

PRESENT

Michelle Atkins, Christopher Binkley, Mary Beth Burlison, Alicia Calderon (Campus Partner), Jon Chandler, Shane Colter, Geroge Drinnon, DeAnna Flinchum, John Goddard, Marcus Hilliard, Anne Ho (Proxy), Whitney Jenkins, Amanda Middleton, David Moore, Julie Roe, Tonya Sartin, Sam Smith, LaShel Stevens, Hillary Tune, Matt Ward, Samantha Ward, Leslie Wereszczak, Brooke Wichmann (Campus Partner), and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch

ABSENT

Jamie Cypher, Allyson Graves, Lauren Hatcher, Melissa Jenkins, Beth Kurtz, Kim Raia, and Shay Riggs

1. WELCOME

Shane Colter, Exempt Staff Council (ESC) Chair, welcomed everyone to the March 2025 meeting.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. Human Resources Update - Julie Roe, Manager of Employee Relations

The Staff Senate Bylaws Committee met to go over the feedback provided by the Exempt Staff Council and the Employee Relations Committees. They incorporated the feedback as appropriate and have finalized a version of the Bylaws for senior leadership review. Next, an electronic vote will be taken of the Exempt Staff Council and Employee Relations Committees for adoption of the Bylaws in the next few weeks.

A discussion took place regarding Staff Senate constituents and the roster (i.e., constituents per Senator, areas represented, etc.).

The 2024 Staff Performance Reviews will be completed in the DASH system. The deadline has been extended for this cycle only and reviews are due by May 30th, 2025. K@TE has online trainings for both the employee and manager to explain how to complete a review in DASH. You can search "Understanding and Navigating the Annual Performance Review Process in DASH" to find the training.

b. Check your “Beneficiary Information” – Sam Smith, Employee Relations Specialist

The university will provide [a benefit payment](#) for regular employees who die while in an active pay status. Employees may designate a beneficiary to receive this benefit. Below is a guide on how to check who you have designated as a beneficiary in DASH and how to change or add one to your file, if needed. **Please note, this is a different beneficiary form to your life insurance and 401k payout.

- **To check your beneficiary for your survivor benefit in the event of your death while in active pay status:**

1. Login into dash.tennessee.edu.
2. Click the tile for “Employee Self-Service Finance, Human Resources, Facilities.”
3. Under the “Me” tab, click on the “Benefits” tile.
4. Click the “Your Benefits” tile.
5. Scroll down to the bottom of the page. Click on the section that is titled “Benefit in the Event of an Employee Death.”
6. You should then see the name(s) of who you have selected to be your beneficiary and their percentages. If you do not see anyone listed, or the wrong person is listed, then you will need to add or update your beneficiary information.

- **To add or update your beneficiary information:**

1. Login into dash.tennessee.edu.
2. Click the tile for “Employee Self-Service Finance, Human Resources, Facilities.”
3. Under the “Me” tab, click on the “Benefits” tile.
4. Click the “Record a Change” tile.
5. Pick the option for “Beneficiary Information Update (Non-Qualifying Event).” Enter today’s date when asked for when this change occurred. At the top of the page, click the continue button. Click the okay button if you receive a popup that is confirming the date of the qualifying event.
6. Under the “People to Designate” section, make sure the person(s) you want to make your beneficiary are listed in this section. If they are not, click the add button and enter their information, and click submit at the top of the page.
*Please note, you must designate the person as an emergency contact to be able to add them as a beneficiary.
7. If you needed to add a person to the list of people to designate, they should now be in this section. At the top of the page, click the continue button.
8. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and select the option for “Benefit in the Event of an Employee Death.”
9. Click the edit button.
10. At the bottom of the page, click the pencil icon. Select the person(s) you wish to be your beneficiary and input the percentages you wish to have. Click the okay button once finished.
11. Click the continue button at the top of the page.
12. Hit the submit button at the top of the page.

13. You should then see a confirmation message that your benefit elections were saved.

c. Committee Updates

- o Employee Relations Advisory Board (Shane Colter)
- o Faculty Senate (Jamie Cyphers)
- o Police Advisory Council (LaShel Brown)
- o University Leadership Council (Beth Kurtz)
- o Council for Diversity and Inclusion (Hillary Tune)
- o Shared Governance Committee - aka The UTK Collaborative Leadership Council (Shane Colter and Beth Kurtz)

The Employee Relations Advisory Board, Faculty Senate, The Police Advisory Council, The University Leadership Council, and The UTK Collaborative Leadership Council did not have an update for this meeting.

The Council for Diversity and Inclusion is not currently meeting as they are restructuring their group to make it more effective.

3. CONSTITUENT ISSUES

- a. I have some concerns about two performance evaluation changes: (1) One category completely changed - the 2023 category of "Inclusion, Diversity & Engagement" has changed to "Adaptability & Flexibility." (2) I noticed that the rankings have been redefined. Note that the numbers for the rankings have been removed from the DASH web forms, but since the HR policy for the UT system is still the same, I assume we still receive a numerical ranking out of 25.

(A): Julie Roe, Employee Relations Manager, replied that this was a System-wide decision to change the evaluation rubric. Communication was sent in January 2025 with the launch of DASH and the Annual Staff Performance Review season. "Adaptability and Flexibility" is a new category that was utilized in previous years, and the Be One UT Values have been incorporated in the review process. Feedback on communication and timing of the changes has been provided to System HR. In addition, the launch of DASH has created an opportunity for a cultural shift, from numerical ratings to narrative ratings. The goal is more focus on the narrative of the employee's work instead of a specific number. The HR policy related to staff performance is under review to reflect changes.

- b. (Q): I know the hammock stands are more for students but the majority of the ones at Circle Park are no longer there. Does anyone know if those will be brought back to Circle Park now that it is getting warmer?

(A): Jon Chandler, Senior Employee Relations Consultant, answered that it is unknown who owns or is in charge of the hammock stands, but as it is getting warmer outside, it is likely that they will return. [Facilities One Call](#) could be a good place to reach out to for future questions like this one.

Other Business:

- [Save the Date and Appreciate!](#) - Send a [Thankful Thursday Note](#) to a colleague for Staff Appreciation Week.
- Next meeting - April 22, 2025 at 2:30 pm EST.
- Please email Shane Colter (colters@utk.edu) or Sam (samsmith5@utk.edu) with constituent issue or questions the Friday (by noon) before the next meeting.