

addenda

The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | March 2, 2026

Ministers breakfast held Feb. 2



Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. (third from left) hosted a campus ministers breakfast in the Chancellor's Conference Room on Feb. 2. Shown at the event are (l-r) Dr. Andy Lewter, vice chancellor for student affairs; first lady Rafielle Freeman; Chancellor Freeman; Mollie June Miller-Bachman, Wesley Foundation campus director and misiter; Deacon Rodney Freed and Stacy Freed, campus ministers of the Skyhawk Catholic Ministry; and Casey Paulin, campus minister of Skyhawks for Christ.

UT Martin ranks well in U.S. News & World Report

UT Martin continues to shine in the U.S. News & World Report college rankings, placing among the top 20 schools in the South Region in four categories and among the top 60 nationwide in two online program rankings.

UT Martin ranked eighth among colleges in the South Region for veterans, earning the top spot in Tennessee in that category. The university also ranked ninth overall among public colleges and universities in the South

Region and first among Tennessee public institutions.

The university held the same rankings in those categories in a similar release issued by U.S. News & World Report on Sept. 23. The current rankings were released by U.S. News & World Report on Jan. 27.

The university tied for 20th among universities in the South Region – first among Tennessee colleges and universities – and 21st among the South Region best-value

schools, placing fifth among Tennessee colleges and universities in that category. UT Martin had those same regional rankings in the September release.

UT Martin ranked 46th in the South Region in social mobility in the January listing, third among Tennessee colleges and universities.

In online college programs, UT Martin tied for 38th nationally in online MBA

Continued on PAGE 5

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff



UT Martin students and instructors attending the “Yokai Parade: Supernatural Monsters from Japan” display in Murfreesboro were (kneeling, l-r) Rubi Maldonado, Talena Glover, Kyoko Hammond (lecturer of Japanese), professor Sarah Haig (chair of the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts), (first row standing, l-r) Ethan Tanner, Kylie Smith, Delilah Luciano, Damien Davidson, Regina Golden, Audrey Conger, (second row standing, l-r) Laura Telfer, Johntavia Cross, Melle Fuqua, Brandon Rogers, Natalie Munday, (back row standing, l-r) Mickela Stewart, Donovan Stribling and April Hosey. The Feb. 21 visit to the international traveling exhibit was funded by the UTM Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages and the the UTM Department of Visual and Theatre Arts.

Sarah Haig, chair of the Department of Visual and Theatre Arts, and Kyoko Hammond, lecturer of Japanese, took a group of art and Japanese students to an experiential learning opportunity on Feb. 21.

exhibit entitled “Yokai Parade: Supernatural Monsters from Japan” was on display at the Todd Art Gallery at Middle Tennessee State University and organized by The Japan Foundation.

participated and enjoyed this special event.

This learning opportunity was sponsored by the UTM Department of Visual and Theatre Arts and the UTM Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages.

An international traveling

Thirteen UTM students

Erica Bell, executive director of Regional Centers and Online Programs, served as a panelist during the United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA) Public Policy Week as TNDLA state chapter president.

The leaders discussed how emerging policies, legislation, technology shifts, and funding priorities are shaping digital learning in their respective regions, highlighted state-level trends affecting access, equity, and innovation in distance and digital education, and underscored Tennessee’s leadership in national conversations on digital learning policy.



Bell

The news at
news.utm.edu

State tour to promote, celebrate 125th anniversary

UT MARTIN | NEWS

Upcoming Skyhawk Home Events

Friday, March 6

- Baseball vs. Mississippi Valley State, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, March 7

- Baseball vs. Mississippi Valley State, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Sunday, March 8

- Baseball vs. Mississippi Valley State, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Tuesday, March 10

- Baseball vs. Union (Tenn.), 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Friday, March 13

- Baseball vs. The Citadel, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, March 14

- Stunt vs. Central Methodist, 10 a.m., Skyhawk Fieldhouse.
- *Softball vs. Southeast Missouri (dh), noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.
- *Stunt vs. Missouri State, 2 p.m., Skyhawk Fieldhouse.
- Baseball vs. The Citadel, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

* - conference competition; dh - double-header (baseball and softball); full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com.

Dates and times are subject to change.

Rasmussen named director of online programs

Sarah Rasmussen has joined UT Martin as the new director of online programs.

She will lead the continued development and growth of UTM's online portfolio, working closely with faculty, staff and campus partners to enhance high-quality, learner-centered online experiences.

"Sarah brings a wealth of experience in digital and online education, coupled with a deep, student-first passion that aligns with UTM's mission," said **Erica Bell**, executive director of regional centers

and online programs. "Her background in strategic online program development, faculty collaboration and data-informed decision-making will be instrumental as we expand and strengthen UTM Online to better serve our students and expand opportunities."

With more than two decades of experience in higher education, Rasmussen has led online education and professional learning initiatives across the country.

She has directed comprehensive online



Rasmussen

portfolios of undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs, guided instructional design teams and supported

faculty in implementing innovative, outcomes-based and workforce-aligned online and hybrid courses.

Her prior roles have also included overseeing academic and student services for adult and nontraditional learners, building pathways that support transition and persistence, and partnering with community and employer stakeholders to align educational offerings with regional workforce needs.

To contact Rasmussen, call 731-881-7959 or email outreach@utm.edu.

Skyhawk Spirit Award nominations due Friday

Nominations for this month's Skyhawk Spirit Awards should be turned in by the end of the day Friday, March 6.

Skyhawk Spirit Awards seek to recognize employee contributions that exceed expectations for performance. All regular full- and part-time faculty and staff up to the level of director are eligible to receive Spirit Awards. Independent contractors, temporary employees, volunteers and executive-level staff who report directly to the chancellor and serve as a member of the chancellor's cabinet are not eligible for the

Skyhawk Spirit Award.

There are two awards that people may be nominated for are:

- The Skyhawk Innovation Award, which seeks to recognize employees who achieve beyond the status quo by implementing an idea, initiative, process or system that improves efficiencies or outcomes.

The \$250 Innovative Spirit Award nominees are reviewed by the director of human resources for final approval and must include sufficient documentation of the employee contribution that warrants

their nomination.

- The Skyhawk Spirit Award, which is given to those whose performance is substantially beyond expectation on a specific assignment, task or goal or to those whose contributions have a significant impact on department or university objectives.

Winners of the Skyhawk Spirit Award receive a \$50 cash prize. Winners of both awards also receive plaques.

Nominations for each month's awards should be sent to skyhawkspiritaward@utm.edu by the first Friday of each month.

Daylight saving time begins Sunday

The annual time change takes place at 2 a.m., Sunday, March 8, as most of the nation moves from standard time to daylight saving time.

To adjust clocks, watches and other devices, move them ahead by one hour. The day will be a 23-hour day, with the hour from 2 to 3 a.m. skipped over, giving people one less hour of sleep.

The Tennessee General Assembly and other states have passed legislation for permanent daylight saving time. Others are advocating for permanent standard time.

No changes can be made to daylight saving time without Congressional approval.

Hawai'i and most of Arizona do not observe daylight saving time.

Daylight saving time ends Sunday, Nov. 1, when the nation returns to standard time.

SAVE THE DATE

March 4, 2026 | 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Nunnally Welcome Center, Room 107,
Boling University Center

Help shape the future of the College of Business and Global Affairs!

- Review building plans.
- Give us your feedback and ideas about the new Business Administration Building.
- Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members are welcome!



Math Craft Lab members speak at Rotary Club



The Department of Mathematics and Statistics had members of its Math Craft Lab share their passion for mathematics Feb. 19 with the Martin Rotary Club. The team highlighted the many creative and engaging ways mathematics comes to life through hands-on activities, outreach and community programming. It was a great opportunity to showcase how math can be fun, accessible and inspiring for learners of all ages. Those attending the meeting were (l-r) Dana Gatewood, lecturer; Jackie Siler, Rotary Club president; Barbara Kunkel, lecturer; Dr. Amanda Niedzialomski, assistant professor of mathematics; Shelly Long, administrative assistant; Arlena Ferrell, a sophomore math major; and Carlin Bush, lab instructor.

Panel program on leadership set for March 3

The UTM human resources office will present a panel program, “Spilling the Tea for Leadership, Impact and Influence,” 3 to 4 p.m. in Room 230 Boling University Center.

This interactive conversation will highlight real leadership journeys, professional development experiences, lessons learned and the role of self-awareness in effective

leadership.

Panelists for the program include first lady **Rafielle Freeman**, Senior Vice Chancellor **Petra McPherson**, Human Resources Director

Dr. Debbie Stairs and Senior Associate Athletics Director for Internal Operations **Ashley Bynum**.

The program is free and open to faculty and staff.

Campus Calendar

Monday, March 2

- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee 4 p.m., 124 Gooch Hall.

Tuesday, March 3

- Employee Appreciation Come-and-Go Brunch, 10 a.m., Russell Duncan Ballroom, Boling University Center.
- Coffee and Conversation with the Chancellor, 10 a.m., Center for Student Engagement Suite, Boling University Center, for Boling University Center and Student Recreation Center

employees.

- Intercollegiate Review Board, 4 p.m., 124 Gooch Hall.

Wednesday, March 4

- New Business Administration Building review, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. (come-and-go), Nunnally Welcome Center, 107 Boling University Center, open to the public.

Thursday, March 5

- “Spilling the Tea for Leadership, Impact and Influence,” postponed to Thursday, April 16.

Saturday, March 7

- ENTICE Series, Student Leadership Summit, 9 a.m., Wartkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

Tuesday, March 10

- ENTICE Series, film screening, “Echoes of the Forks of Cypress,” 6 p.m., Watkins Auditorium, Boling University Center.

Monday, March 16

- “History of Military Nursing,” 6:30 p.m., Martin Public Library, second floor.

Tuesday, March 17

- Coffee and Conversations

with the Chancellor, 9 a.m., ITS Presentation Room, Crisp Hall, open to all.

March 24-26

- UT Innovative Technology Symposium, Knoxville Convention Center; register through March 17; open to faculty, staff and students; app and registration info available [at this site](#).

Events are subject to cancellation; dates, times and sites are subject to change. Send free-admission, on-campus events to Addenda at addenda@utm.edu.

Nursing history program held at Martin Public Library

A special program exploring the history of military nursing will be held at 6:30 p.m., Monday, March 16, at the Martin Public Library.

Theresa Craige, a 2019 UT Martin graduate, will present a program highlighting military nursing history with a particular focus on World War II.

Her presentation will feature items from her personal collection of rare medical and nursing artifacts from the World War II era.

The event is coordinated by Dr. Cassondra Burks, assistant

professor of nursing, as part of a special nursing history course.

In partnership with the Weakley County Historical and Genealogical Society, the program has been opened to the public.

Craige has a background in intensive care nursing and has served communities across West and Middle Tennessee. She is committed to preserving and sharing nursing history, particularly the contributions of military nurses during World War II.

In addition to her clinical

work, Craige is an active nurse re-enactor who participates in events across the United States and internationally.

Her collection of nursing uniforms and artifacts earned “Best of Show” honors at the 2025 Tennessee Military Collectors Show in Franklin.

The program will take place on the second floor of the Martin

Public Library at 410 Lindell St. Guests should enter through the Lindell Street entrance.

A brief business meeting of the Weakley County Historical and Genealogical Society will begin at 6 p.m., with Craige’s presentation to follow.

The event is free and open to the public.

RANKINGS from PAGE 1

programs for veterans – first among Tennessee colleges and universities – and tied for 59th nationally for online MBA programs overall, also ranking first among Tennessee colleges and universities.

UT Martin tied for 205th nationally in the online Master’s in Education program, ranking third among Tennessee colleges and universities.

UT Martin improved eight places over the September ranking of 46th in online MBA programs.

On the international scene, Study Abroad Aide – a

company that ranks colleges and universities worldwide to assist students who want to study abroad – ranked UT Martin No. 355 in the world overall out of 8,477 colleges and universities – ranking among the top 5% of colleges and universities worldwide – and No. 106 in the United States.

The university was ranked No. 305 in the world in its best-value category – among the top 4% in the world – and No. 96 in that category in the United States.

UTM tied its second-highest fall enrollment total in history as 8,101 students enrolled for the fall 2025 semester.

UT Martin Department of Nursing, Weakley County Historical and Genealogical Society, and Martin Public Library Present

HISTORY of MILITARY NURSING



Theresa Craige, a 2019 graduate of UT Martin, will present an engaging program highlighting military nursing history, with a particular focus on World War II. The presentation will feature items from her personal collection of rare medical and nursing artifacts from the World War II era.

MONDAY, MARCH 16TH

6:30 PM

SECOND FLOOR OF THE MARTIN PUBLIC LIBRARY
Use Lindell Street Entrance

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

You Tell Me

•**Question** – UT Martin no longer has a temporary employee pool. Why was the temporary employee pool discontinued, and what is the recommended way to fill a position temporarily?

•**Answer** – To have a robust temporary employee pool, regular work must exist to keep temporary employees. Although retirees are an excellent group from which the university could recruit, the post-retirement restrictions often prevent them from being able to fill the urgent requests received. If the demand starts to increase, the university will advertise in order to create a pool. If there is someone who has expertise in the administrative area that is needed for a short-term duration, the Office of Human Resources would work with the office or department to assist them in the hiring process.

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

addenda

Published weekly during the academic year and biweekly during the summer by UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238
 Randy Boyd – President, University of Tennessee System • Dr. Yancy Freeman Sr. – UTM Chancellor • David Snow – Addenda Editor
 UT Martin is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA employer. E05-0415-00-001-26