



Texas Council of Faculty Senates

A Federation of Texas Faculty Governance

Spring 2025 Meeting Minutes Embassy Suites – Austin Central

February 21-22, 2025

In attendance: The Executive Board Members

Joseph Velasco, President
 Tabitha Morton, President Elect
 Wynne Chin, Treasurer and Past President
 James Woosley, President Emeritus
 Zachary Valdes, Vice President, East Region
 Catherine Ross, Vice President Northeast Region
 Kip Austin Hinton, Vice President, South Central Region
 Derek Catsam, Vice President, West Region

TCFS Members Present: 45
 Universities Represented: 24

East Region

Lamar University –
 Beaumont
 Prairie View A&M
 University
 Sam Houston State
 University
 Texas A&M
 University –
 College Station
 University of Houston
 University of Houston
 – Clear Lake
 University of Houston
 – Downtown

Northeast Region

Texas A&M
 University –
 Commerce
 Texas Woman’s
 University
 University of North
 Texas – Dallas
 University of North
 Texas – Denton
 University of Texas
 at Dallas
 University of Texas
 at Tyler

South Central Region

Texas A&M
 International
 University – Laredo
 Texas A&M
 University – Central
 Texas
 Texas A&M
 University – Corpus
 Christi
 Texas A&M
 University –
 Kingsville
 Texas State University
 University of Houston
 - Victoria
 University of Texas –
 Rio Grande Valley
 University of Texas at
 Austin

West Region

Sul Ross State
 University
 Tarleton State
 University
 Texas Tech
 University

Representatives from Each Region:

East: 16
 Northeast: 11
 South Central: 12
 West: 6

AAUP, TACT, TAFT, TFA, and NAACP Representatives: 17
Total Attendees: 62

Call to Order of the Business Meeting, February 22, 2025

President Joseph Velasco (SRSU, Communication) called the meeting to order as there were enough TCFS members in attendance to constitute a quorum.

Meeting Summary

Dr. Velasco opened the meeting with discussion of the Roundup Reports. Members discussed the results of the roundup round tables, potential actions and strategies related to the themes below and the implications of a proposed Senate Bill 1489 on faculty governance. They discussed ways to preserve faculty influence amid proposed legislation that may eliminate Faculty Senates and reviewed the previous meeting's minutes. The conversation ended with a discussion on Senate Bill 1489 and the decision to continue the discussion in the next meeting.

Roundtable discussion topics

- 1) Research designation
- 2) Shared governance
- 3) Administration turnover trend
- 4) Lack of discussion of legislative changes
- 5) Compensation studies and budget
- 6) Workload and workload policy

The following topics were also covered. Professor Christopher Gabler (UTRGV, Earth, Environmental, and Marine Sciences) suggested that the group should address the potential major cuts to NSF and NIH, given their widespread impact and the lack of guidance from administrative leadership. Andy Milson (UT Arlington, Geography) expressed concern about the uncertainty and legislation around Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), particularly in relation to curricular matters. Jessica Velasco (SRSU, Political Science and Public Administration) suggested reaching out to other organizations to tackle common issues together. The idea of forming a joint ad-hoc committee to develop a strategy was also proposed. The conversation ended with the suggestion of attending the AAUP meeting next door to discuss further. These topics and the six roundtable topics above would be included in the spring newsletter.

- 1) Enrolment trends and program changes
- 2) Shared governance and faculty concerns
- 3) Impact of state and federal legislation
- 4) Budget constraints and faculty compensation
- 5) Academic program expansions and cuts
- 6) Administrative turnover
- 7) Workload tenure policy revisions including cost of tenure review
- 8) Research and graduate program growth - Federal cuts and private funding
- 9) Digital learning/AI policies/emerging technology/academic integrity

10) Navigating DEI legislation/research

Senate Bill 1489 Implications Discussed

TCFS members discussed the implications of a proposed Senate Bill 1489 on faculty governance. It was clarified that the bill does not eliminate faculty senates; rather, it designates them as advisory bodies to the President. It was suggested that the general faculty could still hold meetings and retain their authorities under current policies, regardless of the bill's outcome. It was noted that the bill does not mention shared governance in university policies. The discussion concluded with members expressing concerns about the potential lowering of faculty power and the shift of authority from senates to the general faculty.

Faculty's Influence on Senate Legislation

The discussion focused on strategies to maintain faculty influence on potential legislation that could abolish Faculty Senates. Several participants suggested building relationships with external organizations, including K-12 administrators and medical associations, with specific mentions of the Texas Association of School Administrators. Kip Austin Hinton (UTRGV, Bilingual and Literacy Studies) pointed out that Senate abolishment would only occur if not ratified by Boards of Regents, while Ian Barba (TTU, University Libraries – Research, Instruction, and Outreach) emphasized that Faculty Senates are already advisory bodies and that administrators understand the importance of faculty input for successful implementation of decisions.

Approval of Prior Business Meeting Minutes

President Velasco asked for a motion from the floor to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2025, meeting. James Woosley (TAMU, Kinesiology and Sport Management) motioned to approve the minutes, which were seconded by Professor Gabler. The minutes were approved by show of hands with three members abstaining due to not attending the September 28, 2024, meeting.

Report of the Treasurer

Treasurer Wynne Chin (UH, Decision and Information Sciences) presented the treasurer's report. The report focused on raising annual dues and registration fees. Annual expenses average \$34,000 with the banquets being the major expense, followed by the executive secretary's \$6000 annual salary. TCFS members agreed to increase individual registration fees and annual institutional dues, switching to a tiered system to be determined by the Executive Board.

General Spring Elections

Elections were held for Vice Presidents for the East and South Central Regions. Bernardo Pohl (UHD, Urban Education) and Zachary Valdes (SHSU, Library Science) were nominated for the East Region ballot, and Christopher Gabler was nominated for the South Central Region. Zachary Valdes and Christopher Gabler were elected as board members for the East and South Central Regions, respectively.

Announcements

President Velasco reminded the TCFS members that the Texas-AAUP meeting was underway in the adjacent ballroom should anyone want to attend.

Adjournment

President Velasco adjourned the meeting at 11:12 am.