

# TEXAS COUNCIL OF FACULTY SENATES

## Spring 2023 Meeting Minutes Arboretum Embassy Suites, Austin, TX February 25, 2023

### **In attendance: The Executive Board members**

Joseph Velasco, President  
Trevor Hale, President Elect  
Wynne Chin, Past President and Incoming Treasurer  
James Woosley, President Emeritus  
David Shattuck, Vice President, East Region  
Ludovic A. Sourdot, Co-Vice President, Northeast Region  
Jaqueline A. Fay, Co-Vice President, Northeast Region  
Ari Sherris, Co-Vice President, South Central Region  
Derek Catsam, Vice President, West Region  
Keri Sourdot, Outgoing Executive Secretary  
Debbie Roberts, Incoming Executive Secretary

General meeting attendees: conference, February 24-25, 2023:

Universities Represented: 28

Regions Represented:

East: 18

Northeast: 13

South Central: 11

West: 8

AAUP Representatives: 6

Total Attendees: 56

### **President Joseph Velasco called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.**

There were enough TCFS members in attendance to constitute a quorum.

### **Discussion of Roundup Reports**

Dr. Velasco opened the meeting with discussion of the Roundup Reports. The themes included:

- 1) Faculty Workload and Compensation (NTT, honors programs/honors credits, concentrations/tracks, master's thesis, dissertations)
- 2) Top-down faculty policy revisions
- 3) Shared Governance Education (Administration, Deans, Faculty, and Legislators)
- 4) Salary and Budgetary Matters
- 5) Collegiality and Professionalism –criteria for faculty evaluations
- 6) Ombuds
- 7) Process for hiring practices of Presidents and Provosts
- 8) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – what it looks like at various institutions.

#### Helpful Resources:

- 1) [AAUP website](#)
  - a. [AAUP@Austin](#)
  - b. [Texas Legislature Higher Education Bill Tracker](#)
- 2) [TACT](#)
  - a. [Legislative First Alerts](#)
  - b. [Tips for Meeting with Your Legislators](#)
- 3) [Higher Ed and the Texas Legislature](#)

#### **Approval of Prior Business Meeting Minutes**

President Velasco (Associate Professor of Communication, Sul Ross University, Alpine) asked for a motion from the floor to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2022, meeting. Two typos were noted correcting treasures to treasurer's. The minutes were approved by show of hands with four members abstaining.

#### **Report of the Treasurer**

Past President Wynne Chin (Professor of Decision and Information Sciences, University of Houston) presented the treasurer's report on behalf of Dr. Alba Ortiz (Treasurer, Professor Emeritus of Special Education, The University of Texas at Austin) in her absence. Dr. Chin announced that Dr. Ortiz would be stepping down as treasurer effective May 1<sup>st</sup> and that he is transitioning into that role. Dr. Chin said that he did not have a breakdown of expenses to report but they were likely like those in the past, which included combined expenses for the two annual conferences and the secretary's salary that totaled approximately \$12,000. He reported that the current account balance in the checking account was \$27,760.44 and the savings account balance to be \$23,034.51. He said that Dr. Ortiz recommended maintaining the same budget as last year. President Emeritus James Woosley (Instructional Professor of Kinesiology and Sport Management, Texas A&M University, College Station) commented that the numbers may look different from previous years because of COVID and because the \$1,500 contribution by AAUP for dues had yet to be deposited. Professor Woosley then moved to have the treasurer's report approved, which was seconded by Dr. Ari Sherris. The treasurer's report was unanimously approved by voice vote.

A TCFS member reminded the group that there had been discussions at a previous meeting to hold the spring meeting in odd years when the Legislature is in session in March or April rather than February. During the discussion that followed, It was noted that March would be problematic because of spring break and that most of the bills would already be in place by April. President Velasco asked members to send their suggestions on the matter to the executive committee for their consideration when scheduling future conferences.

#### **New Business**

President Velasco announced that Executive Secretary Keri Sourdout is stepping down and that Debbie Roberts would be taking over in that role. He thanked Keri for serving the TCFS so well and asked the members to give her a round of applause and then gave a warm welcome to Debbie.

Professor Woosley asked TCFS members to acknowledge Professor Alba Ortiz's 25+ years of service to the Council. President Velasco agreed and said that Dr. Ortiz has always been "a wise voice and makes us mindful." He added, "Her wisdom has really been the compass in many of our decisions to keep us on

track... I will continue to have her as part of my reflection in every decision that this organization makes.”

President Velasco updated members on the status of the website that is currently being hosted by Bluehost. He said that Dr. Chin had pulled all data from the website and that a decision would be made by May 1<sup>st</sup> about whether to “stay or go” with the hosting service, but for now, the URL, <https://www.txfacultysenates.org/>, would remain the same.

Next, the President asked for committee reports. Professor William Cherry (Mathematics, University of North Texas) apologized for not having anything to report from the Committee on the Importance of Shared Governance for Untenured Faculty Members. He said that he would have something for the next meeting. There were no other comments or reports from the floor.

### **General Spring Elections**

Elections were held for the South Central Region and the East Region.

Dr. Kip Austin Hinton (Associate Professor of Bilingual and Literacy Studies, The University of Texas, Rio Grande Valley) was nominated and unanimously elected to represent the South Central Region.

Nominated for the East Region were Tabitha S. Morton (Assistant Professor of Political Science, Texas A&M University, Prairie View) and Bernardo Pohl (Associate Professor of Education, University of Houston). Professor Morton was elected by secret ballot receiving 24 votes; Professor Pohl received 12 votes.

### **Closing Business**

Because President Velasco’s term ends on May 1, prior to the next meeting, President Elect Trevor Hale (Clinical Professor of Business Analytics, Texas A&M University) presented him with a gift certificate and plaque acknowledging his service to the Council. The plaque inscription read:

In Gratitude to  
Dr. Joseph G. Velasco  
President  
Texas Council of Faculty Senates, 2021-2023  
for  
Outstanding Leadership and Inspiration

### **Adjournment**

President Velasco adjourned the meeting at 11:06 am.

# Higher Ed and the Texas Legislature

*(Return to Helpful Resources)*



## Higher Ed and the Texas Legislature

### FACULTY SENATE GUIDES

The Texas Legislature began its session on January 10, 2023, and bills are currently being submitted or “filed.” Some of these bills concern higher education. As you hear news reports about bills, you may feel uncertain about what all this means and have questions about the process. Read on to learn more about the process and for further resources.



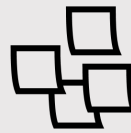
**Just because a bill is filed does not mean it will become law.** Many checks and balances are in place. Last session, less than 16% of filed bills eventually became state law. Try not to react to the news of every bill filed as though it is already law.



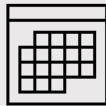
**Filed bills are rarely in their final form even for those bills that do pass.** Of those bills that make it to the Governor’s desk, most will be amended and rewritten several times over the course of the legislative session. It is extremely rare for a bill to pass in its original form.



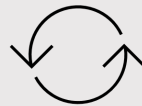
You can view all bills submitted and follow particular bills through the process [here](#). If you want only to follow Texas Higher Ed bills, a list is available [here](#).



**Bills are filed for a number of reasons, including keeping promises made to constituents.** Not all bills are equally likely to move through the process.



The Legislative session runs through the end of May, so it will be a while before we know which bills are likely to come to an actual vote.



UTA’s [Office of Government Relations](#) watches the progress of education bills closely and regularly updates faculty senate leadership. If you want to learn more about UTA and the Texas legislature, sign up for their [newsletter](#).



You can contact your state representative but make sure always to speak as a constituent and not as a faculty member. [Find out who represents you in the Texas Legislature](#)



If you’d like to get involved in faculty and higher ed advocacy, consider joining [Texas AAUP American Association of University Professors](#)

If you have questions or concerns, don’t hesitate to reach out to your faculty senator (find your representative [here](#)) or to the Chair ([jacqueline.fay@uta.edu](mailto:jacqueline.fay@uta.edu)) or Chair Elect ([milson@uta.edu](mailto:milson@uta.edu)) of the faculty senate, or stop by our office hours any Monday 1-2pm in Trinity Hall 102.