

addenda



The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | Feb. 24, 2025

UT Board of Trustees to hold winter meetings here

The UT Board of Trustees will hold its winter meetings Feb. 27-28 in the Russell Duncan Ballroom in the Boling University Center.

Meetings are scheduled as follows:

Thursday, Feb. 27

- 1:30 p.m.: Education, Research and Service Committee
- 3:15 p.m.: Audit and Compliance Committee (public session)
- 4:15 p.m.: Audit and Compliance Committee (non-public, executive session)

Friday, Feb. 28

- 8 a.m.: Finance and Administration Committee
- 10 a.m.: Winter meeting of the Board of Trustees

All meeting times are approximate. If a meeting ends earlier or later than expected, the next meeting may begin following a short break.

All public meetings will be



Chair of the Board of Trustees John Compton and UT System President Randy Boyd are shown during the 2024 Board of Trustees meeting. (Photo by Kasey Funderburg)

webcast live and archived for later viewing; a link to the webcast will be available at tennessee.edu.

Agenda items include, but are

not limited to:

- President's report
- Strategic Plan, UT Martin
- Revised FY 2024-25

operating budget

- FY 2025-26 state budget amendment request
- FY 2025-26 tuition levels at the UT Health Science Center

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TEST Hub groundbreaking set for Feb. 28

A groundbreaking ceremony for the Tennessee Entrepreneurial Science and Technology (TEST) Hub at the UT Martin will be held at 11:30 a.m., Feb. 28, behind the Student Recreation Center.

Once completed, the \$18.5 million facility will provide hands-on manufacturing engineering education, and will be a regional innovation hub that will support workforce and economic development for future generations.

The event is open to the university community and public and will follow the conclusion of the UT Board of Trustees winter meetings in the Boling University

Center.

Funded by the Tennessee General Assembly in April 2022, the TEST Hub will be located on the west side of the UT Martin main campus and, in one innovative footprint, combine educational facilities, entrepreneurial centers and manufacturing

workshops surrounding a shared industrial maker space.

Through partnership with the Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology and Dyersburg State Community College, the facility will offer educational opportunities

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The TEST Hub will also become the new home for the UT Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and Economic Development Center

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff



Barber

Dr. David Barber, professor of history, will give a talk, "The Importance of Black History," to the Obion County Historical Society at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25, at the Obion County Public Library on Reelfoot Avenue in Union City.

The event will be held in Meeting Room B of the library and is free and open to the public.

A recent article titled "Collaborative Cybersecurity Education for Advancing Precision Agriculture in Rural Settings," co-authored by Dr. John Cole, assistant professor of agricultural engineering; Dr. Barbara Darroch, associate professor of plant and soil science; Dr. Sandy Mehlhorn, associate professor of agricultural engineering; Dr. Saman Sargolzaei, associate

professor of engineering; and Dr. Bethany Wolters, associate professor of plant and soil sciences - along with student Seth Hatchett, a senior cell and molecular biology major from Huntingdon - has been accepted for presentation at the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) SoutheastCon 2025 conference, held March 22-30 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The study, sponsored by TN Corn, highlights the growing cybersecurity risks in Northwest Tennessee's rural farming due to the increasing use of digital technologies, revealing a significant knowledge gap among farmers regarding advanced security measures and data management.

It calls for targeted educational interventions and farm-specific cybersecurity solutions to address these vulnerabilities.



Cole



Darroch



Mehlhorn

Dr. Mahmoud Haddad, professor of finance, and Dr. Laura Hatch, assistant professor of accounting, College of Business and Global Affairs, were featured in the Feb. 5 WalletHub online story titled "What is a Budget?"

The story can be found [at this site](#).

WalletHub, based in Washington, D.C., is a financial website that offers information such as credit-improvement



Haddad

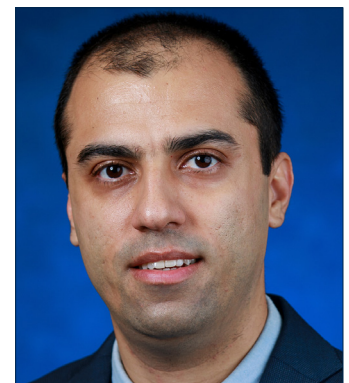
advice and personalized savings alerts.

The site's business-related



Hatch

features are supplemented with information from subject-matter experts.



Sargolzaei

Paul Meek Library to host DnD workshop

The Paul Meek Library will collaborate with UTM's Dungeon and Dragons club to help open the game up to all who are intrigued with its inaugural Dungeons and Dragons workshop.

The workshop offers a series of instructional groups, including character exploration, impromptu lessons and creative writing.

All of the events are listed on Runway and corq. D&D supports academic skills by reinforcing

math, reading and writing through gameplay mechanics and narrative creation. It even helps develop research skills as players and dungeon masters delve into lore and world-building and builds social connections.

For more information about this workshop or the UTM Dungeons and Dragons club, contact Ronne Cox at the Paul Meek Library at 731-881-7093 or rjone107@utm.edu.



Wolters

UTM business programs maintain AACSB accreditation

The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International Board of Directors has confirmed that the UT Martin will maintain AACSB accreditation for all business programs for the next six years.

Accredited programs include marketing, management, information systems, accounting, economics and finance at the undergraduate level and the Master of Business Administration degree for graduate students.

AACSB International was founded in 1916 and is the longest-serving global accrediting body for institutions offering undergraduate, master's and doctoral degrees in business and accounting.

AACSB accreditation is considered by many the mark of excellence in business education and has been earned by 6% of the world's business programs.

This news follows Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee's funding recommendation in the state budget for a new UT Martin College of Business and Global Affairs building. The governor's announcement came Feb. 10 as part of his annual State of the State address.

UT Martin Chancellor **Yancy Freeman** said the accreditation news from AACSB and Gov. Lee's announcement about the new business building represent major milestones for the university.

"Maintaining AACSB accreditation is an outstanding accomplishment in itself, but the announcement from Gov. Lee signals that even greater days are ahead with a new home for the accredited business programs taught in the College of Business and Global Affairs," Freeman said. "We're grateful to the governor for his support of a college with a long history of graduating outstanding business and industry leaders who will continue to impact West Tennessee and beyond."

Dr. Ahmed Tootoonchi, dean of the College of Business and Global Affairs, said the college has a longstanding history of accreditation.

"Our college earned its initial accreditation in 1995, and as difficult as it is to earn the initial accreditation from AACSB, it is equally challenging to stay on the course, show evidence of continuous improvement, and earn reaffirmation of the accreditation,"



The AACSB International Board of Directors has confirmed that UT Martin will maintain AACSB accreditation for all business programs for the next six years. In this December 2024 file photo, participants in the UT Martin-TVA Investment Challenge Program gather to present the students' end-of-the-semester performance report in the Kelly Murray Investment Management Room in the university's Business Administration Building.

Tootoonchi also credited the college's faculty, staff and students for their roles maintaining AACSB accreditation and added his appreciation for the university's leadership and the external involvement that led to the successful accreditation review.

"We would not have been able to earn this without the support from the institutional leadership and our amazing advisory board members' commitment, dedication and continued support," he said.

Dr. Philip Cavalier, provost and senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, noted the importance of having accredited business programs.

"AACSB accreditation is the gold standard of quality for business education," he said. "Prospective students, business graduates and employers can be confident that we have high-quality faculty, curricula that is relevant and up to date, and those who earn degrees are graduating fully equipped to succeed in the global economy."

UT Martin ranked among the best schools in the state of Tennessee and in the South

region in several online-program categories in the U.S. News & World Report's 2025 rankings for colleges and universities. The university's online business programs listed in the latest rankings were:

- Master of Business Administration: ranked highest among colleges and universities in Tennessee, tied for 46th place nationwide.
- Master of Business Administration programs for veterans: ranked highest among colleges and universities in Tennessee, 28th nationwide.

Accredited business courses in many subjects are also available at the UT Martin regional centers in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley, Selmer and Somerville.

Some degree programs can be completed entirely at the regional-center locations through a combination of in-person and online courses, while other programs require time at the main campus to finish required coursework.

The MBA degree program is offered completely online.



Representing UT Martin at the Southeast Journalism Conference, Jan. 31-Feb. 2, in Starkville, Mississippi, were (front center, l-r) Chloe Kent, Clarissa Spitzley, Kate Pilcher, Aubrey Abbott, LeeAnne Morefield, (back row, l-r) Ethan Tanner, Chyler Lee, Connor Butts, Bethany Collins, Trenton Michon, Marques Rice, Katelyn Cohee and Gwendolyn Lyle.

MMSC students fare well at Southeastern Conference

Thirteen students represented the UT Martin at the Southeast Journalism Conference, Jan. 31-Feb. 2, at Mississippi State University in Starkville.

UT Martin was one of 27 universities represented at the conference.

Tomi McCutchen, instructor of mass media and strategic communication; **Dr. Richard Robinson**, professor of mass media and strategic communication; and UT

Martin mass media and strategic communication alumna Sarah Cornwell accompanied the students.

The 2025 SEJC onsite competitions were held on Feb. 1, and three UT Martin students placed in their categories:

- Clarissa Spitzley, senior mass media and strategic communication major from Clarksville, first place, design.
- Chyler Lee, junior mass media and strategic

communication major from Jackson, third place, sports writing.

- LeeAnne Morefield, senior mass media and strategic communication major from Dresden and WUTM news director, third place, TV anchoring.

Those earning 2024 Best of the South rankings were:

- WUTM, second place in Best College Audio Program (podcast)
- WUTM, third place in Best College Radio Station (first place was Mississippi State and second place was Lipscomb University)
- Trenton Michon, senior political science major from Chapmansboro, third place, Best Artist/Illustrator (for his Pacer Pete comics that appear in the print editions of The Pacer).

- Lauryn Davis, senior mass media and strategic communication major from Memphis, third place (tie), Best Radio Journalist.

- Alex Martin, senior mass media and strategic communication major from Trenton, fifth place, Best Radio Feature Reporter.

- Bethany Collins, junior mass media and strategic communication major from Dresden, honorable mention (three-way tie), Best Op-Ed Writing.

Since 2005, WUTM has placed in the top three for Best College Radio Station in all but one of those years (2006), when only a first-place ranking was awarded. The station has finished in first place 13 times over the last 20 years.

Campus Calendar

Tuesday, Feb. 25

- Civil Rights Conerence: "Assessing the Changes at Hand," 6 p.m., Watkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

Wednesday, March 5

- Dr. Amy Yeung, vocal

recital, "The Sounds of Grace," 7:30 p.m., Blankenship Recital Hall, Fine Arts Building.

Events are subject to cancellation; dates, times and sites are subject to change.



This artist rendering of the UT Martin TEST Hub shows the external view of the completed building. The facility is a joint effort by UT Martin, Tennessee Colleges of Applied Technology and Dyersburg State Community College to support and expand workforce and economic development in rural Northwest Tennessee.

TEST HUB from PAGE 1

at the certificate, associate and bachelor’s degree levels, as well as career and technical education opportunities for the region’s high schools.

The TEST Hub will also become the new home for the UT Martin Regional Entrepreneurship and

Economic Development Center. The REED Center assists existing and potential business owners through one-on-one consultations and interactive training programs.

The center houses the Tennessee Small Business Development Center (TSBDC) and is currently located in

downtown Martin.

Parking will be available in the Student Recreation Center parking lot and the lot adjacent to Pacer Pond next to the recreation center.

Call the Office of the Chancellor at 731-881-7500 for additional information.

UT BOARD from PAGE 1

- Revised Audit and Compliance Committee charter
- 2025 internal audit plan and 2025 institutional compliance plan
- Policy on the use of artificial intelligence
- New academic programs, program modifications and new academic units

The full agenda for each

meeting is available at trustees.tennessee.edu. All meeting materials will be posted in advance of the meetings and available at trustees.tennessee.edu.

Information regarding attending public meetings of Board of Trustees is available at trustees.tennessee.edu.

Anyone with a disability who wishes to attend this meeting

may contact Melissa Tindell, 865-974-0741, mtindell@tennessee.edu, or Rob Reburn, 865-974-1739, rreburn@tennessee.edu, to request auxiliary aids or services needed to facilitate attendance.

Contact may be made in person, by writing, by email, by telephone or otherwise and should be received no later than 5 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 26.

This Week’s Skyhawk Home Events

Thursday, Feb. 27

- Women’s basketball vs. Southern Indiana, 5:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- Men’s basketball vs. Southern Indiana, 7:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Saturday, March 1

- Women’s basketball vs. Morehead State, 1 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center (end of regular season).
- Men’s basketball vs. Morehead State, 3:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center (end of regular season).

* - conference competition
Full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com
Dates and times are subject to change.

- Watch “Skyhawk Sports Talk” each week, archived at utmsports.com! New episodes are posted each Monday.



You Tell Me

• **Question** – The UT Board of Trustees holds its winter meetings this week (Feb. 27-28) on the UT Martin main campus. How often does the board meet in Martin, and what meetings over the two days are open to the public?

• **Answer** – The Board of Trustees holds three regular meetings each year. As the meeting location rotates among the university’s five campuses, the board generally visits the UT Martin campus every other year. Except for the non-public, executive session of the Audit and Compliance Committee, all meetings are open to the public. The winter meeting of the board scheduled for Friday, Feb. 28, will include Chancellor Yancy Freeman’s presentation of the new UT Martin 2025-2030 Strategic Plan. All meetings will be held in the Boling University Center. More information is available [at this site](#).

Submit your questions to Addenda at addenda@utm.edu.

Staff recognition

Five staff members earn Skyhawk Spirit Awards



Dyer

Five UT Martin faculty or staff members were awarded the Skyhawk Spirit Award for the months of January and February for their outstanding service to the university.

Bonnie Dyer, senior secretary in the Office of Housing, earned a Skyhawk Spirit Award for her work during the university’s transition to the DASH system.

“Your tireless efforts in ensuring that new student hires were properly brought onboard during the DASH system transition, along with your collaboration with Human Resources and willingness to assist other departments, have made a lasting impact on the university,” wrote John’Na Webster, coordinator of the Skyhawk Spirit Awards, in her letter of congratulations.

Jordan Gardner, an administrative specialist with the Student Health and Counseling Center, was praised for her leadership in streamlining the immunization process that ensured a smooth moving-in experience for students.

“This remarkable achievement, combined with

your ability to uplift those around you, have made a lasting impact on the Student Health and Counseling Services team and the entire UTM community,” said Webster in her letter of congratulations.

Laura Larkins, assistant director for Residence Life, earned a Skyhawk Spirit Award for her dedication and commitment to supporting students and colleagues during the university’s transition to the DASH system.

“Your perseverance in ensuring that new student hires were successfully integrated into the system, your collaboration with Human Resources and your willingness to assist other departments exemplify the spirit of teamwork and service,” Webster said in her letter of congratulations.

Kristina Pitz, a health sciences pre-professional counselor, earned the Skyhawk Spirit Award for organizing training events and maintaining crucial communications channels.

“Your dedication to supporting pre-health students, guiding them through their

academic and professional journeys and ensuring they have the resources they need to succeed truly exemplifies the spirit of this award,” Webster said in her letter of congratulations.

Teresa Tibbs, accounting assistant in the Office of Housing, earned a Skyhawk Spirit Award for her role in trouble-shooting and testing key budget reports.

“Your meticulous work on budget report reconciliation and revenue designation corrections...have strengthened the efficiency of our financial systems,” Webster said in her letter of congratulations.

Each of the Skyhawk Spirit Award winners will receive a \$50 prize and a commemorative plaque.

The Skyhawk Spirit Award was created in January 2024 to recognize employee contributions that exceed expectations for performance.

The Skyhawk Spirit Award is given based on performance and provides a \$50 prize and a commemorative plaque. The Innovation Spirit Award recognizes employees who implement an idea, initiative, process or system that improves efficiency or outcomes. That award provides a \$250 prize and a commemorative plaque.

Nominees are taken through the first Friday of each month. To nominate a faculty or staff member for the March Skyhawk Spirit Award, send nominations with a description of why they deserve the award to skyhawkspiritaward@utm.edu by March 7.



Gardner



Larkins



Pitz



Tibbs

addenda