

PRESENT

Michele Atkins, Mary Beth Burlison, Alicia Calderon, Jon Chandler, Shane Colter, George Drinnon, Darrell Easley, DeAnna Flinchum, John Goddard, Lauren Hatcher, Marcus Hilliard, Bill Jackson, Melissa Jenkins, Beth Kurtz, Amanda Middleton, David Moore, Kim Raia, Tonya Sartin, Sam Smith, Joshua Steele (Guest Speaker) LaShel Stevens, Hillary Tune, Matt Ward, Tanya Washington, Leslie Wereszczak, and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch

ABSENT

Christopher Binkley, Jamie Cyphers, Allyson Graves, Bonnie Johnson, Nathan McKinney, and Blake Reagan

1. WELCOME

Beth Kurtz, Exempt Staff Council (ESC) Chair-elect, welcomed everyone to the May 2024 meeting.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. Digital Learning – Joshua Steele, Chief Programs Officer

Chief Programs Officer Joshua Steele presented to the group what Digital Learning's mission and goals are.

Digital Learning is a transformative campus unit at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, focused on advancing UT's commitment to discovery, learning, and engagement, specifically for fully online students. Their team of experienced professionals is driven by a passion for higher education and our shared goal: providing the same great UT higher education experience to online students anytime and anywhere.

The Digital Learning team is dedicated to helping faculty, program directors, and academic administrators plan and implement quality online educational opportunities. To learn more about or to contact Digital Learning, visit their [hub page](#).

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

The Exempt leadership development cohort program, University of Tennessee Inclusive Leadership Academy (UTILA), is now accepting applications for the 2024-2025 cohort. This is a strong leadership development program that focuses on inclusive leadership. To learn more about this program or to apply, visit: <https://hr.utk.edu/ut-inclusive-leadership-academy/>. You can also nominate a colleague you think would be a good fit for the program on their webpage.

The Career Development team won the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA) [HR Innovation Award](#) for their implementation of the career development program on the Knoxville campus.

c. 2024 Spring Elections Update

Beth Kurtz and Shane Colter shared election updates with the Council. Two representative positions need to be replaced, and the outgoing representatives for those areas have recommended people to replace themselves for the 2024-2025 year. A couple of other positions are being looked at being replaced as well, due to special circumstances, like retirement and attendance.

Mr. Colter would like to extend a thank you to all Representatives who agreed to extend their term for an extra year.

Mary Beth Burlison asked the group if it would be possible to add another representative, in addition to her, to the Provost area due to the large number of constituents. The group agreed that would be a good idea and Ms. Burlison stated that she would look into a possible 2<sup>nd</sup> Provost representative.

d. Committee Updates

There were no updates provided for Faculty Senate, the Police Advisory Council, the University Leadership Council, and the Council for Diversity and Inclusion.

The Employee Relations Advisory Board (ERAB) met to discuss the continuation of the ERAB and what people feel they get out of the group, and if it is helpful to them.

The Shared Governance Committee has submitted a proposal to the Chancellor to create a new UTK group called the Collaborative Leadership Council, comprising of representatives from the shared governance organizations on campus, including the faculty senate, graduate student senate, staff councils, and student government association. The members of the CLC will be chosen by their respective organizations to serve as representatives for each group in conversations with other shared governance groups and the administration.

3. CONSTITUENT ISSUES

- a. **(Q):** To join the Sick Leave Bank, an employee needs to have a balance of at least 48 hours of accrued sick leave, which is six months' worth of unused sick leave. The

requirement of 48 accrued hours to join the sick bank means that disabled and chronically ill employees—the most vulnerable members of the population—are unable to access that resource. In other words, employees who are disproportionately likely to run out of personal leave are also disproportionately likely to have to take unpaid time off in the case of an emergency.

Can the total number of accrued hours required for an employee to join the sick bank be reduced? For example, a requirement of 32 hours would significantly increase the chances of being able to enroll in the Bank, let me contribute the same 24 hours to the bank when I join, and still leave some personal sick leave.

**(A):** The Sick Leave Bank policy follows state statute, and the University Bank cannot be more restrictive than the State Bank. The State Bank currently requires 4 days for enrollment with one additional day donated per year, while the University Bank requires 3 days for enrollment with no additional annual assessment. Both Banks require a sick leave balance of no less than 6 days at the end of the open enrollment period of the current enrollment year.

Reducing the 6-day enrollment requirement would deviate from state statute and require a system policy change. Knoxville HR has shared this question with our System HR partners. The Council may also consider whether to raise the policy question with ERAB. For more information about the Sick Leave Bank and open enrollment, you may view a brief informational video: [an informational video](#). If constituents have questions regarding the bank or transfer donations, they may contact [sickleavebank@utk.edu](mailto:sickleavebank@utk.edu).

#### 4. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Sick Leave Bank open enrollment began April 1, 2024, and continues through June 30, 2024. For questions, or to submit your application, email [sickleavebank@utk.edu](mailto:sickleavebank@utk.edu). For more information regarding the sick leave bank visit the Hub at [Sick Leave Bank \(sharepoint.com\)](#). An informational on-demand session is available at [SLB Information Session on Demand - YouTube](#).
- b. UT Inclusive Leadership Academy [UTILA](#) applications are live! If you are interested in a leadership development opportunity, click the link to apply today!

Next meeting- June 25, 2024 at 2:30 pm EST.

Please email Beth Kurtz ([ekurtz2@utk.edu](mailto:ekurtz2@utk.edu)) and Sam ([samsmith5@utk.edu](mailto:samsmith5@utk.edu)) with constituent issue or questions the Friday (by noon) before the next meeting.