❖ COMMITTEE UPDATES

- ➢ **Star Award**
  - ▪ The September Star Award in person surprise is planned for next week. Announcement to campus community will be sent via email.
  - ▪ Nominations for October 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

- ➢ **Benefits**
  - ▪ Delta Dental has recently reviewed their offerings and their negotiated pricing with providers. Check with your dental provider for updated costs and coverages. Some providers who previously opted out, may now be within network.
  - ▪ Benefits Committee will start a monthly "Did-You-Know?" each month to feature various employee benefits.
    - This month's feature: The Office of Community Engagement offers a UT Tyler Discount Program with discounts available in Tyler, Palestine, Longview and Houston areas. Details can be found here: UT Tyler Discount Program or email Michelle Salge at michelle.salge@uthct.edu .
      - ♦ Discounts are accessible with your employee badge ID.
  - ▪ HR sent out an email about National Retirement Security Week, which is next week. There will be a virtual webinar each day by each of the five approved retirement plan vendors.

- ➢ **Communications**

- Annual meet your senator event is tomorrow, Oct. 17th. Due to weather, the event has been moved to the UC Ballroom. Breakfast tacos, juice and water will be served, so come meet your district representative.

- **Staff Senate President**
  - A lot of excitement right now about the campus master plan, and things we can do in the near future. Information in the near future.
  - The new Starbucks is now open in the library – be sure to check it out!

❖ GUEST SPEAKERS

- **Isai Ramirez-Vice President, Information Technology, Chief Information Officer**
  - IT incidents have decreased by 32% this semester compared to Fall 2023.
  - The technology assessment aims to align technology and processes across campuses, prevent duplicate spending, and ensure software compatibility and efficiency. The team will review purchases before approval. This new process is used to avoid duplicate and unnecessary spending. Will also help identify software that requires additional tech resources and avoid incomparable or flawed software. This process will also help in negotiating new technology contracts. This process will require an assessment whether a software request is a new request, or a renewal.
  - The team is working to streamline the use of the same products over other UT institutions, however different campuses may use the same software for different needs. Therefore, the software will still need to be assessed based on how it will be used.
  - Accessibility: IT is working to ensure that web pages and electronic resources comply with accessibility laws and to educate the community on best practices.
  - Student Device Assistance: IT can assist with personal devices, but may not be able to solve all issues. Priority is given to University devices.
  - In regard to information security, do not let your guard down. Be careful when and how you log in and keep your credentials confidential.
  - Microsoft 365 Copilot licenses are being explored to enhance work productivity, with at least one license per department planned. The licenses comes with data protection and can be used to create PowerPoint presentations and more.
  - If you find AI has used your copyrighted data, contact Isai Ramirez and Legal Affairs.
  - Security Reminder: Maintain caution with logins and credentials. Report any cybersecurity issues to Isai Ramirez or Kevin Kjosa (Information Security Officer).
  - The PeopleSoft merger between campuses is progressing well, with an anticipated go-live date of September 2025.

- ➢ **Elizabeth Caulkins- Title IX specialist**
  - ▪ New Narcan Distribution Initiative: Free Narcan will be available for students, faculty, and staff starting October 29th.
    - • Main campus pickup locations: UC Welcome Desk, Library Help Desk, and Student Affairs Office in the Pharmacy Building.
    - • The Longview and Palestine campus will also have pick up locations.
    - • Each month, the University will receive 60 doses, with a limit of three per person.
    - • A kickoff event will be held on October 28th from 5-8 PM on the plaza.
    - • Instructions on Narcan use will be included with a QR code linking to a video tutorial.
    - • This month is fentanyl poisoning awareness month and students are excited to be able to have Narcan available to them.
    - • The distribution process is anonymous and no identifiable information will be collected.
    - • The Narcan only works on the opioid receptors, so if you give it to someone who is not having an opioid overdose, it will not do anything to them.
    - • October is Fentanyl Poisoning Awareness Month, with Narcan availability providing additional safety resources for students. The distribution process is anonymous.

- ➢ **Campus Announcements-**
  - ▪ Midnight Breakfast: Scheduled for Tuesday, October 22nd, from 9 PM to midnight. Volunteers are needed.
  - ▪ Career Success Conference: Thank you to staff volunteers for the upcoming conference on October 24th from 8 AM to 2:45 PM. Over 100 volunteers and 150 speakers, including keynote Jeremy Schifeling, are participating.
  - ▪ Patriot Days (October 19-30): Various campus events will be held. Follow @UTTyler.ca on Instagram for details.
  - ▪ Halloween Costume Contest: Hosted by Residence Life on Halloween from 12:00 to 1:00 PM, with prizes and ice cream provided.
  - ▪ Trunk or Treat: Organized by the Office of Greek Affairs in the Cowan Center parking lot on October 20th, in collaboration with the University Academy and the East Texas Crisis Center.
  - ▪ School of Nursing Flu Vaccine Clinic: Annual flu vaccines available today, tomorrow, and Friday at no cost for employees with a valid ID.