

East Tennessee State University

Staff Senate

Meeting Minutes - Draft

Date: August 10, 2026

Time: 2:30 p.m. – 3:19 p.m.

Location: Culp Center 311

Facilitator: Cody Morelock, Staff Senate President

Scribe: William Cate, Staff Senate Secretary

Senators Present: K. Albarado, S. Barger, J. Bidwell, D. Bishop, V. Canter, W. Cate, R. Colwell, J. Crigger, A. Fortney, J. Fulkerson, S. Hooven, E. Hutchinson, J. Lockmiller, C. Morelock, G. Osborne, R. Sells, B. Siddell, J. Strauss, L. Thomas-Joseph
Guests: Melissa Nipper & Amerrica Duggan-Torbert, Kelvin Tarukwasha & Alex Snapp, Lisa Bell, B. Dye, Opal Frye-Clark, Erin Messmer, Jennifer Moon, Benjamin Murphy, Ryan Roberts, Janna Scarborough
Absent: A. Birchfield, K. Ferrell, D. Finney, B. Garland, R. Kellogg, J. Lively, C. Maupin, E. Montana, S. Moore, S. Murphy, D. Nelson Barnes, M. Peters, D. Roach, A. Skeens, A. Slaughter, B. Smith, J. Watson

Agenda Overview

1. Call to Order
2. Introduction of Guests
 - a. Melissa Nipper and Amerrica Duggan-Torbert
3. Approval of Previous Minutes
 - a. July Approvals
4. Information Items
 - a. President's Report
 - b. Treasurer's Report
 - c. Committee Updates
5. Old Business & Follow Ups
6. New Business
 - a. Senate Executive Committee Nominations
7. Announcements, *What is on your mind?*
8. Adjourn

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Meeting Notes

1. Call to Order

President Morelock called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. by welcoming MarCom guest speakers, Melissa Nipper and Amerrica Duggan-Torbert, and newly elected senators with terms beginning 9/1/2026.

President Morelock made note of an additional agenda item, Kelvin Tarukwasha was present to discuss updated employee meals plans with time to present after the MarCom update.

2. Introduction of Guests

MarCom Update

Melissa Nipper introduced Amerrica Duggan-Torbert, Web Strategy Manager, to discuss the ongoing website update.

America presented an update on the website's revamp project, explaining that complete overhaul is necessary because the current website is outdated, not accessible, and poses reputational and legal risks. She outlined key principles including optimization for external audiences, alignment with the university's brand messaging strategy, and serving as a foundation for omni-channel marketing. America discussed how the new platform will make website editing easier through structured content and single sources of truth, while addressing digital accessibility, personalization expectations, immediacy needs, and the rise of AI in how students find information about colleges.

Duggan-Torbert presented a roadmap for reorganizing ETSU's website, which currently contains 30,000 pages and will be reduced to around 10,000 pages. The project is being conducted in three phases through December 2027, starting with the homepage and top-level navigation pages, followed by select program pages and major initiatives, and finally admissions-related content and remaining program pages.

Each academic unit needs a designated unit lead to serve as a liaison between the web team and the specific department, with deans and cabinet members tasked with identifying these leads by next week.

Sodexo Update

President Morelock welcomed Kelvin Tarukwasha and Alex Snapp from Sodexo who presented updates on the new employee meal plan, which changes from a 60-

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meal plan to a 40-meal plan plus \$100 flex dollars, featuring new options for to-go meals and meal exchanges at retail locations.

3. **Approval of Previous Minutes**

President Morelock presented the July minutes for consideration. No corrections were needed. Senator Fortney made a motion to approve the July minutes, and the motion was seconded by Senator Siddell. The motion carried, and the July minutes were approved.

4. **Information Items**

President's Report

Due to time constraints, President Morelock did not provide a President's Report. Notes from the August University Council meeting are included in the *Supporting Documents & Reminders* section.

Treasurer's Report

There are no changes in account balances from July 2026 -

Main Account - \$9,850

Foundation Account - \$18,000

CBC - \$681.25

Holiday Account - \$632.44

Committee Updates

Senator Fulkerson reported on the Staff Concerns Committee's work addressing accessibility and governance concerns, including emails to the Faculty Senate to discuss staff representation on governance committees.

5. **Old Business & Follow Ups**

None.

6. **New Business**

Senator Joseph-Thomas led the Senate through Executive Committee nominations and presented the current nominations as follows:

Vice President – Kari Albarado

Secretary – Jenny Lockmiller and Jessimine Strauss

Treasurer – Vanessa Canter and Suzy Hooven

Member-at-Large – Kim Ferrell and potentially Vanessa Canter, Jenny Lockmiller, and Jessimine Strauss

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Senator Joseph-Thomas called for any additional nominations to these officer positions from the floor. Senator Fulkerson nominated Senator Hutchinson for Member-at-Large. Senator Hutchinson accepted the nomination and was added to the ballot.

Elections for Secretary and Treasurer will open at 4:00 pm on August 10 and close at 4:00 pm on August 11.

Elections for Member-at-large at large will open at 4:30 pm on August 11 and close at 4:30 pm on August 12.

Officer elections will take place via electronic ballot.

7. **Announcements, *What is on your mind?***

Vice President Albarado and Senator Fulkerson note the start of the fall semester is approaching with move-in day scheduled 8/19/2026. Vice President Albarado encourages everyone to plan their commute accordingly.

The new academic building will host a ribbon cutting on 8/14/2026 at 1:30 pm. Senator Sells reminded everyone that the new academic building will close daily at 9:00 pm.

8. **Adjourn**

Senator Strauss made a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded by Senator Siddell. The meeting adjourned at 3:19 p.m.

Action Items Summary

Responsible Party

Due Date

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Supporting Documents & Reminders

Placeholder for Sodexo presentation.

Presidents Staff Senate Report 8.10.26

Council of Chairs-

The Academic Council of Chairs continues its work in support of campus leadership, including the ongoing development of trainings for campus leaders. The Council is also maintaining representation in university policy discussions and changes while continuing to develop and refine policies and procedures.

SGA-

There was no update from SGA.

Athletics-

The “5 for 5” eligibility model was discussed. Student-athletes now have five years to compete, eliminating traditional redshirt years. There is a possible impact for students as far back as 2022, as well as potential impacts for international student-athletes.

ITS-

Myra Jones provided an update from ITS. Classroom upgrades are nearing completion in several buildings, including the installation of new cameras and audio equipment. Computer lab installations are also nearing completion in the new academic building. A reminder was given regarding the need for continued diligence as it pertains to cybersecurity. Recently, 48 compromised accounts were identified, 22 of which were student accounts.

MARCOM-

Updates were also provided regarding MARCOM and the university website by Melissa Nipper and America Duggan. These updates will also be shared at the August 10 Staff Senate meeting.

Mike Hoff discussed proposed federal changes related to international students and the current “duration of status” model. The proposed changes would replace the current model with fixed periods of stay. Proposed maximums would be four years for undergraduate students and two years for graduate students. Under the proposed changes, ETSU would no longer be able to directly extend a student’s timeline; extensions would require federal approval. Students would have 30 days to depart the United States following program completion or the end date of their authorized stay.

The proposed changes would also include restrictions on undergraduate major changes and transfers during the first year. Graduate students would face restrictions on changing programs or institutions. Current students may also be affected, particularly if they leave and re-enter the United States. There is significant potential impact on international student-athletes and the “5 for 5” eligibility model. Questions remain regarding how academic years versus calendar years would be calculated in relation to these changes.

President Noland’s Report-

In the President’s Update, it was announced that Rebecca Tolene will begin as General Counsel on October 1. The search for the Vice President for Marketing & Communications is underway, with Dr. Green chairing the search.

Student move-in begins next Wednesday, and the new building is expected to open around 1:00 p.m. on August 21. A celebration for the new pickle ball court will be on Thursday Aug 27th at 6pm

President Noland highlighted the Gray’s lily as a symbol of being distinctive, resilient, and rooted in our region, and discussed how we reflect those same principles here at ETSU.

President Noland also acknowledged the challenges associated with Voyager, Banner, and other software transitions, noting that improvements will continue. The overall message was clear: **ETSU continues to grow and thrive.**



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

WEB STRATEGY REDESIGN

Fall 2026 Update



AGENDA

- 1 Overview of the project
- 2 Trends shaping this work
- 3 Update on timeline and roadmap
- 4 What you can do to help
- 5 Q&A



BOTTOM LINE, UP FRONT

Our website is mission critical.

Our website is perhaps our single most important asset for communications and marketing.

Doing nothing is a significant risk.

We are currently exposed to reputational, legal, and competitive risks that must be addressed.

UMC is leading a 3-year overhaul.

This includes updating our web content policies, review of ALL site content, and migration to new tools.



KEY PRINCIPLES

1

Optimize for external audiences, prioritizing students.

2

Mirror the university's overarching brand messaging strategy.

3

Set the foundation for an omni-channel marketing strategy.



WHAT DOES THIS ACTUALLY MEAN?



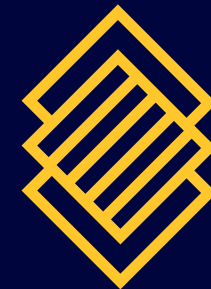
Modern design

On the front end
and back end



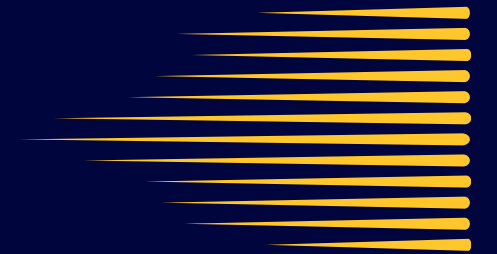
Structured content

Form fills instead of
page builds



Single source of truth

Publish once,
update everywhere



Faster and easier

More intuitive, no
coding



TRENDS SHAPING THIS WORK



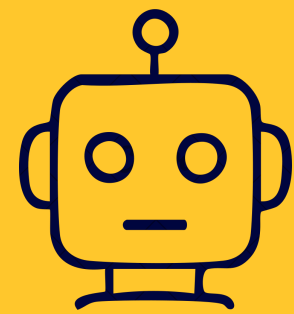
Digital
accessibility



Expectations for
personalization



Expectations for
immediacy



Web 4.0 (the rise
of AI)



TIMELINE

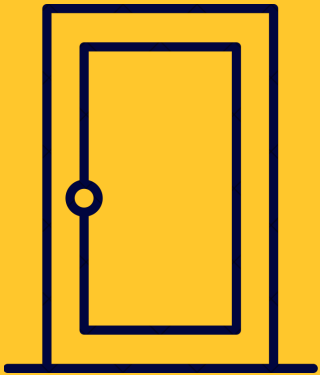


BUILDING A NEW HOME FOR ETSU'S WEB PRESENCE



Blueprints

Determining strategically where everything will live



Front Doors

New home page and other high-visibility landing pages for each major section of the site.



Entryways

Areas devoted to welcoming prospective students into our community



Interior Rooms

Sites and pages for academic and administrative units



ROADMAP: PHASES 1-3

1

November–December 2026

Homepage
Program finder/academics pages
Trailblazers (research) page
About ETSU page
Apply page
Experience (campus life) page
Roan Scholars site
ETSU News site

2

January–February 2027

Select program pages
Academic Health Sciences Center site
Unified Student Support Page
Community-Engaged Learning page

3

March–June 2027

Undergraduate Admissions site
Graduate Admissions site

June–December 2027

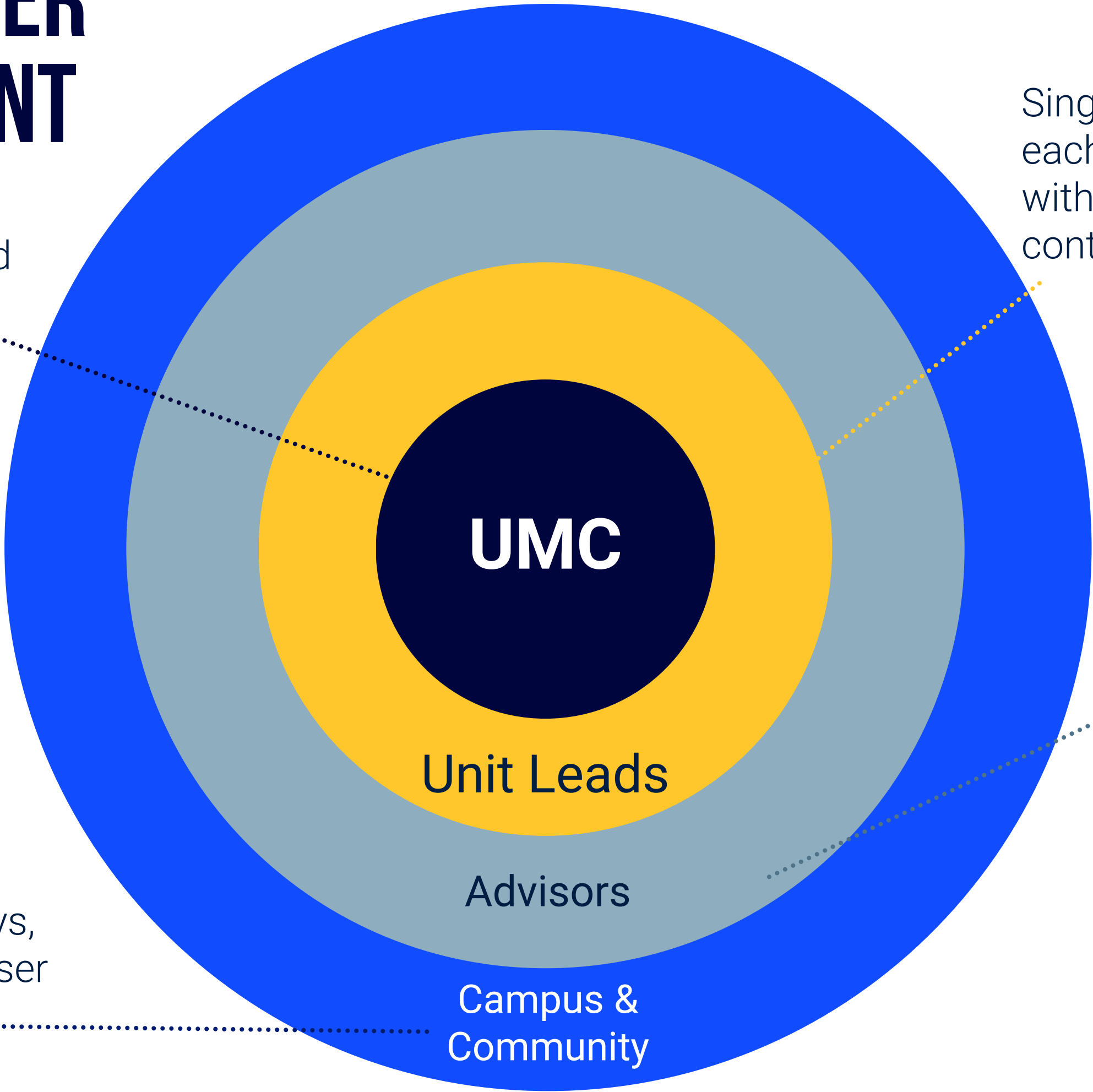
Remaining program landing pages

More details coming soon for beyond December 2027



STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

UMC team members leading the project and the university's long-term web strategy.



Single points of contact for each college or unit to assist with the migration and new content development.

Campus leadership and domain experts providing guidance and feedback on the project.

End users providing input through surveys, focus groups, and user testing.





WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

- Keep cleaning, consolidating, archiving, and deleting!
- Share this information with your teams.
- Cabinet members and deans must identify unit web leads by August 15.

GET EXCITED!

This could be fun.

It will also probably be a bit painful.

But it will definitely be worth it.



QUESTIONS?

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Melissa Nipper

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Keep up to date with the project on our [Web Strategy Redesign web page!](#)

