

addenda



The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | Feb. 3, 2025



Students are seen at Gooch Hall on campus. The spring 2025 enrollment numbers were released, and they bode well for a growing student population at UT Martin.

Spring enrollment sees 10% increase over 2024

The numbers are in for the spring 2025 semester at the UT Martin main campus and six regional centers, and they show increasing enrollment and persistence.

UT Martin's spring 2025 enrollment is 7,092 students, an increase of 10% over the spring 2024 enrollment. This is the highest spring enrollment for the university since 2013.

That enrollment includes 6,400 undergraduate students and 692 graduate students. The number of undergraduate students is a 10.46% increase over spring 2024, while the

number of graduate students is a 5.49% increase over spring 2024.

Transfer students also saw an increase this semester, with 178 coming to UT Martin, an increase of 21.92% over spring 2024.

Dual enrollment students also increased, with 1,771 enrolling this semester, a 21.89% increase over spring 2024.

Persistence is the percentage of students enrolled in fall 2024 who returned to campus in spring 2025. This semester, the overall persistence of

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Online programs rank among best in Tenn.

UT Martin ranked among the best schools in the state of Tennessee in several online program categories in U.S. News & World Report's 2025 rankings for colleges and universities.

Here is a look at how UTM ranked in its online programs in this year's rankings:

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

in Tennessee, tied for 46th place nationwide.

- Master's degree in criminal justice programs: ranked second among colleges and universities in Tennessee, tied for 64th nationwide.

- Master's degree in education programs: ranked third among colleges and universities in Tennessee, tied for 180th nationwide.

In the U.S. News & World Report's rankings in September, UT Martin was the highest-ranked college or university in Tennessee in the category of

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YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

Dr. David Barber, professor of history and the founder of the Black History Matters Coalition, was the featured guest on Public Broadcast System station WLJT's "Tennessee is Talking" program Jan. 24. The topic was "The Importance of Black History." Barber was interviewed by Don McCorry.

Video of he program can be seen [here](#).

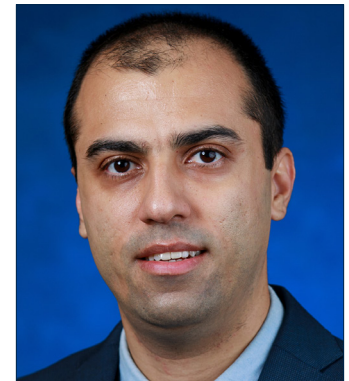


Barber

Dr. Saman Sargolzaei, associate professor of engineering, recently had an article accepted for presentation at the IEEE SoutheastCon 2025 conference.

The article is titled "A Comparison of Methods for Predicting Heart Disease: Neural Network, XGBoost, Gradient Boost, Logistic Regression, and SVM" to be presented at the AI and Predictive Modeling track of the conference.

Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) are a leading cause of death, making early risk factor screening critical for effective



Sargolzaei

prevention.

This study evaluates the predictive performance of various AI-based techniques in forecasting CVD symptoms using CDC data from Kaggle.

Hayden Weber, a senior accounting student from Puryear, presented his research titled "The Impact of Financial Reporting Quality on Dividend Policy and the Role of IFRS Adoption" Jan. 31 at the Southeast Decision Sciences Institute 2025 Conference in Greenville, South Carolina.

The main hypothesis of the research is that after a country adopts International Financial Reporting Standards, the quality of financial reporting improves and this improvement has an impact on the relationship between financial reporting quality and dividend policy.

The research uses the datasets



Le

of Thailand (for the period of 2002-19) and Malaysia (for the period of 2000-19).

The presentation is a part of his undergraduate honors thesis where **Dr. Ben Le**, associate professor of accounting, is his mentor.

Kyoko Hammond, lecturer of Japanese, and two friends will present a special program from 6 to 7 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 6, in the Martin Event Center at Martin Public Library.

The program, "Japan Travel Study Report and Celebration of the Coming of Spring," will center on a specific Japanese spring festival and will feature food typically served at this event.

Hammond will also describe travel-study opportunities at UT Martin.

The UT Martin Faculty Women's Club is the sponsor of this event, which is open to the public at no charge.



Hammond

Refreshments will include Ehomaki sushi rolls and green tea. Ehomaki is traditionally served around Feb. 2-3 for the Japanese festival of Setsubun to herald the coming of spring. Eating an Ehomaki sushi roll is believed to bring good luck.

Promote a faculty or staff member by sending a YoUTM to addenda@utm.edu!



Planning for April 3 ELLI Conference is underway

Planning for the Experiential-Learning Leadership Institute (ELLI) conference is underway, and organizers are calling for submissions for the conference.

The conference will be held April 3 at Discovery Park of America and all educators (including K-12) and students are invited to participate.

The theme of the conference is “Experiential Learning in the Age of AI.”

The conference seeks proposals that explore the impact of educating students via experiential-learning activities in an age of artificial intelligence and other technological advances.

The deadline for submitting proposals is 11:59 p.m., Monday, March 10.

Proposals must be structured around experiential education areas of interest relevant to any level of education. They should also fit one or more of the following conference tracks: assessment, evaluation and student research; entrepreneurship; career development; challenges of experiential learning; agriculture; addressing diversity; health care; experiential learning F2F or online service learning, internships and cooperative education; K-12 education; postsecondary education; and travel or



study abroad.

Proposals should be structured around one of the following conference session types, all held April 3:

- Traditional presentation (30 minutes)
- Workshop (90 minutes)
- Small group round table discussion (30-60 minutes)
- Poster presentations (from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.)

The regular presentation, poster session and workshop time slots are available.

The ELLI planning committee encourages all professors as well as students who wish to have practice presenting at an educational conference to register for the event at www.utm.edu/elli.

Discounted registration rates are offered

for students, K-12 teachers and UT employees.

Applicants will be notified of the status of their proposals by March 12. Applicants will need to register for the conference by March 15.

This year’s planning committee is co-chaired by **Dr. Dexter Davis**, professor of sport management, and **Dr. Lajuan Davis**, professor of information systems, and includes **Dr. Laura Brown**, professor of pedagogy; **Dr. Derek Ezell**, assistant professor of marketing; **Dr. John Glass**, director of honors programs and associate professor of English; **Dr. Joey Mehlhorn**, dean of graduate studies; **Dr. Robbie Montgomery**, chair of the Department of Chemistry and Physics; **Dr. Clinton Smith**, chair of the Department of Educational Studies; Dr. Mark Farley of Southeast Missouri State University; and Dr. Lorie Jones of UT Southern.

Cheyenne Stewart, a senior management major from Centerville, is serving as the ELLI conference intern and is sponsored by **John Clark**, the Dunagan Chair of Excellence of Banking.

For more information, email elliconference@utm.edu.



D.Davis



L.Davis



Brown



Ezell



Glass



Mehlhorn



Montgomery



Smith

12 students take working trip to Super Bowl

For the last 11 years, the University of Tennessee at Martin has been represented at the Super Bowl, the championship game of the National Football League, and this year will mark No. 12, when students continue the tradition at the game Feb. 9 in New Orleans.

Dr. Dexter Davis, professor of sport management, coordinates working trips for UT Martin students majoring in sport business or a related field to the sport industry.

Twelve UT Martin students will be working in several areas during the week leading up to Super Bowl LIX, including assisting with “Super Bowl Opening Night,” the media party, and the Athletes in Action Super Bowl Breakfast.

This is all leading up to game day, where the students will be providing support for On Location, the NFL’s premier hospitality provider.

Davis serves as co-chair of the Super Bowl Student Network Event, an informal gathering of students from the other colleges and universities involved in the Super Bowl events.

This event provides an opportunity for students to network with sport industry professionals and other students

who work Super Bowl events.

There is also a panel discussion and a short key address, each designed to provide students with insight into what it takes to succeed in the competitive sport industry.

Davis is also responsible for a new initiative, a student recognition program where faculty members from the more than 50 programs involved in Super Bowl activities are invited to nominate one of their students to be awarded one of 10 “Super Bowl Student MVP” awards.

These awards are made possible through the support of MoonShot, the NFL’s customer service training partner.

Working at the Super Bowl this year from UT Martin are

Aaron Bartholomew, Toby Bolkcom, Nic Edwards, Parker Ferrell, Hannah Haislip, Paris Hodge, Jaden Knott, Dylan Mott, Jon Powers, Cheyenne Stewart, David Stukey and Bryleigh Travis.

Davis picks the students to work at professional venues through an interview process meant to be similar to what they will encounter in the field.

“They have to send me a cover letter and a resume, just like they were applying for a job, because it is a job. For that week, it’s a job,” Davis said.

He analyzes students by their resumes and by the things they do on campus, how involved they are and how ready they are to put in the work.

Continued on PAGE 6

This Week’s Skyhawk Home Events

Thursday, Feb. 6

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

Saturday, Feb. 8

- *Women’s basketball vs. Western Illinois, 1 p.m, Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- Men’s basketball vs. Western Illinois, 3:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- * - conference competition
- Full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com.
- Watch “Skyhawk Sports Talk” each week, archived at utmsports.com! New episodes are posted each Monday.



House, Douglas speak at Kiwanis Club



Lt. Col. Bernard House (right) and Sgt. Nick Douglas (left) were guests at the Jan. 22 meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Martin and shared information about military science, Army ROTC at UT Martin, the Army National Guard and the U.S. Reserve. They outlined their personal stories associated with military service and explained some facts about the levels of financial opportunities associated with enrolling in ROTC as a college elective that develops leadership skills. House and Douglas were introduced to the group by Earl Wright, Kiwanis program chair for January, and presented a certificate of appreciation by Kiwanis president Laura Taylor (center). A donation will be made to Martin Public Library in honor of the speakers.

ONLINE from PAGE 1

public universities and colleges for veterans.

For information about UT Martin’s online programs, call the Office of Regional Centers and Online Programs at 731-881-7080.



Students are seen working on a project with a laptop computer. UT Martin’s online programs continue to be ranked among the best in Tennessee.

Campus Calendar

Monday, Feb. 3

- Civil Rights Conference: “CRC: From Then to Now,” 6 p.m., Watkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

Tuesday, Feb. 4

- Civil Rights Conference: Charlayne Hunter-Gault, speaking event, 6 p.m., Watkins Auditorium.

Wednesday, Feb. 5

- Civil Rights Conference: Financial Literacy Workshop, 4 p.m., 206 Boling University Center.

Friday, Feb. 7

- WestStar Working Women’s Conference, 2:30 p.m.,

Duncan Ballroom, Boling University Center.

Sunday, Feb. 9

- Civil Rights Conference: Movie, “A Million Miles Away,” 2 p.m., Watkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

Monday, Feb. 10

- Civil Rights Conference: “Strength, Courage and Wisdom” art exhibition, through Feb. 20, Boling University Center walkway.

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

ENROLLMENT from PAGE 1

undergraduate students was 92.4%, the highest persistence rate for the university in more than 10 years.

For first-time full-time students, that persistence rate in spring 2025 was 91.7% – the highest percentage since 2015.

Chancellor Yancy Freeman announced several goals in 2024, including having 10,000 enrolled students by the year 2030. This semester’s enrollment numbers are encouraging for reaching that goal.

“We are thrilled to see a continued increase in our enrollment at UT Martin, building on the success of our

fall 2024 growth,” said Destin Tucker, assistant vice chancellor for enrollment management. “This achievement is a direct result of the dedication and hard work of our enrollment teams, faculty and staff, who continually strive to provide an exceptional experience for every student.

“Together, we are creating a welcoming and supportive environment that empowers students to thrive, and we look forward to building on this momentum in the years ahead.”

UT Martin has regional centers in Jackson, Parsons, Ripley, Selmer, Somerville and Springfield.

You Tell Me

• **Question** – Does the university’s Power Generation Facility, located on Jerry D. Gresham Road, provide power backup to the campus? And does the facility still have an academic component/benefit for students?

• **Answer** – The Power Generation Facility is not an emergency backup generator for the campus. However, it can provide standby electrical power for the entire campus if needed. The Power Generation Facility was built in 2005 to provide the main campus with a special interruptible power rate from TVA. The generator plant houses four 2-megawatt generators. These generators can power the entire campus electrical load and can export surplus power back on the TVA electrical grid when in operation. TVA pays the campus a monthly rate of \$26,000 to be able to request the campus to be on its own power within five minutes of notification and export the surplus to the TVA electrical grid. The generator facility includes a classroom component. A classroom was constructed within the building adjacent to the generator room and switch gear room. Also, the facility has data points within the generators to showcase the impacts of generated electrical power.

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

25th annual Civil Rights Conference gets underway

The Civil Rights Conference at the University of Tennessee at Martin marks its 25th year of providing notable guest speakers, panels and activities promoting civil rights and equality.

The annual conference helps the campus celebrate Black History Month by showcasing people of color who have made their marks in history or in their chosen fields.

The theme for this year's celebration is "Strength, Courage and Wisdom: Lessons for the Journey Toward Justice."

Dr. Henri Giles, assistant professor of African American studies, is the coordinator for this annual event. She said that for the university to host this event for a quarter-century is meaningful.

"For it to have lasted 25 years says something about the dedication of this university to these types of issues," she said. "It has certainly changed over the years, but it has kept its objective and main focus: to enlighten people and inform people about different issues that deal with civil rights, equity and justice."

Giles added that UT Martin is the only university in the United States to dedicate

a month to a civil rights conference.

This year's conference features the following guest speakers:

- **Charlayne Hunter-Gault**, a journalist, activist and foreign correspondent who, with Hamilton Holmes, was the first African-American student to attend the University of Georgia in 1961.



Hunter-Gault

- **José Hernández**, a current regent for the University of California who worked with farmworkers as a child and became an astronaut, serving as a mission specialist onboard the Space Shuttle Discovery in 2009.

- **Michael Eric Dyson**, a social justice activist and seven-time New York Times bestselling author. He has written 25 books and taught at some of the nation's most distinguished universities. Also a Baptist minister, Dyson is a professor in the College of Arts and Science and in the Divinity

School at Vanderbilt University.

Giles said the speakers bring a wide variety of backgrounds and stories to the Civil Rights Conference.

"The hope is that with these different backgrounds that it will spark the interest of our students in social justice or the law," she said. "There might be a STEM (science-technology-engineering-mathematics) student wanting to go into space or someone with the hope of becoming a writer or an academic."

The art exhibition held Feb. 10-28 features work by UTM students that will be showcased in the hallway near the Nunnally Welcome Center in the Boling University Center. An awards ceremony for the exhibition will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 19, in Watkins Auditorium.

UTM Civil Rights Conference organizers to discuss the purpose and mission of the event; 6 p.m., Monday, Feb. 3, Watkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

All events are free and open to the public.

SUPER BOWL from PAGE 4

Davis encourages students to network.

"The sport industry is relatively small, and people move around in the industry," Davis said. "There will be people who work in baseball who make their way into football or soccer or basketball, and vice versa."

"You never know when one of the people you encounter at an event like the Super Bowl will be your colleague or supervisor. Understanding that is one of the major lessons of the experience."

This article can be seen in its entirety at news.utm.edu.



Representing UT Martin at Super Bowl LIX in New Orleans on Feb. 9 are (l-r) Hannah Haislip, Jaden Knott, Aaron Bartholomew, BryLeigh Travis, Nic Edwards, Cheyenne Stewart, Dr. Dexter Davis, Toby Bolkom, Paris Hodge, Dylan Mott, David Stukey, Jon Powers and Parker Ferrell. This is the 12th straight year for a student staff from UT Martin to work at the Super Bowl.

[Read more at news.utm.edu](https://news.utm.edu)

addenda

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