I. Phil Bright of the Office of Human Resources welcomed the council to the meeting and opened with introductions of those present.

Pamela Fuqua – University Center  
Karen Hussey – Administration Building  
Tony Maisano – HVAC  
Trudy Henderson – Elam Center, Fieldhouse, Football, Children Center  
Charlene Lovette – Chrish Hall & Copier Repair  
Terry Little – Grounds & Transportation and Warehouse  
Magdalene Hampton – Clement Hall  
Dr. Nick Dunagan – Chancellor  
Phil Bright – Human Resources  
Sherry Shanklin – Human Resources  
Lana Ferrell – EPS, Fine Arts & Brehm Hall  
Harold Cochran – Gooch, School of Business, McCombs Center  
Betty Cowen – Humanities, Sociology, Student Health, & Housing Receptionist

II. Report from The Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting

Karen Hussey spoke on the presentation to the State Employee Relations Council in Nashville on February 16, 2005. She presented the proposal of the UT Martin Council concerning sick leave. This was a two part proposal covering an employee acting as a care giver being able to use sick leave bank time and also the sharing of sick leave bank time. The council and Dr. Peterson welcomed the proposal openly; however, matters such as this are mandated by the state. Proposals such as this must go before the Board of Regents, the State Legislature, etc. This is not the first time that this type of idea has been mentioned. The proposal will be followed by checking with other states, researching the budget impact and other aspects.

Several other items were discussed at the Advisory Board Meeting including better classification of the temporary reclassification process; states participating on career ladders; flexible spending accounts; incentives on health plans; categories to be included Employee Satisfaction Survey in September of 2005; HR development of tracking system of 32 hour training for employees annually. Mrs. Hussey concluded with stating that the next Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting will be held in Knoxville in June.

Phil Bright commented on topics discussed by the Employee Relations Advisory Board. He stated that several of these issues are on the HR agenda. This reclassification addresses a person filling in for another employee of higher level for an extended period of time. There isn’t a set policy addressing compensation in this situation and that various means had been developed across the state to address this issue.

He also mentioned the career ladder study was just in the infant stages of development. This issue addresses the leveling of pay in order to stay competitive
in the market. Family and Consumer Science has a form of career ladder in place for that purpose.

Dr. Dunagan mentioned the 32 hour Training/Enrichment issue. Some employees must have hours per year to maintain certification in their area, others participate for their own enrichment experience. Record keeping for this training has not yet been defined. The record keeping for such a program could in itself become a nightmare. Tony Maisano asked if supplier seminars would be such seminars to document and how that documentation would be handled. Harold Cochran asked as to where the funding would come for participation in seminars. Mr. Bright mentioned that there are many seminars held on campus presently that are of no cost to the employee or departments.

The purpose was discussed at greater length. Dr. Dunagan gave an example of Dr. Peterson reviewing a report of all UT Martin employees who did not meet the required 32 hours of training annually. He would ask as to why this requirement had not been met and Dr. Dunagan would then pass this along to department heads.

III. Selection of the 2005 Christmas Breakfast Chair and Co-Chair

Phil Bright mentioned how well the Library staff delivered on the Christmas Breakfast and asked for volunteers to chair the 2005 Christmas Breakfast. Terry Little volunteered the Grounds department for this year.

IV. Maxing of Pay Scale

Phil Bright addressed the maxing of the pay scale in recent years. It has been since the 1980’s or 90’s since anyone has maxed in their position. This is due to the fact that many employees do not stay in the same position their entire career or the position could have been reevaluated over the years. Also, we have had many in the past 10 to 15 years retire that would have been near the top of their pay scale.

V. Why aren’t percentage raise equal

Phil Bright explained the raise situation. The percentages of raises as of late have been across the board or the same. These percentages are then multiplied by base annual pay. This is where the differences will appear. Dr. Dunagan mentioned that sometime in the past faculty were given larger raises. These were given in order for the university to stay competitive in the market and in comparison with the market at the time.

In regard to raises this year, Dr. Dunagan and Mr. Bright both commented that the situation is dependant on the Tenn. Care issue, which should be decided in the court system within the next few weeks. A 1% raise across the board with a 1% bonus is being reported at the present time. These percentages and the time of implementation may change dependant upon Tenn. Care and the legislature decisions.
VI. Improved Dental Insurance that is good locally

Phil Bright asked Sherry Shanklin to share with the group concerning the present programs in place concerning dental care. The Tennessee Dental, Assuring Dental and Delta Dental were all discussed and materials distributed to the group. The various amounts of coverage and listings of providers were covered.

VII. Vision Care Insurance

Sherry Shanklin also addressed the council concerning vision care. At the present time the Tennessee Dental program is the only one offering any type of discount to university employees toward vision care. The need for vision care was discussed by the group. The fact that few providers wish to participate in these types of programs was mentioned.

VIII. Chancellor Dunagan’s Comments

The chancellor commented on several items of interest and projects taking place in the near future across the campus. Admissions for most departments are on the increase for fall 2005. The new apartments, University Village, are booked for the fall semester with a list developing for any possible openings. The progression of removing old dorm facilities and replacement was discussed. The retention rate is on the rise and is presently between 62 and 72%. Classroom space is becoming more and more a premium. Persons with interest in the budget should watch the state papers for news regarding developments in that area. He believes that Governor Bredesen is appreciative of the state employees on every level.

Dr. Larry McGehee has visited the campus via a virtual tour and will be visiting the campus in person in the near future. Appreciation was shared for those who developed the virtual tour.

Others made comments toward the growing pain issue and possible updates to buildings being occupied by their departments.

IX. In closing, Mr. Bright made mention that an Employee Relations survey will be coming in the next week or so and thanked the group in advance for their response. He also mentioned that the time to sign up for the Sick Leave Bank is from April 1 – June 30. Information will be circulated next week concerning enrollment. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.