



UT Tyler **STAFF SENATE**

Staff Senate Monthly Meeting Minutes

May 21, 2025 | 3:00 p.m. | COB 307

[Zoom Link](#) | Passcode: +kig+0PU

❖ COMMITTEE UPDATES

➤ University Appreciation

- Dates and planning have been put on hold while the committee reevaluates summer activities.
- Activities will likely take place in July.
- Senate leadership is seeking ideas for relevant professional development topics that benefit staff across all departments.
 - Send suggestions to staffsenate@uttyler.edu

➤ Leadership

- Senator elections are coming up later this summer.
 - Nomination emails will go to all districts soon
- Redistricting –
 - Staff Senate is divided into 14 districts. Current structure is based on historical pairings and staff headcount.
 - Concerns raised about underrepresentation in some districts and the pairing of departments with dissimilar roles.
 - Suggestions included:
 - ◆ Reassigning districts based on shared work functions.
 - ◆ Ensuring equitable representation regardless of district size.
 - ◆ College of Business requested consideration for its own district.
 - ◆ Try to match departments that are underrepresented/low participation, with departments that have more engagement.
 - ◆ Taken into consideration is the staff counts for those departments.
- Senators for districts can be found at <https://www.uttyler.edu/staff-senate/senators/>
- Senators were encouraged to send feedback to staffsenate@uttyler.edu for consideration in future restructuring.

➤ **Benefits**

- “Did you know?” - The UT Tyler agreement with Coursera has been extended until the end of 2027. This includes unlimited access to the Career Academy Catalog, including access to over 35 entry-level Professional Certificates from companies like Google, IBM, Meta and more.
 - Students, faculty, staff, and alumni can create an account with their UT Tyler email address and that should give them access to the “Career Academy Catalog”. All the courses in the career academy catalog are free.
 - Members can also browse the “Full Coursera Catalog or Open Catalog” which includes more courses, but those do have a cost. Only the Career Academy Catalog Courses are free.
 - For more information, you can visit: <https://www.uttyler.edu/offices/digital-learning/microcredentials/>
 - Staff can email our Coursera mailbox if they have any questions, it is coursera@uttyler.edu.

➤ **Star Award**

- March recipient will be announced via campus email soon
- Nominations for May will be open until the 25th. If you would like to nominate someone, please do so at:
https://uttyler.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ey74ctmUZIGeYMu

❖ **GUEST SPEAKERS**

➤ **Kim Livingston-Cobb – Wellness Initiatives**

- Trying to create a culture of care for all students, faculty, and staff.
- Planning on doing more wellness surveys to see where the students' needs are.
- One goal is to create a wellness newsletter to highlight what different departments are doing regarding wellness on all of our campuses.
- We have a new wellness center next to the counseling center with massage chairs, painting, puzzles, and art. All are welcome.
- De-stress fest at the end of each spring and fall semester.
- Also have support services for people in distress and suicide prevention.
- Wellness Ally Training – email klivingston@uttyler.edu for more information.

➤ **Isai Ramirez – EIR Accessibility Update**

- **Accessibility Program:**
 - The program ensures all software/technology complies with ADA accessibility standards

- Software must be re-evaluated periodically not just for accessibility, but also information security, and other standards, protocols, policies and laws due to evolving compliance requirements and updates to usage.
- Every time we renew existing software or purchase new technology, it needs to be assessed to make sure it complies and is in the best interest of the University.
- **Questions:**
 - Is InfoSec reaching out to these places first in the process or is that something individuals must do?
 - ◆ A: No, unless more information is needed.
 - If we have software that is used at other programs, UT Arlington for example, are you able to see the EIR for other UT entities to prevent a duplication of efforts to review and approve?
 - ◆ A: Yes, but this does not mean the other institution assessed this, or they may use this technology differently, so risk varies. We can reach out to these other institutions and request the information.
 - If some software is deemed noncompliant, what can be done to make it compliant?
 - ◆ A: Exceptions can be required. There is a process. More information may be required from the department or vendor.
 - Law requires us (UT Tyler) to document why we are allowing a non-compliant technology.
 - May require approval from a Dean/Vice President/CIO/ or the University President.
 - Has it been shared with faculty and administrators so they are aware of the time needed to process the EIR? Especially for new software agreements.
 - ◆ Isai has spoken at Faculty Senate, CAD, and University Council recommending for all individuals to submit the form at least a few months in advance of when it is actually needed or contract expiring. There was also an email that went out to the campus encouraging people to attend the training session, that has more information for timeline of approval, etc.
- **Key points:**
 - Over 421 software assessments have been submitted; 233 completed
 - A centralized database is being developed to reduce duplicate assessments. Goal is to get to a master database of who is using what on campus to help make approvals easier in the future. Database is in the service now portal,

there will be a link on the website in the future so people can see what has already been vetted.

- Assessments depend on the use case (e.g., faculty use vs. student use impacts compliance levels)
- A new **EIR Accessibility website** was introduced with guides, templates, and resources. Go to the website for more information.
- Staff are encouraged to reference existing use at other UT institutions when submitting new requests and to expect response timelines based on exception type and submission completeness.
- <https://www.uttyler.edu/offices/information-technology/technology-assessment/>
- <https://www.uttyler.edu/offices/information-technology/eir-accessibility/>
- <https://www.uttyler.edu/offices/information-technology/files/helpguide-utt-department-exception-05-05-25.pdf>

Next meeting will be Wednesday, June 18 at 3:00 pm, COB 307 or via Zoom