

addenda



The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | April 21, 2025



Grubaugh named OVC Outstanding Faculty member

Dr. Jack Grubaugh (right), professor of biology, received his Ohio Valley Conference Outstanding Faculty - Commitment to Success Award at the UT Martin Honors Day program April 13.

Grubaugh is shown receiving the award from **Dr. Philip Acree Cavalier**, provost and senior vice chancellor for academic affairs for UT Martin.

The Ohio Valley Conference (OVC) is the athletics conference that UT Martin has competed in since 1992.

The awards were created by the provosts from each OVC member institution to recognize outstanding faculty at each OVC member institution.

Each OVC member institution has the opportunity to nominate a faculty member with the rank of associate or full-time professor who have been employed at the institution for at least five years.

The criteria included impacts of students, contributions made to the department, university and curriculum development, consistent professional development as well as community involvement and institutional service.

Other OVC Faculty - Commitment to Success Award winners for the 2024-25 school year include Jeremy Paprocki of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, John Morris of Eastern Illinois University, Dr.

Kyle Sunderland of Lindenwood University, Dr. Manuel Probst of Morehead State University, Dr. Lori Mueller of Southeast Missouri State University, Dr. Lynne Miller of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Dr. Mark D. Krahling of the University of Southern Indiana, Dr. Vaidas Lukosius of Tennessee State University, Christina Turnbow of Tennessee Technological University and Dr. Amanda B. Silberer of Western Illinois University.

Previous OVC Faculty - Commitment to Success Award honorees from UT Martin are Dr. Mahmoud Haddad, professor of finance (2022-23) and Dr. Angie MacKewn, professor of psychology (2023-24).

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

Dr. Christopher Brown, professor of philosophy, had an article “Human Nature Transcended, Not Destroyed: St. Thomas Aquinas on Creaturely Acts of Intellect and Will in Heaven” published in [Lux Veritatis: A Journal of Speculative Theology 1, No. 2 \(2024\), pp. 194-226](#).

In the paper, Brown argues that St. Thomas Aquinas’ account of heaven not only allows for a sensible response to a potential problem for traditional Christian accounts of heaven he calls “the Problem of Heaven and Human Nature,” but that St. Thomas’ views



Brown

are not subject to additional theological and philosophical problems he identifies for a number of views of heaven alternative to those of St. Thomas.

A recent article titled “Neuroimaging and Physiological Data-driven Autonomous Vehicle Driving Simulation System in Extended Reality” has been accepted for presentation at the IEEE International Conference on Engineering Reliable Autonomous Systems (IEEE ERAS 2025), to be held May 29–30 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts.

The article is co-authored by **Dr. Saman Sargolzaei**, associate professor of engineering and UT Martin students Curt Lynch, Kyle Byassee, Isaac Copeland and Seth Hatchett.

The research and development project introduces a driving simulation system developed in the UTM Brain Autonomy and Resiliency Lab, which uses electroencephalography, heart rate variability and eye tracking



Sargolzaei

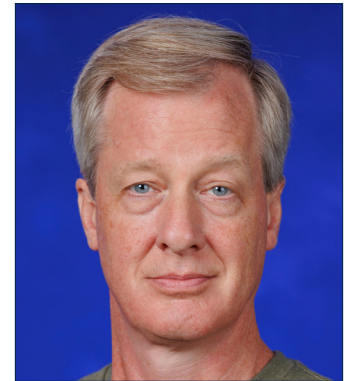
to monitor drivers’ cognitive and physiological states during autonomous vehicle simulations.

By integrating these modalities, the system provides valuable insights into driver comfort, attention and interaction with automation, supporting future research and the advancement of safer, more user-friendly autonomous driving technologies.

Dr. Daniel Nappo, professor of Spanish, gave a guest lecture April 8 to a group of about 20 students at the University of Kansas with assistance from Dr. Jonathan Mayhew, professor of Spanish and Portuguese.

The lecture was made via Zoom, and Nappo presented and answered questions about the poetic qualities and techniques of song lyrics from Spanish popular music.

The presentation focused almost exclusively on the song lyrics of Joaquín Sabina. For many in the Spanish-speaking



Nappo

world, Sabina is known as the “Spanish (Bob) Dylan.”

The presentation was given in Mayhew’s SPAN 453 – Poets and Songwriters course.

Dr. Richard Garlitz, associate professor of history, participated in a panel March 2 commemorating the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon at the Calloway County Public Library in Murray, Kentucky.

The title of the presentation was “Teaching the Vietnam War through Historiographical Shifts.”

Dr. Brian Clardy, professor of history at Murray State University and a graduate of the UTM history program,



Garlitz

organized and participated in the panel.

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

**April 20-26:
Administrative
Professionals
Week**

***Thank you*
to our Administrative Professionals!**

Faculty, students attend math conference



The UTM Department of Mathematics and Statistics took part in the Mathematical Association of America Southeastern Section Conference held March 28-30 at High Point University. Shown are members of the UTM mathematics and statistics faculty who attended: (l-r) Dr. Ezra Nance, lecturer; Dr. Brian Wagner, professor; Tom Eskew, instructor; Dr. Shalmali Bandyopadhyay, assistant professor; Dr. Jason Devito, associate professor; John Bush, lecturer; and Dr. Charlie Liu, assistant professor. The department fielded two Math Jeopardy student teams this year, including a women's team made up of Emily Tester, Natalie Bayless, Rachel Flores and Joan West and a men's team made up of Kyle Byassee, Hunter Johnson, Curt Lynch and Brandon Jones. The women's team advanced to the second round of competition. Four faculty members – Bandyopadhyay, Devito, Liu and Wagner – and Flores gave oral presentations. Tester, Byassee and Lynch – presented a poster. Bandyopadhyay organized a workshop on "Beyond the PhD: Career at PUI" (predominantly undergraduate institutions).

Social work students help flood victims



Social work students recently provided disaster recovery assistance to a couple in Rives, Tennessee whose property was impacted by catastrophic flooding. The service-learning initiative involved debris removal and property rehabilitation. "One of the foundational values of social work is service," said course instructor Dr. Cayce Batts. "This community service project allowed students to directly observe one of our professional values in practice." Among the students who helped are (l-r) Camille Dansby, Icesies Darden, Kove Boyd and Hanna Abbitt

Foltz, Harris earn Outstanding Employees Awards

UT Martin held its Spring 2025 Outstanding Employees Award presentations April 16, with **Dr. Laura Foltz**, special assistant to the vice chancellor for finance and administration for strategic initiatives, earning the award for exempt employees and **Tina Harris**, administrative assistant in the Division of Access and Engagement and the Office of Access, Compliance and Title IX, earning the nonexempt employees award.

Foltz was nominated by co-workers across the entire campus. In conjunction with her normal duties, she has been a part of the implementation of the DASH system and training people over the last year. She also agreed to take on the duties as interim director of human resources.

Harris has been an administrative assistant at UT Martin for 15 years. She has filled two positions for many years.



Shown with Chancellor Yancy Freeman (center) at the presentation of Outstanding Employee Awards for Spring 2025 are non-exempt employee winner Tina Harris (left) and exempt employee winner Dr. Laura Foltz.

Computer science department holds pinning ceremony



The UTM Department of Computer Science held a pinning ceremony April 15 in the Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building to honor new computing professionals. The event included the Pledge of the Computing Professional and the presentation of pins as a symbol of commitment to the field. Pictured are (l-r) Dr. Nancy Buschhaus, dean of the College of Engineering and Natural Sciences; Bob Bradley, interim chair of the Department of Computer Science; Tiffany Decker; Jhems Wallace; Vance Brender-A-Brandis; Jeremy Gordon; Henry Joyner; Wesley Duclos; Jace Riley; Dr. Lily Pharris, assistant professor of computer science; Dr. Jian Wang, assistant professor of computer science; Dr. Qing Wang, associate professor of computer science; and Dawn Dill, administrative associate.

UTM Care Team Well-Being Summit set for April 25

The Office of Student Conduct and Care announced that registration is now open for the UTM Care Team Well-Being Summit 2025.

The summit will take place from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Friday, April 25, at the Boling University Center.

This summit will be a come-and-go event, designed to bring together students, faculty and staff to explore the critical role of relationships in fostering a culture of care, belonging, well-being and student success.

The summit will feature several presenters, including:

- **Dr. David Barber**, professor of history.
- **Dr. Cayce Batts**, lecturer of behavioral science.
- **Dr. Amy Richards**, associate professor and Didactic Program in Dietetics director.

To register for the well-being summit, go to [this site](#). Registration ends noon April 24. This event is free to UTM faculty, staff and students.

Those who have questions or need assistance should contact the Office of Student Conduct and Care at 731-881-7703 or via email at utmcareteam@utm.edu.



UT MARTIN CARE TEAM

Well-Being Summit

**“Retention Through Relationships:
Fostering a Culture of Care and Belonging”**

**UT Martin Students,
Faculty, and Staff: FREE**

PRESENTERS:

- **Dr. David Barber**
History Professor, UT Martin
- **Dr. Cayce Batts**
Lecturer of Behavioral Sciences, UT Martin
- **Rachel Bradford**
Director of Case Management & Peer Support Services, Carey Counseling
- **Lisa Clifton**
Associate Professor of Behavioral Sciences, UT Martin
- **Tonya Drewry**
Director of Early Intervention Services, Carey Counseling
- **Tamera Harden**
UT Martin Student
- **Conrad Pegues**
Assistant Professor, Paul Meek Library, UT Martin
- **Natalie Perkins**
Lecturer of Mass Media and Strategic Communication, UT Martin
- **Dr. Amy Richards**
Associate Professor & Didactic Program in Dietetics Director, UT Martin
- **Samantha Roney**
UT Martin Student
- **Samantha McIntyre**
Director of Collegiate Recovery, Tennessee Association of Mental Health Organizations
- **Tammy Stanford**
Assistant Director of Success Counseling, UT Martin
- **Amanda Waldon**
Assistant Program Director of the Veterinary Technology Program, UT Martin
- **John'Na Webster**
Health & Wellness Educator, Student Health & Counseling Services, UT Martin

REGISTER HERE!

OR

[HTTPS://UTM.CO1.QUALTRICS.COM/JFE/FORM/SV_EQNX21QIINKKRHM6](https://utm.co1.qualtrics.com/JFE/FORM/SV_EQNX21QIINKKRHM6)

Friday, April 25, 2025
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM
COME AND GO
Boling University Center

731.881.7703
utmcareteam@utm.edu

UTM+ **THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE MARTIN**
OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND CARE

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Guy earns Skyhawk Innovation Award

Darnesha Guy, coordinator of employer relations in the Office of Career Services, received the Skyhawk Innovation Award for April 2025.

The award comes with a commemorative plaque and a \$250 cash prize.

According to the award announcement made April 15, it was Guy's "outstanding creativity, strategic thinking and dedication to enhancing the student experience" that helped her earn the award.

The award announcement stated that Guy's idea to combine the career fair and Senior Salute into one event "not only improved efficiency but also created a more impactful experience for students and employers alike."

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

The Skyhawk Spirit Award



Guy

is given based on performance and provides a \$50 prize and a commemorative plaque. The

Skyhawk Innovation 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 May Skyhawk awards, send nominations with a description of why they deserve the award to skyhawkspiritaward@utm.edu by May 2.

Seven chosen for inaugural CTL retreat

The UT Martin Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) announced that seven UTM faculty members were selected to participate in the University of Tennessee's inaugural system-wide Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) Retreat.

This prestigious two-day event will be held June 12-13 at Henry Horton State Park in Chapel Hill.

The retreat, jointly hosted by CTLs from UT Martin, UT Knoxville, UT Chattanooga, UT Southern and the UT Health Science Center, aims to help faculty jumpstart and refine their SoTL work.

The retreat will bring together 28 faculty members from across these five UT campuses. This

collaborative environment will provide opportunities for UTM educators to develop research that directly impacts classroom experiences and student success.

The seven UTM faculty members selected for this honor are **Dr. Shalmali Bandyopadhyay**, assistant professor of mathematics and statistics; **Dr. Cassie Burks**, assistant professor of nursing; **Dr. Jennifer D. Dickerson**, lecturer of education; **Dr. Kailyn Hall**, assistant professor of English; **Dr. Saman Sargolzaei**, associate professor of engineering; **Dr. Amanda Vanhooose**, assistant professor of biology; and **Dr. Natasha Varnick**, assistant professor of psychology.

This selection affirms the UT Martin CTL's commitment to providing meaningful opportunities for faculty development and continued investment in teaching excellence that ultimately enhances our students' educational experiences.



Bandyopadhyay



Burks



Dickerson



Hall



Sargolzaei



Vanhooose



Varnick

Remaining Skyhawk Home Events

Saturday, April 26

- *Softball vs. Tennessee State (dh), noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.

Sunday, April 27

- *Softball vs. Tennessee State, noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.

Friday, May 2

- *Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, May 3

- *Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Sunday, May 4

- *Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Tuesday, May 6

- Baseball vs. North Alabama, 6 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Thursday, May 15

- *Baseball vs. SIUE, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Friday, May 16

- *Baseball vs. SIUE, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, May 17

- *Baseball vs. SIUE, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

* - conference competition.

Full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com.

Dates and times are subject to change.



**Read more UT Martin news
at news.utm.edu!**

UTM students take part in annual Posters at the Capitol



Since 2006, the Posters at the Capitol event has highlighted undergraduate research from Tennessee's public universities. This year, nine institutions took part with 57 undergraduates presenting their research. This event gives students an opportunity to expose their research to legislators, and it gives legislators a chance to see the types of research occurring at the undergraduate level at Tennessee's public universities. Shown are the UTM students who participated in this year's event (l-r): Seth Hatchett, Jonathan Barber, Joshua Townsend, Sara Batts and Lydia Honbarger. Faculty mentors working with the UTM students included Dr. Stan Dunagan (Honbarger), professor of geology; Dr. Ann Gathers (Batts), associate professor of biology; Dr. Saman Sargolzaei (Batts and Hatchett), associate professor of engineering; and Dr. Ali Seyedkavoosi (Barber and Townsend), associate professor of engineering. Dunagan accompanied the students to Nashville and the Capitol for the event.

You Tell Me

• **Question** – What's the status of the Hall-Moody Administration Building project??

• **Answer** – The first phase of the Hall-Moody Administration Building HVAC capital upgrade project is expected to be completed in July 2025. The second phase will be completed in the first quarter of 2026. More about the timetable for Phase 2 completion will be known when the project bids and is included in the budget.

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

addenda

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