

East Tennessee State University

Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University

University Council Agendas and Minutes

Agendas and Minutes

10-9-2023

2023 October 09 - University Council Agenda and Minutes

University Council, East Tennessee State University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/university-council-agendas-minutes>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

University Council, East Tennessee State University, "2023 October 09 - University Council Agenda and Minutes" (2023). *University Council Agendas and Minutes*. 64.
<https://dc.etsu.edu/university-council-agendas-minutes/64>

This Agendas and Minutes is brought to you for free and open access by the Agendas and Minutes at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in University Council Agendas and Minutes by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

AGENDA
University Council
Monday, October 9, 2023
East Tennessee Room,
DP Culp Center
8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Standing Items
 - 3.1. Approve minutes of the September 11, 2023 meeting
 - 3.2. Review agenda
 - 3.3. Consent agenda items:
 - Parental Leave Policy – Kay Lennon-McGrew
 - Campus Closing Due to Inclement Weather Policy – Kay Lennon-McGrew
 - 3.4. Call for Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations
 - 3.5. Sub-Council Reports – Quality & Effectiveness Sub-council – Dr. Mike Hoff
4. Action Items
 - 4.1. Old Business
 - 4.2. New Business
5. Information Items/Presentations
 - 5.1. New Organizational Structure for Office of Administration and work processes – Jeremy Ross
6. President's Report
7. Announcements
8. Adjournment

The next meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

University Council
Monday, October 9, 2023
East Tennessee Room

1. Call to Order

Provost Kimberly D. McCorkle called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Melissa Nipper led the roll call. Members present were: Bridget Baird, Dr. Ginni Blackhart, Dr. Joe Bidwell, Dr. Bill Block, Dr. Joel Faidley, Ms. Joy Fulkerson, Ms. Christy Graham, Dr. Adam Green, Dr. Nick Hagemeier, Mr. Steven Hendrix, Dr. Mike Hoff, Dr. Keith Johnson, Dr. Karen King, Dr. Dhirendra Kumar, Dr. Kimberly D. McCorkle, Dr. Brian Noland, Dr. Rob Pack, Mr. Jeremy Ross, Ms. Pam Ritter, Dr. Joe Sherlin, Mr. Mehmet Topyurek, and Mr. Trent White.

3. Standing Items

3.1 Approve Minutes of the September 11, 2023, Meeting

A motion was made to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2023, meeting. The motion was seconded; the minutes were approved.

3.2 Review Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

3.3 Consent Agenda Items

A motion was made and seconded to approve the two items on the consent agenda (listed below). The motion was approved.

3.3.1 Parental Leave Policy

3.3.2 Campus Closing Due to Inclement Weather Policy

3.4 Call for Voluntary Reports of UC-Essential Action Items from Governance Organizations

Faculty Senate: Dr. Ginni Blackhart reported that the Faculty Senate would host Dr. Karen King, Ms. Christy Graham, and Ms. Lori Erickson for a presentation about the Voyager implementation at the October 9 meeting. On October 30, the Faculty Senate will host Dr. Nick Hagemeier and Dr. Virginia Foley to speak about the work of the Academic Structure Task Force. At a previous Faculty Senate meeting, the Senate heard from Dr. Sharon McGee and Dr. David Harker on the work of the General Education Redesign Task Force. She also noted that in April, ETSU will host the Tennessee University Faculty Senate meeting.

SGA: SGA President Trent White provided an update on the Homecoming festivities, noting the success of the Pep Rally and other activities.

3.5 Sub-Council Reports

Quality and Effectiveness Sub-Council (QESC): Dr. Mike Hoff provided an update on the work of the QESC on behalf of Dr. Cheri Clavier. He explained that the sub-council has been separated into four sub-groups: Pre-Accreditation and Program Preview; Post-Accreditation and Program Review; Institutional Satisfaction and Student Access and Success; and Student Equity. The groups will allow more people to become actively engaged with the process and will also allow for better use of institutional data.

4. Action Items

4.1 Old Business

There was no old business to come before the council.

4.2 New Business

There was no new business to come before the council.

5. Information Items/Presentations

5.1 New Organizational Structure for Office of Administration and Work Processes

Mr. Jeremy Ross reported on organizational changes to the Office of Administration, including the introduction of a new office: Capital Assets and Real Estate. He also discussed the functions of the Business Office.

Mr. Jeff Blanton reviewed a new process that will be more widely implemented across the ETSU campus: zone maintenance. This process will divide the campus into three zones (east, middle, and west) to increase efficiency and maximize resources for maintenance, custodial, and grounds work in these areas. Mr. Blanton pointed out that zone maintenance is already being used at Quillen College of Medicine and Housing. Using current personnel, they will pilot the zone approach on the east side of campus and hope to expand to the middle and west campus when staffing is in place to do so.

Mr. Ross provided an update on themes from the master plan, including considerations of campus walkability, parking, housing, and facilities.

Finally, Ms. Laura Bailey updated the council on the process for renovation of space, going over the Renovation/Space Utilization Request Form, located on the Facilities Management website.

She also emphasized the importance of using the Work Order Request Form so that work orders can be addressed in a timely, streamlined manner.

Mr. Ross was asked about parking on campus, and informed the council that a consultant is currently performing a needs assessment of different user groups to examine ratios, enrollment projections, possibilities for new parking, costs, and a host of other issues related to parking. The result will be an operational plan to prepare for the identified needs.

6. President's Report

President Noland thanked Dr. Joe Sherlin, SGA President Trent White, and all of the individuals who helped plan the Homecoming celebration.

He noted that at least a 4 percent across-the-board salary increase recommendation will come before the ETSU Board of Trustees for approval.

He encouraged the council to attend the events taking place during the ETSU Founders Week, which will conclude with the State of the University address on Friday, October 13. At that time, he will update the campus community on enrollment, first-year student comparisons, student success and retention, graduation rate, salaries, and other items of note.

7. Announcements

Provost Kimberly D. McCorkle previewed the ETSU Elevates event on Monday, October 9, at 5:30 p.m. at the ETSU Martin Center and encouraged the council to attend.

8. Adjournment

Provost McCorkle adjourned the meeting at 9:24 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 13, at 8:30 a.m.



Campus Closing due to Inclement Weather	
Responsible Official: Chief Operating Officer	Responsible Office: Office of Administration

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the institutional response plan to local and regional inclement weather conditions.

Policy Statement

East Tennessee State University (ETSU) will communicate with the campus community in the event of a closure, suspension of activities, or delayed opening.

I. Closure, Suspension, or Delayed Opening.

The President, Chief Operating Officer (COO), or the President's designee may officially delay opening, close, or suspend selected activities of the university due to weather conditions. All staff are expected to report to their specific work locations by the set opening time if safe to do so. When a decision to close is made, information is distributed to the campus community, shared with local media, and posted on etsu.edu.

A. Closure.

If ETSU closes early, all instruction and campus activities will conclude at the designated time and should not extend beyond that time.

B. Delayed Openings.

In the event of a delayed opening, the President, COO, or the President's designee will determine a specific time of opening and that information will be distributed to the campus community, shared with local media, and/or posted to the ETSU webpage.

All faculty and staff are expected to report to their specific work location by the designated opening time. Students are expected to report to their regularly scheduled class only if there are thirty or more minutes remaining in the session. In a delayed opening, all classes scheduled

prior to the set time of opening and those that have less than thirty minutes remaining are canceled for the day.

C. Off-Campus Sites and Activities.

Decisions related to delayed openings and closures of Off-Campus Sites and Activities will follow the policies and procedures of those site locations. Off-Campus Sites and cohort programs meeting in school or community college facilities will follow the inclement weather policies of the local school system or community college in which the class or activity is held. All ETSU health clinics should exercise discretion with safety being a paramount consideration, as well as considering the needs of their patients and employees. The clinic director is responsible for making the determination regarding any delays or closures.

II. Essential Activities.

During university closing, certain essential functions such as campus dining, Facilities Management, and Public Safety will continue to operate. The Office of Administration will coordinate with health clinics, the library, the Center for Physical Activity, and Dining Services regarding amended hours of operation.

III. Travel.

ETSU recognizes safe passage conditions vary for faculty, students, and staff depending upon the geographic regions from which they may be traveling. As such, it is the responsibility of each person to determine if safe travel is possible.

IV. Employee Responsibilities.

When ETSU remains open, all faculty, administrators, and staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to maintain their regular work schedules; however, they are advised to avoid undue travel risks. Employees who anticipate arriving late or not arriving at work must notify their immediate supervisors. Employees have the option of charging their time off to annual leave, leave without pay, or with approval they may make up their lost work hours. Graduate assistants, interns, volunteers, etc. should contact their supervisors regarding their work schedules.

V. Student Responsibilities.

Students will be responsible for any academic work they miss due to absences caused by severe weather conditions or threats to campus. It is the student's responsibility to make up any missed work, and it is the instructor's responsibility to provide a reasonable opportunity for students to complete assignments or exams missed due to such absences.

VI. Online Courses.

Asynchronous Online Courses are not affected by university schedule changes due to inclement weather or threats to campus. The instructors in these courses are responsible for any modifications in course deadlines, assignments, or other requirements in an online course. Students should contact their instructor for guidance in these situations.

Synchronous Online Courses follow the announced schedule changes due to inclement weather.

VII. Delayed Opening or Emergency Closing Pay.

In the event of a delayed opening or a closing, full-time and part-time Regular Employees on the active payroll who are scheduled to work during the declared times of closing will be granted time off from work with pay. Employees who are not scheduled to work will not be paid for the emergency closing. If an emergency closing has not been declared due to inclement weather and an employee is prevented from reporting to work for their normally scheduled working hours, annual leave or leave without pay will be charged; or, the employee may be allowed with institutional approval to make up the time lost. Regular part-time employees will be affected on a pro-rata basis in each of the provisions listed above.

Authority: Focus Act § 49-8-203, et.seq.

Previous Policy: PPP-28 Inclement Weather Policy; Inclement Weather Policy for Students in Online courses; PPP-14

Defined Terms

ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSES Courses that meet online, but do not meet at the same day and time as an on-ground section.

OFF-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES AND SITES Programs and/or classes which meet in locations or buildings off the main ETSU campus. E.g. – Chattanooga, Sevierville, etc.

REGULAR EMPLOYEE Personnel whose salary and benefits are budgeted on a recurring basis whether through grant or state funds, who are employed on a continuing basis, and who are eligible for full benefits (pro-rated based on percentage of effort). The Employee Classification policy provides information on types of regular employees.

SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSES Courses that meet online at the same day and time as an on-

ground section or courses that meet solely online at the same day and time.

Policy History

Effective Date:

Initial:

Revision:

Procedure

Effective Date:

Initial:

Revision:

Related Form(s)

Scope and Applicability

Primary:

Secondary:



MEMORANDUM

TO: University Council

FROM: Lori Erickson, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources; Jeff Blanton, Assistant Vice President of Administration; Mason Bowen, Director of Operations of Emergency Preparedness; Kay Lennon McGrew, Esq., Associate University Counsel

DATE: October 3, 2023

RE: Policies for October 9, 2023 UC Meeting

I. Parental Leave Policy.

A. Policy Purpose.

On August 1, 2023 in response to changes in Tennessee Law (TCA 4-21-208), ETSU enacted an emergency policy on Parental Leave. Pursuant to the Policy on Policies, the content of the emergency policy is now moving through the formal policy process. No substantive change to the content in the emergency policy were made in the proposed permanent policy. This policy specifies the parameters for parental leave.

B. Public Comment Period.

This policy was posted for public comment from September 9, 2023 through September 20, 2023. No substantive comments requesting revision of the policy were received. However, Rachel Waldon and Sharon McGee both applauded ETSU's efforts to adopt this policy.

C. Legal Review.

The Office of University Counsel completed its review of this policy on August 7, 2023 and found no legal issues.

D. Recommendation.

IN CONSIDERATION of all of the above, the Office of University Counsel confirms the requirements under the Policy and Development and Administrative Rulemaking Policy have been met and the Office of Human Resources recommends **APPROVAL** of the Parental Leave

Policy.

II. Campus Closure Policy.

A. Policy Purpose.

This policy specifies the institutional response plan to local and regional inclement weather conditions. It replaces the TBR policy which the institution is currently following.

B. Public Comment Period.

This policy was posted for public comment from September 9, 2023 through September 20, 2023. The following substantive comments were received:

Comment from Janna Scarborough: *“Hello - I believe cancelling synchronous classes for weather does make sense given that the exact time of the course is a consideration (different from asynchronous). There could be access issues due to power but also due to the need to be in a location, in front of a computer/phone with connection, at a specific time - and this could also be impacted by the weather-related issue.”*

Sponsor’s Response: Thank you for your comment. We agree.

Comment from Cheri Clavier: *“I agree with Dr. Pittarese's comment. For reference, the following are ETSU's off-campus instructional sites per the SACSCOC definition:*

- *ETSU at Kingsport Allandale, located at 1501 University Boulevard, Kingsport, TN 37660*
- *Nave Center, located at 1000 Jason Witten Way, Elizabethton, TN 37643*
- *Pellissippi State Community College, located at 10915 Hardin Valley Road, Knoxville, TN 37932*
- *ETSU at Sevier County, located at 2025 Red Bank Road, Sevierville, TN 37876*
- *BlueSky Chattanooga Center, located at 1 Cameron Circle, Chattanooga, TN 37402*

Note that SACSCOC considers a location an off-campus site when 25% or more of the credits towards a degree or certificate can be obtained there. However, ETSU offers instruction (below the 25% threshold) at additional locations not included in the list above, including at some local high schools via dual enrollment. Guidance for ETSU students, faculty, and staff at these locations would strengthen this policy.”

Sponsor’s Comment: Thank you for your comment. Please see the previous response. The policy has been updated.

Comment from Rachel Walden: *“I would appreciate having a responsibility spelled out in this policy regarding communication of expectations from leadership during weather hazards that occur during nights and weekends. For example, the Medical Library may be*

staffed until midnight on weekdays and open on weekends - when snow or other inclement weather occurs during these times, there is uncertainty about whether the institution will issue any specific closure or delay directive. We also have a student area that is open 24/7 by cardswipe; it would be helpful to know if emergency alerts for tornadoes or other hazards would go out in the middle of the night when students may be using campus buildings. Other campus units who may be affected on nights and weekends could include the Sherrod Library, the CPA, the Martin Center, other arts performance spaces, etc.”

Sponsor’s Response: While we cannot predict all emergency weather events in advance of the emergency, for example tornadoes, the communication is same regardless off the time of day. Our system currently does send out notices 24 hours a day. However, the nature of an emergency is often unforeseeable. It also depends on the time of emergency; for example, if a tornado were to strike, the 24/7 student area that you mentioned should stay open if students are in it, so that the students may shelter in place.

Comment from Sharon McGee: *“I agree with Dr. Pittarese's comment about off-site locations and the need for clarity in this policy regarding the impact of closures on off-campus sites.*

I agree with Dr. Epps and am confused as to why synchronous online classes would be canceled. It is possible in inclement weather that internet or electric services could be out, but couldn't the policy allow flexibility for that?

Many institutions are moving to online instruction in the event of forecasted inclement weather so that instructional time is not lost.

Sponsor’s Response: Thank you for your response. Please see previous comments.

Comment from Susan Epps: *“Are all synchronous courses connected to an on-ground course? If so, the policy that they would be canceled makes sense, but if they aren't connected to an on-ground course, why would a synchronous course need to be canceled for inclement weather if everyone is on Zoom?”*

Sponsor’s Response: Inclement weather may affect the faculty or student’s ability to access internet. In addition, we would neither require faculty to travel to campus to teach an online course nor do we require faculty to have internet in their homes to teach from home.

Comment from Tony Pittarese: *“Should there be a statement in this policy regarding off campus instructional locations? When closure announcements are made for the main campus, clarity is needed regarding how this affects Off-Campus Sites. As an example, the BlueSky Chattanooga Center must, of necessity, follow the closure policies of BlueCross BlueShield of TN. If they close their facility due to inclement weather, the instructional site would be required to close. Similarly, that Center may operate at times when the main campus*

is closed if the inclement weather is local in its effect. (Off-Campus Sites are listed in the defined terms, but I don't see Off-Campus Sites addressed in the policy.)”

Sponsor’s Response: Thank you for your comment. The policy has been updated to reflect your suggestion.

C. Legal Review.

The Office of University Counsel completed its review of this policy on October 2, 2023 and found no legal issues.

D. Recommendation.

IN CONSIDERATION of all of the above, the Office of University Counsel confirms the requirements under the Policy and Development and Administrative Rulemaking Policy have been met and the Office of Administration recommends **APPROVAL** of the Campus Closure Policy.



Parental Leave Policy	
Responsible Official: Chief Operating Officer	Responsible Office: Office of Human Resources

Policy Purpose

This policy specifies the parameters for parental leave and the procedures for receiving leave.

Policy Statement

In accordance with TCA § 4-21-208 and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), ETSU will provide up to four months of Parental Leave to Eligible Employees for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing an infant, subject to the limitations provided in TCA § 4-21-208, FMLA, and this policy. ETSU may request proof of birth or adoption documentation.

An employee who has not been employed at ETSU long enough to meet the requirements under TCA § 4-21-208 and FMLA, and therefore does not qualify for leave under this policy, may use accrued sick and/or annual leave for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing an infant.

I. Paid Parental Leave.

A. Eligibility for Paid Parental Leave.

1. Birth or Adoption of a child on or after July 1, 2023.

If an Eligible Employee's child is born or adopted on or after July 1, 2023, the first six weeks of the Eligible Employee's Parental Leave shall be Paid Parental Leave. The employee may only receive six weeks of Paid Parental Leave in a twelve-month period, even if the employee has more than one birth or adoption.

2. Birth or Adoption of a child before July 1, 2023.

If an Eligible Employee's child is:

- (1) born or adopted before July 1, 2023; and
- (2) the Eligible Employee has Parental Leave remaining for the birth or adoption of the child as of July 1, 2023,

then the Eligible Employee may receive Paid Parental Leave for any remaining Parental leave the employee is eligible to take on or after July 1, 2023, but not to exceed six weeks of Paid Parental Leave.

II. Notice.

Employees are required to give three months advance notice to their supervisor and the Office of Human Resources of their anticipated date of departure, length of leave, and intention to return to employment in accordance with the procedures section of this policy. Employees who are prevented from giving three months advance notice due to medical conditions, early birth, a late notice of adoption, or the retroactive adoption of this policy, shall not forfeit their rights and benefits under this policy.

III. Employment Rights and Benefits.

Leave taken pursuant to this policy shall not affect the employee's right to receive annual leave, sick leave, bonuses, advancement, length of service credit, benefits, plans or programs for which the employee was eligible at the date of their leave, and any other benefits or rights of their employment incident to the employee's employment position. However, ETSU is not required to provide for the cost of any benefits, plans or programs during the period of leave, unless ETSU provides such leave to all eligible employees on leaves of absence.

IV. Use of Leave.

Paid Parental Leave shall be at full pay. ETSU shall not charge Paid Parental Leave to sick, annual, or other leave the employee may have accumulated. ETSU shall consider such Paid Parental Leave to be regular employment for purposes of calculating service anniversary dates and longevity.

For the birth of a child on or after July 1, 2023, leave will be charged as follows for Eligible Employees:

- A. Paid Parental Leave will be paid first and must be used within twelve (12) months of the birth or placement of a child for adoption;
- B. Any available Sick Leave will be used second; and
- C. Once Paid Parental Leave and sick leave are exhausted, leave under this policy will be

charged to annual leave and then compensatory leave.

Parental Leave shall be continuous (e.g., in a single block of time), unless ETSU, at its discretion, permits the employee to use Parental Leave intermittently. In the event that Paid Parental Leave and accrued annual and sick leave balances are depleted prior to the end of the four (4) month parental leave period, the employee will be placed on unpaid leave of absence status. Refer to the Leave of Absence Policy for information on continuation of insurance coverage.

V. Return to Work.

ETSU may require written approval from the employee's attending medical professional for the employee's return to work at the end of the employee's leave period.

If an employee's job position is so unique that ETSU cannot, after reasonable effort, fill that position temporarily, then ETSU shall not be liable for failure to reinstate the employee at the end of the parental leave period.

Pursuant to Tennessee law, if an employee has utilized the period of leave to actively pursue other employment opportunities or if the employee has worked full-time or part-time for another employer during the period of leave, ETSU is not required to reinstate the employee at the end of such leave.

VI. Repayment of Paid Parental Leave.

If an employee does not return to work or resigns within 90 days of returning to work, then the following applies:

A. If the employee has been employed at ETSU less than five years from the date of resignation, the employee must repay the six weeks of Paid Parental Leave received in the twelve months prior to the date of resignation. ETSU may deduct these amounts from the employee's final paycheck and accrued leave.

B. If the employee has been employed for five or more years from the date of resignation, the employee does not have to repay any Paid Parental Leave.

C. If the employee does not return to work due to a medical condition or death of the employee or the child, subject to medical documentation, the employee does not have to repay any Paid Parental Leave.

Authority: TCA § 4-21-208
TCA § 49-8-203
TCA § 8-50-809
Family Medical Leave Act

Previous Policy: PPP-22 Parental Leave; Emergency Policy- Retroactive to 8/1/23

Defined Terms

A defined term has a special meaning within the context of this policy.

ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEE:	Faculty and staff employed by the University in a regular position for at least twelve (12) months and having worked at least 1,250 hours prior to the birth or adoption of the child.
FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA):	Provides employees up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period for family or medical leave and ensures employee is reinstated to the same or an equivalent position following the leave period, in accordance with FMLA guidelines.
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE):	The ratio of the total number of hours of a full-time position in comparison to the hours on a less than full-time position.
PARENTAL LEAVE:	Provides up to four (4) months of unpaid leave to employees for adoption, pregnancy, childbirth and nursing an infant, where applicable. Employees' eligibility for this type of leave must be in accordance with T.C.A. 4-21-408.
PAID PARENTAL LEAVE:	For the birth or adoption of a child after July 1, 2023, a six-week period of paid leave of absence (that does not reduce an employee's balance of any other paid leave) for an Eligible Employee to adjust to their new family situation and balance their professional obligations due to the birth or adoption of a child under the age of 18.

Policy History

Effective Date

- a. Initial:
- b. Revised:

Procedure

I. Notice of Leave.

Employees should give at least three months advance notice to their supervisor and the Office of Human Resources of their anticipated date of departure for such leave, their length of leave, and their intention to return to regular employment after leave. The employee completes the appropriate leave forms and returns the forms to the Office of Human Resources.

An employee who intends to use FMLA leave beyond the six weeks of Paid Parental Leave, submits the appropriate FMLA paperwork. If paid parental leave is being combined with any other type of available leave, appropriate application and documentation procedures must be followed as indicated in the relevant leave policy.

II. Notice of Return to Work.

Prior to returning to work, the employee notifies the Office of Human Resources and submits documentation required under this policy.

Procedure History

Effective Date

- a. Initial:
- b. Revised:

Related Form(s)

Scope and Applicability

Primary: Human Resources