

OPERATIONS ERC

Meeting AGENDA

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021 | 1:30 – 3:00 P.M.

VIA ZOOM

PRESENT

Tom Anderson, Jason Baggett, Harold Bivens, Danielle Bohn (Guest Speaker), Brian Browning, Jessica Cantu, Jeremiah Cook, Ted Coward, Matthew Cramer (Guest Speaker), Darrell Easley, Chris Iler, Sarah Hoel, Debbie Lane, Terry Ledford, Mary Lucal, Raheem Obaid, Gavin Ramsey, Ed Roach, Julie Roe, Jake Turner, Lisa Turner, Joe VanCleave, Dave Webb, Jessica Woofter,

ABSENT

David Blaylock, Joseph Bray, Charles Burton, Allen Flowers, Paul Finley, Allison Givens-Nunn, Steven Henry, Judy Jones, Jimmy Large, Ethan Long, Harley Matthews, Regina Olum, Chip Pennoyer, Eric Robinson, Debra Robinson, Thomas Spoon, Cris Strange, Lisa Turner

1. WELCOME

Julie Roe, Senior Employee Relations Specialist, welcomed the group to the February meeting.

1. UPDATES
	1. Human Resources Update – Mary Lucal, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources

Dr. Mary Lucal began her update by announcing we are over the hump of implementing the compensation project and that everyone is now working in the new market-based pay system. She said there are still things to do including looking at career paths, but the big push of implementation is done and we are now fully transitioned to the new system.

Dr. Lucal next shared that Learning & Organizational Development (L&OD) continues to offer a great deal of content to folks who are both working on campus and remotely. She also said Dr. Darrell Easley, Director of L&OD and Employee Relations (ER), is getting settled in. When L&OD was created they did not have an opportunity at that time to do an overall assessment of what people are looking for in leadership development. Under Dr. Easley’s leadership, L&OD will be doing a needs assessment later this year. She praised the work they have done during the past year and said conducting a needs assessment will help them continue to tap into the campus community’s interest in leadership development content.

Dr. Lucal then highlighted the Online Performance Review (OPR) process which recently went live. She said that HR is busy walking people through the new system, which has gotten positive feedback and is already proving to be a time saver. The process’s implementation is also well timed with people continuing to work both on campus and remotely. Some departments like Facilities Services are not moving to the OPR process this year, and they will decide how to handle that in the future.

Dr. Lucal closed by announcing that she and Tyvi Small, Vice Chancellor for Diversity & Engagement, will be hosting an upcoming webinar to talk about the new diversity goal in 2021 performance reviews. She stressed how important it is that we all set diversity related goals that we can be assessed against when review time comes around next year.

* 1. Finance and Administration Update – Brian Browning, Acting Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration

Brian Browning greeted the group and began his update with bringing the group up to speed on construction across campus. He said the West Campus Dining Facility is on schedule and well underway for completion in late May or June. He shared his excitement that the facility will open in the fall and is hopeful by that point most of the pandemic will be behind us so they can fill the 1.200 seat facility. The new Nuclear Engineering building is also on schedule with a completion date of late spring or early summer. The facility is just to the southeast of the stadium and Mr. Browning said it is progressing very nicely. He also noted the first phase of the Pedestrian Mall extension is now complete, and encouraged the group to visit it to get a glimpse of what the rest of the extension will look like. Phase II will begin around the end of May and proceed through the rest of 2021 in concert with the completion of the West Campus Dining Facility. For more information about campus construction projects visit: [conezone.utk.edu/projects](https://conezone.utk.edu/projects/)

Mr. Browning next updated the group that Governor Lee’s FY 21-22 budget will be presented on February 8. The campus is anxiously awaiting to hear what he has to say and recommend to the state legislature as to what the budget will look like for campus. The UT System is also in the process of [acquiring Martin Methodist College](https://tennessee.edu/transparency/mmc/), located in the midsouth area of the state. That campus will be brought into the UT System family and will round out the System’s statewide coverage.

Mr. Browning then discussed the [Budget Allocation Model (BAM)](https://budget.utk.edu/budget-allocation-model/), which was previously set to be run in parallel with the current budget model for Fiscal Year (FY) 20-21. Due to the pandemic those plans were delayed, but Mr. Browning said the committee has restarted the process. He shared the new goal is to run the BAM alongside the current budget model starting July 1 this year for FY 21-22 and then transition to the BAM effective FY 22-23.

Mr. Ramsey asked Mr. Browning to explain the Budget Allocation Model. Mr. Browning explained that the model involves how the University assesses space and charges for support services. Currently, if a department needs services from key support service units like Construction Services or Design Services, their recovery charges are billed back to the departments for services rendered. Under the new model everything is tied to space, so departments are charged based upon their utility volumes and space usage. The new model also covers overhead charges for services from Human Resources, Public Safety, and other general support services. That means that departments will not have to do internal transfers to recover expenses that have been incurred, but instead it will be factored into departments’ budgets on the front end. Mr. Browning suggested a representative from the BAM

Committee be invited to attend a future ERC meeting to provide an overview and share specifics with the group on how the model will work. Mr. Browning, and suggested Kim McCullock, Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, as a point of contact for the BAM Committee.

Ed Roach asked Mr. Browning for an update as to if Hearing and Speech would still be moving to the Conference Center. Mr. Browning said that it is still on the schedule, and that Terry Ledford, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Services, might be able to give an update as to completion. Mr. Ledford replied he did not know the date but would check on it. Mr. Browning confirmed that once the project is complete they will move, likely in several phases. Mr. Ramsey asked if the South Stadium Hall renovation had been put on hold. Mr. Browning confirmed it had and that there is no timeline right now for restart, especially given the new Athletics administrative changes.

1. GUEST SPEAKERS
	1. Here4TN Employee Assistance Program & Services – Matt Cramer

Matt Cramer, Senior Client Service Manager for Optum, greeted the group and began his presentation by reviewing resources that Here4TN provides to University employees. He first shared contact information (855-Here4TN/855-437-3486) and their website ([here4tn.com](https://www.here4tn.com/)). He also highlighted a new live chat feature for employees who are too busy to call. The chat feature is available on the Here4TN website from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET.

Mr. Cramer led by noting that employees who have behavioral health coverage via their medical insurance coverage through the University should have also received a behavioral health ID card from Optum. He said the cards can be used like any other medical identification card when visiting providers. Employees who have lost their card or did not receive one may call 855-Here4TN to request one or log into the Here4TN website and download a PDF copy.

Mr. Cramer then discussed coverage for [substance use disorder (SUD),](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/substance-use-resources.html) which involves excessive and compulsive use of alcohol or drugs. He explained that for employees who are struggling with SUD the state has a benefit that allows access to a preferred substance use disorder facility. He said SUD treatment is clinically proven and has a lower cost for members. To seek treatment assistance, call 855-Here4TN.

Mr. Cramer next discussed the different programs and resources that fall under Here4TN including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), WorkLife Services, Take Charge at Work, and other digital resources. He stressed that employees have access to a dedicated minimum masters-level clinical team available through Here4TN, and can call 855-Here4TN for any EAP or other resource needs.

Mr. Cramer explained that employees have access to five EAP sessions per person, problem, and year at no cost to the employee. Prior authorization is required, and can be obtained by calling 855-Here4TN or submitting an authorization request via here4tn.com. Virtual visits for EAP as well as behavioral health visits can be scheduled through the website at Here4TN.com. [TalkSpace](https://www.here4tn.com/content/dam/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/documents/SOT_Optum_Talkspace_Flyer.pdf), a text and messaging app, is available for both EAP and behavioral health visits, and may be helpful for employees who perform shift work. [Sanvello](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/library/sanvello.html), a self-help app, helps users engage in activities to improve their mental health at any time via their smartphone. He explained it includes practical on-demand tools to help manage stress and anxiety such as deep breathing exercises and relaxation techniques. Employees can access premium membership at no cost by signing up via the Here4TN website. Mr. Ramsey asked to clarify if Here4TN is for those who need to see a psychiatrist. Mr. Cramer confirmed that Here4TN is an umbrella that includes behavioral health benefits for employees participating in a University medical plan. Mr. Ramsey asked if employees’ dependents are eligible for behavioral health benefits. Mr. Cramer confirmed the employees are benefits eligible then their dependents are eligible for the five free EAP visits per year. For behavioral health services beyond those five visits the employee would need to be enrolled in a University medical plan. Lisa Turner asked if there are specific providers that must be used or if employees can use any provider and pay a copay fee. Mr. Cramer responded that the providers need to be in-network, and to visit here4tn.com to use the search tool to find a provider. Ms. Turner asked about how billing works after the five free EAP visits per year. Mr. Cramer responded that if an employee exceeded the five EAP visits and needs to continue seeing a provider they would then begin using their behavioral health benefits and there would be copays involved.

Mr. Cramer next covered [legal and mediation benefit services](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/benefits/legalandfinancial/legal-consultation.html), which include free consultation services and a discount for ongoing representation. Employees interested in finding an attorney or mediator should call 855-Here4TN and an agent will assist them with setting up those services. Dr. Lucal asked if mediation services are a new benefit, and Cramer responded that they are not. They agreed it is a very useful and cost-effective resource for constituents. Mr. Cramer said self-help legal forms are also available through the website as well as access to consulting with a money coach and other financial resources. He said that Optum recently held a [financial webinar series](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/financial-webinars.html) on topics such as managing debt, controlling spending, and maintaining excellent credit. The series is available on their website to view at any time.

Mr. Cramer then discussed [WorkLife Services](https://www.liveandworkwell.com/en/member/benefits/wl.html), which is a service designed to assist employees by researching things to like caregiving assistance, community education programs, support services and more. He shared his personal experience with using the service to locate a contractor for a home project.

Mr. Cramer next talked about the [Take Charge at Work program](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/take-charge-at-work-program.html). The program is confidential and designed to help working adults manage symptoms of stress and depression. Those who qualify work with a licensed clinician and the State of Tennessee offers participants who complete the first engagement activity $150.00 through Active Health. For more information and to take the assessment online visit here4tn.com. Mr. Ramsey asked how the incentive is paid out, and Mr. Cramer replied that it is like other Active Health wellness rewards and is paid out via payroll.

Mr. Cramer closed by highlighting [services available to supervisors and managers](https://www.here4tn.com/content/cex-consumer/state-of-tn/en/leaders.html), including catalogs of available training available at no cost on topics such as COVID-19, diversity and inclusion, and supporting mental health concerns in the workplace. Departments interested in scheduling these training can call 855-Here4TN.

Ms. Roe noted that for constituents who want to do their own research online the website has a wealth of resources including reading material and content that can be viewed at any time. She also said that if an employee calls in for EAP authorization to be certain to ask the agent assisting them with the authorization to help them find a provider for their needs who is taking new clients. The agents can’t make appointments for employees, but they can assist them with appointment searches. Jessica Cantu asked Mr. Cramer to clarify the difference between TalkSpace and Sanvello as resources for employees who may be on shift work and need assistance outside of normal hours. Mr. Cramer confirmed Sanvello is a self-help app, so those using it are not connecting with a provider but can use it for meditation and exercises at any time. TalkSpace does connect employees with a provider and requires EAP authorization. Once an employee gets authorization they receive the five sessions per year and can text their provider through the app. One week of unlimited texting with a provider would be one EAP session, and providers respond five days a week. Sarah Hoel asked what legal templates are available through Here4TN and if they are free. Mr. Cramer responded that legal and mediation provider consultation information is available on the website, as are the free legal form templates. Ms. Cantu followed up that available legal forms are state specific and include templates for things like living wills. Ms. Hoel asked if templates were available for resumes, and Mr. Cramer replied there are not but WorkLife Services can assist employees find vendors to assist them in updating their resumes for a fee.

More information about EAP can be found at: <https://hr.utk.edu/employee-assistance-program/>.

* 1. Be Well – Danielle Bohn

Danielle Bohn, Health and Wellness Coordinator, introduced herself to the group and discussed how [Be Well](https://bewell.utk.edu/), the UTK employee wellness program, provides preventative wellness education and outreach to employees and departments across campus. Ms. Bohn shared that Be Well works to benefit employees’ and the campus community’s wellbeing and helps employees prioritize their overall wellbeing beyond just the physical dimension.

Ms. Bohn then shared the vision of a campus that supports positive lifestyle choices, and talked about the [eight dimensions of wellness model that the program is based upon](https://bewell.utk.edu/dimensions-of-wellness/): emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical, environmental, financial, occupational, and social. She noted that they want to help people understand that different dimensions of wellness exist within their lives, that sometimes there will be fluctuations in how they are doing in those different area, and that the model is not necessarily designed for 100% achievement in all eight areas. She shared examples with the group of campus resources that support each dimension of wellness, including those related to COVID-19. Ms. Bohn said that they are currently seeing employees needing more assistance in the social, financial, and emotional aspects of wellness due to the pandemic. She shared that her focus for this year is to prioritize those areas as best as they can given the virtual and hybrid environments.

Ms. Bohn mentioned that [EverlyWell COVID-19 test kits](https://studenthealth.utk.edu/everlywell-covid-19-home-collection-kit-overview/) are available at no cost to staff. Asymptomatic employees may pick up a kit from the Student Health Center during regular business hours. The employee can either complete it on campus or at home, ship it via UPS, and EverlyWell will email them their results. Employees experiencing symptoms should contact their health provider instead.

Ms. Bohn noted that due to the pandemic Be Well transitioned their work online, and said it has been rewarding to see it grow in this new direction. She said participation numbers have skyrocketed and it has been a great increase in accessibility for those who are unable to attend in-person events on campus but can attend virtually. Be Well’s partnership with the Culinary Institute continues with virtual [healthy cooking series](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-cooking/) classes, and she noted they have found that allowing people to engage in the class in their kitchens and with family members has been great to watch. She works with the UT Culinary Institute to provide food kits to the first 30 people who sign up. Similarly, Be Well has also been hosting virtual [healthy gardening classes](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-gardening-classes/), with the first class of the semester kicking off this Saturday. She said that UT Gardens sets up kits for those classes, allowing employees to tune in to the virtual class and follow along at home.

Ms. Bohn said that they will be kicking off the [Grow With Be Well](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/employee-campus-garden/) employee gardening program in May. Be Well and the [Grow Lab](https://growlab.utk.edu/) campus garden partner to offer plots and produce plants to employees, who then tend to the gardening with their teams. She said it was a great way to safely connect with others as well as harvest and take produce home. Registration starts in March and the program will kick off this May. She also mentioned [employee fitness classes](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/employee-fitness-classes/), including an upcoming virtual Zumba class. She said the classes are held about once a month and employees can [try any RecSports Zoom fitness classes](https://recsports.utk.edu/virtual-group-fitness-classes/).

Ms. Bohn then discussed the [Healthy Lifestyle program](https://bewell.utk.edu/programs/healthy-lifestyle-program/). Healthy Lifestyles is a six-week lunch and learn program adapted from the CDC’s Diabetes Prevention Program, and offers incentives for participants. The next session kicks off on March 10, and participants can engage in physical activity during the Zoom sessions. The program covers basics around physical activity and nutrition and building a healthy lifestyle at work and at home. It also covers stress management and how to keep healthy lifestyle momentum going. Participants receive a $10 Publix gift card for attending the first session and a $20 Amazon gift card for completing the entire program.

Ms. Bohn then talked about the [Wellness Warriors award](https://bewell.utk.edu/wellness-warriors/). The award highlights a person on campus each month in the Be Well newsletter. She asked the group that if someone they know in their department or on campus is doing a great job of taking care of themselves in any of the eight dimensions of wellness to nominate them as a Wellness Warrior. [Wellness Champions](https://bewell.utk.edu/wellness-champion-program/) are employees who serve as a role model of wellness in their department and promote healthy department certification programs. It helps create change within the department and has an emphasis on wellness to ensure employees’ needs are being met in the workplace. She said that they help identify needs specific to their department, and they consult with Be Well to plan activities. She also said the employee wellness committee helps her brainstorm ways to connect with people on campus. Those interested in becoming involved as a Wellness Champion or participating in the wellness committee can email her at bewell@utk.edu.

Ms. Bohn closed by touching on a new sleep campaign for campus. She said survey data shows 43% of campus employees sleep less than seven hours per night, and the current recommendations for average adults is to get seven to nine hours of sleep per night. She noted sleep is highly connected to emotional well-being, and lack of sleep impacts cognitive functioning and may result in metabolic changes. She shared that research shows finding a routine and sticking with it helps the body go to sleep and wake faster because of a constituent schedule. She shared that slow transitions to increase sleep by fifteen to twenty-minute increments is helpful as is turning off electronic devices before bed, adjusting thermostats at night to around 65 degrees, limiting naps to 20 minutes, and making the room as dark as possible. Dr. Easley shared that he read a book called “Sleep Smarter” by Shawn Stevenson that emphasized the importance of sleep.

Visit [bewell.utk.edu](https://bewell.utk.edu/) to sign up for the Be Well monthly newsletter or follow Be Well on Facebook and Twitter to learn more about upcoming events and healthy living tips.

1. OTHER BUSINESS
	1. Telephone Bills

Jason Baggett asked if employees in the Air Conditioning Shop could get a portion of their telephone bill paid due to using their personal phones for work as other shops get a portion of their bill reimbursed. Dr. Lucal responded that it is up to the department to assess usage. Mr. Ledford said that Facilities Services has set usage cut offs and he will see if the different shops are cutting off at the same place to ensure consistency. Dr. Lucal said that for those not in Facilities Services there is a mechanism for phone usage reimbursement at the University but each case would need to be assessed by the department’s business office and leadership. Tom Anderson remarked on use of cell phones for work being exacerbated during the pandemic, and said it would be good for Facilities Services to reassess who should be reimbursed.

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS
	1. Non-Exempt Staff Sounding Board (2/24)

The Non-Exempt Staff Sounding Board invites all non-exempt staff to join them for a virtual coffee hour on February 24. The Board is sponsored by UT HR and was created to gather resources together to help inspire and encourage non-exempt staff in their goals.

More information: <https://calendar.utk.edu/event/non-exempt_sounding_board_virtual_coffee#.YCKmhGhKiHs>

* 1. L&OD: Upcoming Events

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

1. Click “UT Faculty and Staff”
2. Login with your NetID and Password
3. On the K@TE homepage, select the “Learning” tab
4. Select “Event Calendar”
5. Click on the session title to register for the session.
6. Click “Request”
* March 2, 9, 23 & 30 from 3:30p-4:30p: Telecommuting with Children
* March 8 from 11:30a-12:30p: Lunch and Learn: A Presentation on Supercharging Your LinkedIn Presence with Michael Smith-Porter
* March 24 from 9a-11a and 2p-4p: Professional Development – Building Your Brand: Leading from Where You Are
	1. Big Orange Pantry

The Big Orange Pantry provides emergency food assistance for students, faculty, and staff attending or employed by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The Big Orange Pantry is located on the ground floor of Greve Hall. Students, faculty, and staff seeking food assistance will be able to choose for themselves what products they would like to receive.

More information: [tiny.utk.edu/BigOrangePantry](https://dos.utk.edu/big-orange-pantry/)

1. REMINDERS
	1. Please email Jessica Cantu (jlcantu@utk.edu) any constituent questions.
2. DISTRIBUTIONS
* Optum/Here4TN Presentation: <https://hr.utk.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/56/2021/02/OPTUM-Here4TN-ERC-Presentation.pdf>