=1341&gid=2&pgid=14697) – Phyllis Moore, Director of Alumni Programs

Phyllis Moore, Director of Alumni Programs, greeted the group. The UT Retirees Council was previously known as the UT Retirees Association, which transitioned to Alumni Affairs in fall 2015. The Retirees Council joined the ranks of six other [Office of Alumni Affairs Councils](https://alumni.utk.edu/s/1341/2/20/interior.aspx?sid=1341&gid=2&pgid=14406), including the Pride of the Southland Marching Band, Latino, Army ROTC, Air Force ROTC, LGBTQA+, Black, and Young Alumni Councils. She shared that the task force that was key in transferring the former Retirees Association from Human Resources to Alumni Affairs intended to enhance opportunities for retirees to continue their association with the University and colleagues. The Retirees Council also continues to award scholarships, and 26 students have benefitted to date.

Ms. Moore then noted that membership in the Retirees Council is automatic upon retirement for all UTK employees. She noted that there are more than 4,300 participants with over 2,300 within 75 miles of campus. She touched on membership communications like the Retirees Newsletter and events, including their annual holiday reception and volunteer opportunities at UTMC and the McClung Museum. The group also took trips pre-pandemic including a memorable one to Lynchburg, TN.

Dr. Lucal asked Ms. Moore for feedback from retirees. Ms. Moore replied that she has primarily heard that retirees, especially faculty retirees, want to stay involved and have an opportunity to return to campus. Faculty retirees especially want to continue to have their research benefit their department and University.

Jessica Cantu asked Ms. Moore about how representatives can assist co-workers who are in the process of retiring. Ms. Moore emphasized the importance of new retirees updating their email address, and asked that representatives steer soon-to-be retirees to her so she can connect with them. Retiring employees can contact the Retirees Council by emailing [phyllismoore@tennessee.edu](mailto:phyllismoore@tennessee.edu).

1. CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS
   1. Return to Office – Ami McCarter

**Q:** I have several people in my area wondering why they were required to come back to the office full-time when other offices, that would seem to be more essential, remain closed. Their concern is that on a typical day, there are around 2,000 people entering and exiting the building that they are potentially being exposed to. Previously they had been on an alternating split day schedule to limit the number of people in the office based on the Governor’s order. There is some confusion about why they were brought back to the office full-time when the governor has extended the order through April 28th.

A: Ms. Roe responded that departments are beginning to plan for staff returning to campus full time. Many are in wait-and-see mode as more guidance and information is being developed. She said her understanding of the Governor’s order was to encourage people who could work from home to do so. Ms. McCarter related that some constituents are not comfortable coming back to campus full time. Ms. Roe said the best advice would be for those staff to connect with their supervisors to express concerns and hopefully get clarity. Ms. Roe said that a similar question came up in another ERC from employees who feel their roles have been successful in a remote setting asking to continue to work remotely. She said that remote work decisions will be made at the departmental level and those interested should connect with their supervisors to start those conversations.

1. OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
   1. Winter Mini Term Addition

The Academic Calendar was approved to include Winter Mini Term in January 2022 prior to spring semester starting. This term will last 14 days, beginning January 3 and ending January 21. An academic working group and an operational working group will continue in their efforts to create a successful Winter Mini Term student experience. Additionally, spring break will fall between first and second sessions and aligns with Knox Co. Schools.

* 1. ERAB

The ERAB next meets on April 15, and questions are due by March 15. As a reminder, if you have questions for that group please send those to your ERAB representatives, Angie Holtzclaw and Leslie Valentine, as soon as possible.

* 1. Online Performance Reviews Reminder – Due March 31

As a reminder, annual performance reviews through the Online Performance Review System (OPR) should be completed by March 31. The OPR HR page features a helpful FAQ for supervisors and employees, and a step-by-step guide is available in the Help section of the OPR website.

For more information visit: <https://hr.utk.edu/performance-evaluation/>

* 1. Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment

Sick Leave Bank open enrollment begins April 1! We will be accepting applications for new enrollees for the Knoxville-area and Institute of Agriculture Sick Leave Banks through June 30. To be eligible, you must be employed as a regular UT employee, accruing sick leave, with a sick leave balance of at least 48 hours or 6 days (pro-rated for regular, part-time employees). Employees who meet those requirements who wish to join the Bank must complete an enrollment application and agree to donate 24 hours of sick leave to the bank. The 24-hour donation is non-refundable. Applications may be submitted to [SickLeaveBank@utk.edu](mailto:SickLeaveBank@utk.edu), and electronic signatures and scans are accepted. Current bank members do not need to reapply.

For more information and to download an enrollment application, visit <https://hr.utk.edu/sick-leave-bank/>.

* 1. Campus Vaccination Events for Eligible Employees

The University is now hosting UT employee and student COVID-19 vaccination events at the Student Health Center. These vaccination appointments are only open to UT students, faculty, and staff. You must be in the current age or risk-based phase for Knox County. A NetID and password are required to schedule an appointment online.

Public COVID-19 vaccine clinics are open to the public including UT students, faculty, staff, and retirees.

For more information including age and phase eligibility information and to view available events please visit: <https://www.utk.edu/coronavirus/vaccine/>.

A discussion took place about volunteer opportunities for staff at vaccination clinics.

* 1. Diversity Professional Development Fund for Staff

The Diversity Professional Development Fund for Staff (DPDFS) was created to support the participation of staff in diversity-related programs and conferences. Eligible staff can apply to receive funding to attend diversity conferences, seminars, and other programs. Applications are due on March 15, and all applications are due one month before the program to be attended.

For more information visit: <https://hr.utk.edu/diversity-fund-for-staff/>

* 1. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion HR/EAP Program Series

Join UTK HR Employee Relations and Optum EAP for a new, four part Zoom series focusing on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.

The series includes “Fostering Inclusion in the Workplace” on March 24, and “Unconscious Bias” on April 14.

Sign up for these sessions through K@TE.

* 1. L&OD: Upcoming Programs

For more information or to register for any of these sessions, visit K@TE:

• March 23 & 30 from 3:30p-4:30p: Telecommuting with Children

• March 24 from 9a-11a and 2p-4p: Professional Development – Building Your Brand: Leading from Where You Are

* 1. Commission for Women: Career Advancement Workshops Event

Join the Commission for Women on Tuesday, March 30 for “Lighting Your Path: Workshops on Cultivating Career Advancement Opportunities.” This afternoon event will be held via Zoom and features a keynote address from Gretchen Neisler, Vice Provost for the Center for Global Engagement. Guests are invited to participate in up to three 20-minute workshops of their choosing.

For more information and registration visit: <http://bit.ly/CFW_Lighting>

* 1. Commission for Disability: Universal Benefits of Inclusive Design Event

Join the Commission for Disability, Student Disability Services, and the Division for Student Life on Tuesday, March 23 for “Disability & Innovation: The Universal Benefits of Inclusive Design” hosted by Haben Girma. Haben Girma is the first Deafblind person to graduate from Harvard Law School, and is a human rights lawyer advancing disability justice. Join us for an engaging presentation on Haben’s journey as a disability rights advocate and how we can make UTK more inclusive.

For more information and registration visit: <https://tiny.utk.edu/Girma>.

1. REMINDERS:
   1. Please email Jessica Cantu ([jlcantu@utk.edu](mailto:jlcantu@utk.edu)) any constituent questions.