

Exempt Staff Council
Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2024
UTC Library, Southern Writers' Room

Meeting Description: The council received updates from Chair Susan Lazenby regarding the movement from the current model of employee representation to a campuswide Staff Senate/Council. Vice Chancellor Bryan Johnson held an information session and open forum for the Exempt Staff Council to discuss the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's strategic plan and Total Organizational Health initiatives.

Guest Speaker: Bryan Johnson, Executive Vice Chancellor & Chief Strategy Officer

Updates – Employee Representation Model (Susan Lazenby): There has been growing interest systemwide over the past year among executive leadership and UT System leadership to move toward an employee representation model that represents the entire body of staff at UTC, both Exempt and Non-exempt. This model could mirror Faculty Senate and be tailored to serve staff as a similar model for top-down and bottom-up communication and solutions to needs of the campus. More information will be shared regarding interest in and work toward this staff-wide Senate model in future meetings and campus communications.

Strategic Plan & Executive Leadership Update (Bryan Johnson): VC Johnson reiterated the importance of strategic planning, not only in its presentation, but in its action, communication, and relationship to stakeholders. It is imperative that the university's strategic planning efforts are rooted in its students, faculty, staff, and greater community and how these efforts relate to those who make success of the university possible and probable. A steering committee for the university's strategic plan (2025-2030) was recently established to identify the biggest opportunities for the university moving forward. These include enrollment targets, addressing infrastructure and capacity concerns, etc. The goal is to have the Strategy 2030 plan sent to the UT Board of Trustees by February 2025, and part of this collaborative process includes identifying subcommittees for specific efforts and initiatives, in addition to surveys collecting input from students, faculty, and staff regarding the university's "Mission, Vision, and Values." Data will largely drive the strategic

plan moving forward, which does include market analyses and determinations that may inform programmatic decisions at the unit level. Organizational health remains a proactive priority for the university's strategic plan, and this certainly aids the UT System of campuses in an environment characterized by hardships and challenges for higher education institutions and programs across parts of the United States more broadly. Ongoing TOH efforts inform the university's strategic plan to include a focus on people and culture (seeing employees and students as investments, emphasizing genuine partnerships, breaking down silos, committee bloat, etc.).

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 20, 2024