Colleges Brace for “Daunting Fiscal Challenge”

“It will be ugly,” Sen. Rodney Ellis (D-Houston), predicted recently to the Houston Chronicle, concerning the budget shortfall facing the 78th Texas Legislature when it convenes on January 14. “Bloody awful,” echoed outgoing Lt. Gov. Bill Ratliff, adding in an editorial published statewide that “Texas is confronting one of the most daunting fiscal challenges we have faced in more than a decade.”

A sluggish economy has produced inadequate revenue in sales taxes, and rising costs of certain programs, particularly Medicaid and health insurance for public school teachers and retirees, have pushed the official shortfall estimates to at least $5 billion, with some going up to $12 billion.

Virtually all state budgets are in serious trouble this year, prompting Ray Scheppach, executive director of the National Governors Association, to call the situation “the worst crisis in state finances since World War II.”

However, in the recent Texas elections most statewide candidates steered clear of recommending any new taxes, or outlining the real potential impact of cutting the budget in key areas. Indeed, several successful candidates (most notably Comptroller of Public Accounts Carole Keeton Rylander) proposed expensive new programs offering “free” tuition and fees for all community and technical college students.

At this point it is unclear what results will spring from the victories of the Republican Party, whose members will dominate both chambers of the Texas Legislature for the first time in modern history. Unlike the way Congress is organized, Texas lawmakers have never “caucused” strictly along party lines for committee assignments and chairs. Those in new leadership positions, including incoming Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst and Rep. Tom Cradick (R-Midland), who will likely be chosen Speaker of the House when the chamber convenes, have pledged to continue the bipartisan tradition. Undoubtedly, however, there will be a striking turnover of committee positions in both chambers.

At the top of the list of urgent educational priorities is the state’s unpopular “Robin Hood” technique of financing public schools by requiring wealthy school districts to share property tax revenue with those less fortunate. As for higher education, the Coordinating Board’s ambitious “Closing the Gaps” initiative to add 500,000 students to Texas higher education rolls by 2015 must contend with these realities. However, as Commissioner of Higher Education Don Brown noted at the TCCTA Conference for Faculty Leaders, “Serious gaps exist—especially for ethnic minorities—that must be addressed if the economy and society are to provide opportunities for the next generation of Texans.”

“There has never been a more important time to get to know your representatives and senators,” says TCCTA president Susan Hult Edwards, Cy-Fair College, who will represent the association in testimony before House and Senate committees. “Not only must appropriations for instructional costs be increased adequately, but our health insurance and retirement plans must be protected. I urge all community and technical college employees to remind their elected officials of the vital role of these schools.”

The TCCTA Web site (www.tccta.org) offers new opportunities for participation. Educators can view all “tracked” bills potentially affecting two-year colleges at the Forum feature of the site.

The 2003 TCCTA legislative program is found on page 19 of this issue of the Messenger.
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Liz Carpenter called my office a few weeks ago. Never in a million years would I have believed I could begin my president’s message with that sentence, but Liz Carpenter really did call my office a few weeks ago. I came back from class to check my messages, and she had called to say she would love to speak at our TCCTA convention banquet. She will, and I couldn’t be more thrilled. Mark your calendars for Noon on Thursday, February 20, 2003, in Austin. Ms. Carpenter will kick off our 56th annual convention in grand style. Please join us at the Austin Convention Center to hear her as she addresses our theme, Dare…Dream…Discover.

Opening our convention at Noon on Thursday is a change for us. Normally we would host both our keynote address and general business meeting on our convention’s opening evening, but we have the opportunity to hear Liz Carpenter and Summer Gilchrist, our Phi Theta Kappa Regional President, and honor our past presidents at Noon, which will be a celebration of those who have helped TCCTA dare, dream, and discover in the past and present. Later, on the evening of the 20th, we will host a special general session at which our Ad Hoc Committee on Election Reform, headed by Brian Dille, and our Resolutions Committee, chaired by Cristina Cardenas, will present their recommendations for changes to our Constitution and ByLaws. We want to give all our members time to give special attention to these proposed changes in a separate session, so we can have open discussions about the direction you wish our association to take. I urge you to attend and share your comments on the proposed changes.

Finally, we will be representing you as the 2003 legislative session begins in January. Our Legislative Committee, chaired by Jeff Edwards, proposed our legislative program that was approved by our Executive Committee in December. We will be in Austin to testify on behalf of community college educators and welcome your endorsement is specified clearly.

Agendas and other information will be distributed by the chairs of the committees.
have become difficult as well, since many schools have abandoned traditional schedules showing experience “steps” and educational levels. An unfortunate result of these local policy changes is that it becomes impossible to determine accurately the salaries paid to faculty at precise levels of chronological experience holding specific professional degrees or credentials.

In recent years, another problem has developed as colleges that employ faculty salary schedules, or tables, showing years of service and educational achievements, have failed to provide for advancement on the schedules. In past years, for example, a faculty member on “Step 5” of the salary table would be in the fifth consecutive year of service. In practices now followed at several colleges, however, a faculty member’s step placement is no longer equivalent to consecutive years of service.

In the 2001 survey, 12 of the 50 schools surveyed reported no “fixed” schedule of automatic increases based on years of service. Consequently, those wishing to make comparisons were compelled to do so with almost a quarter of the colleges “missing” from the study. By contrast, the new TCCTA analysis will report salary figures from all Texas community colleges.

Several faculty salary studies report mean or “average” salaries. Such analyses tend inadvertently to give an advantage to “older” colleges over schools formed more recently, since large numbers of veteran faculty members are found at the higher end of salary schedules. Although the new TCCTA study will also employ the mean as a measurement tool, it is hoped that, when segregated into four internal “ranges” with accompanying designations for academic degrees, the information will enable a more valid interpretation than what is currently available.

“No study will be perfect for everyone,” said TCCTA Executive Director Richard Moore. “But we think the new method of calculating and reporting faculty salaries will allow comparisons to be made with more authority. The previous method worked well for many years, but we became convinced that a new approach was necessary.”

The reformulated data from the Coordinating Board will be available in early spring. Soon thereafter, TCCTA will post the new study on its Web site (at www.tccta.org). The analysis will also be published in the April Messenger.

A survey of part-time faculty compensation will appear in both locations as well.

 Committees Examine Alternative Teacher Certification

Two committees of the Texas Legislature conducted hearings during the interim that may signal an expanding role for community colleges in the certification of public school teachers in Texas.

A special House subcommittee reviewing the state’s shortage of educational professionals met in August and September, charged by Speaker of the House Pete Laney with considering measures the state might take to reduce the shortage. The combined subcommittee consisted of members of the House Appropriations and Public Education committees, and was co-chaired by Representatives Scott Hochberg (D-Houston), and Sylvester Turner (D-Houston).

Mirroring a national trend, increasing numbers of Texas community colleges are offering alternative certification programs (ACPs). Significantly, such instruction is not funded by the Legislature in the same manner as other instruction. While some school districts subsidize the training of non-certified teachers under contract, and specialized grants may also play a role, most programs at community colleges rely on student fees, with assessments typically costing at least $2,000. Nevertheless, there were 14 ACPs created at Texas community colleges during the last three years, according to committee testimony.

On September 23, Commissioner of Higher Education Don Brown addressed the House panel. Dr. Brown noted that state funding for ACPs at community colleges would require at least $15 million annually, based on the current number of participants and average cost.

While at this point it seems likely that a variety of public and private ACP approaches will remain, there is a great deal of interest in enhancing the role of community colleges in the mix. U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige has urged the expansion of ACPs nationwide. Naturally, the paramount issue is funding.

The Senate Education Committee, chaired by Sen. Teel Bivins (R-Amarillo), also conducted hearings on ACPs during the interim. The information gathered will be used to formulate legislative policy in the forthcoming session.

The Coordinating Board’s Transfer Issues Advisory Committee, which consists of members from community colleges and universities, plans to investigate ways to address the teacher shortage as well. Members hope the “pipeline” of prospective teachers can be augmented with people who will specialize in teacher preparation while attending community colleges.
For many years, I have supported the concept of concurrent credit. As vice president of instruction and eventually president of Galveston College, I worked to establish concurrent enrollment opportunities between the college and the local high school. As president of Temple College, I have actively campaigned on and off campus to expand concurrent enrollment opportunities for all qualified students at all of the high schools within our service area, almost twenty of them.

I have always believed that there were many high school students well capable of succeeding in college-level classes. And if their participation could save them time, and save their parents and the state dollars, why should we deny them access? With the growing national debate over the “lost senior year,” the partnership formed between high schools and community colleges for the delivery of concurrent credit becomes even more timely and important.

And yet I have respected the opinion of some community college faculty members in Texas who have expressed reservations about offering college credit to juniors and seniors in high school. In fact, it was the existence of those reservations, persistent and sincere, that led me to accept an assignment through Temple College to teach a composition class to thirty-four students, all but four of them seniors, at Salado High School.

That was four years ago, and I have continued to teach one or more classes of concurrently enrolled students every year since. For the most part, I have found the students exceptionally bright and hard working. Most of the seniors have been accepted at four-year institutions before they complete my class. Many of them have attended Temple College in the summer following high school graduation, while others have attended TC for a year or more before they transfer because their initial experience of college began here.

I have enjoyed their enthusiasm, and their willingness to accept the challenge of performing at “college level.” I am currently teaching fourteen juniors from Temple High School who meet with me at 7:30 a.m. two days a week to write, talk about their writing, and write more. They realize that to pass the course, they must write at the college level well before they might otherwise have been expected to do so. And though some will make a grade or two below what they are accustomed to making, they will all successfully complete the class.

I am well acquainted with many of the concerns that have been expressed about concurrent classes, and I have a few reservations of my own. For example, I have found that some students are allowed into the classes who are not ready for them. That seems to occur more often when working with small high schools than with large ones, but it brings its share of frustration for teacher and student.

I have found that school administrators sometimes want to influence the content of concurrent classes and insure the success of their students. I have found that parents can become a factor when they discover their child, an “A” student in high school, is making a “C” in a concurrent composition class. I have seen stress among school officials trying to “rescue” an honor student who is failing a concurrent class.

And yet, to me, these are not sufficient grounds to curtail the offering of concurrent credit. For if the college maintains secure control of the concurrent classes offered, quality and rigor can be assured.

The cardinal principle here is that these are college classes with college-level content approved by the faculty and instructional administrators of the colleges offering them. Whether they are taught by a college teacher on a college campus, a college teacher on a high school campus, or a high school teacher whose credentials meet SACs criteria, and who has been employed by a college, the content of the classes, the level of instructional delivery, and the rigor of evaluation all belong to the college offering them in compliance with Texas Administrative Code.

Whether enrolled students will also receive high school credit is for the high schools to decide. Whether the schools will abide by college policy and practice is also for them to decide. The courses should only be available to their students if they do so.

I have taught at the college and university level for more than thirty years. I have seen students at all levels of preparation. The students in my concurrent classes have been as capable as any that I have ever taught. Some have performed well beyond my expectations, some below. A few have dropped out because they were not willing to fully meet course requirements. They had envisioned an “easy” senior year.

In contrast, many others have shown more than determination; they have shown a degree of courage, willing to jeopardize their high school GPA to gain early ground on their college education.

Since I began working with concurrent credit classes, I have seen hundreds of students, some of them my own, cross the stage during their high school graduation with a high school diploma and ten, fifteen, twenty-five or more college hours on a college transcript. I know that I will see many of them on the Temple College campus because they began with us. We first challenged them to meet college expectations; they have shown a degree of courage, willing to jeopardize their high school GPA to gain early ground on their college education.

Though I continue to see and accept the concerns that I and others have raised to the awarding of concurrent credit, I know from my own experience that these concerns pale in comparison to the exceptional opportunity that we offer students to accelerate their college education, saving both time and money in the process.

Like so many of the programs within our community colleges, it is unique, outside the norm. And yet, we have always been masters at delivering education “outside the norm.” The delivery of concurrent credit is ours to shape and to improve, to fashion, I believe, into an increasingly more attractive opportunity for many of our most highly motivated students.

Marc Nigliazzo
President
Temple College
The practice of allowing academically talented high school students to enroll in college courses has been around for years and has seemed to work well. According to the Coordinating Board, the number of students under 18 attending community and technical colleges increased 77 percent from 1997 to 2001. Undoubtedly, many of these students were encouraged by the Legislature’s 1995 decision allowing community colleges to waive tuition for high school students. Unfortunately, the results have also been haphazard and questionable.

This is because a new breed of class has developed that awards credit but requires little investment—in money or instruction—from colleges. I certainly have no problem with community colleges receiving their share of resources from enrollment growth, but concurrent credit with no safeguards creates a perception that community colleges are simply “credit mills.”

I am sure concurrent classes can be found in Texas that are comparable to college classes and have appropriate academic safeguards. I am also sure that many do not meet those standards.

Faculty are often called academic elitists if we suggest that a high school class is less rigorous than a college class. But one major problem with concurrent credit classes is that full-time faculty are not always allowed to verify their integrity. As faculty, we are charged with being the academicians for our fields. It is our responsibility to ensure the integrity of the courses we teach. It would seem unthinkable for an administrator to implement a concurrent class without full knowledge, support, and oversight from the teachers in that area. But it is currently happening in Texas. Faculty from the specific discipline should verify that a course is equivalent to a college course. A second problem involves the evaluation of concurrent faculty. Increasingly, faculty teaching concurrent classes are also high school teachers. As part of their regular school day, they teach college-level classes. I personally know of one concurrent credit teacher who had previously taught a night class for a community college. This person was deliberately not hired by the college because woefully incorrect information was presented to a class during an observation by the coordinator (a full-time faculty member). Now, a few years later, this teacher is teaching a high school course in which students receive college credit. No academician from the college was allowed to observe the teacher, but administrators duly “signed off” that the class was college credit worthy. If concurrent enrollment is to work, the faculty must be treated exactly as other adjunct faculty in oversight and evaluation.

Another problem involves academic freedom. There is no question that restrictions exist in public school classrooms that do not exist in a college environment. Discussion of controversial topics with a group of minors (these are high school kids, after all) is not the same as discussing these issues with adults. Abortion, sodomy laws, public profanity issues, and the debate over flag burning are just a few subjects commonly discussed in a college environment that could be deemed too controversial for the under-18 crowd (not to mention their parents).

At the very least, steps should be taken to verify that all such students (and their parents) are aware that the course is to be taught as a college course and that sensitive issues may be discussed. Teachers of concurrent classes should have the same academic freedom as any other adjunct faculty. To my knowledge, there have been no steps ensuring academic freedom in concurrent classes.

Then there is maturity level. Having taught high school for 10 years, I can personally attest that most students do a lot of growing up between their senior year of high school and when they begin college. To complicate matters, concurrent credit classes have been expanded to include not only senior level classes, but underclass offerings as well. The maturity levels of students in high school can’t help but affect their understanding. In a college biology class discussing sexuality or evolution, for instance, a 15-year-old’s perception is likely to be worlds apart from a 19-year-old’s. This downward expansion of college classes is very problematic.

Finally, we are being disingenuous to the universities to which our students transfer. Concurrent credit is identical to college credit on transcripts. Interestingly, many universities do not accept AP credit because they do not believe a high school class is comparable to the college experience. I believe many of these universities would have the same opinion of concurrent credit classes—if they only knew! In my opinion, transcripts should designate that a particular course was taken as a concurrent class. Universities have a right to know the academic experiences of their students and community colleges have a moral obligation to share pertinent academic information with them. I am aware, of course, that concurrently enrolled students tend to be “successful,” statistically speaking. And we are all rightfully proud of the performance of community college transfer students. But honesty should dictate full disclosure.

Concerned faculty will not get much sympathy from those who see concurrent classes as a way to boost enrollment. Likewise, legislators and state education authorities are not inclined to challenge community college concurrent credit programs, perhaps because they know little about what is actually going on in these classes. Concurrent classes are a surefire hit with parents, students, and high schools. Many parents are pleased that their children get college credit in high school and save on tuition. High schools want the prestige of holding “college” courses on campus. And many students are looking for the easiest way to get credits.

Nevertheless, it is our responsibility as faculty to uphold standards and maintain the integrity of our disciplines. Some concurrent classes may be college level but many are not.
Members are urged to click on “Forum” at the TCCTA Web site (www.tccta.org) to participate in discussions on a host of subjects. Forum provides a unique way to interact conveniently with community and technical college professionals about mutual concerns and ideas.

The new service was utilized recently, following the 23rd annual TCCTA Conference for Faculty Organization Leaders, which featured speakers on “Academic Dishonesty,” “Intelectual Property,” and the “Americans with Disabilities Act.” After the conference, speakers made themselves available online for follow-up questions and discussion by participants and other interested educators.

Current subjects available at the FORUM include legislative issues and professional development. Faculty organization leaders are especially encouraged to share “best practices” with others around the state, to help promote the role of faculty in college decision making.

TCCTA leaders hope the site will foster numerous “online communities.” According to the American Society of Association Executives, “Web technologies make interaction easier than ever before, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It lets members put stolen moments to good use.”

Although the Web offers countless “chat rooms,” “bulletin boards,” and other forms of participation, many observers say the new capability works best in conjunction with face-to-face meetings. A recent ASAE report states, “For the association community, the greatest benefit is found in combining face-to-face and online technologies and in using each to make the other more effective.”

“Members Speak.” TCCTA members are invited to send in comments, suggestions, and opinions for potential publication in the Messenger. Letters (or e-mails) should be under 200 words, and may be edited for space and content. Topics should be of general interest and sample letters may be chosen to avoid repetition.

Submissions must be accompanied by the author’s name, college, and telephone number or e-mail address, and sent to publications@tccta.org, or by regular mail to:
Letters to the Editor, TCCTA Messenger
5115 Southwest Parkway  Suite 185
Austin, Texas 78735

Call for Papers. The TCCTA Publications Committee is soliciting articles for possible publication in the Messenger. Articles should be of general interest to educators in Texas two-year colleges.

For further information, refer to the Editorial Policy of TCCTA on page 2. Articles should be submitted to:
Dan Mendoza, Chair
TCCTA Publications Committee
Lee College
P.O. Box 818
Baytown, Texas 77522

Resolutions Committee Invites Suggestions. The TCCTA Resolutions Committee invites individual members and campus faculty organizations to submit suggestions for proposed resolutions to be considered at the 2003 convention at the Austin Convention Center.

Suggestions should be received by Feb. 1, 2003, so the Resolutions Committee can give ample consideration to the proposals prior to the annual convention. In the meeting of the Resolutions Committee, set for February 20, 2003, priority consideration will be given to proposals submitted in advance of the meeting. Proposals should be sent to:
Cristina D. Cardenas, Chair
TCCTA Resolutions Committee
Galveston College
4015 Avenue Q
Galveston, Texas 77550

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TCCTA Messenger
Enrollment Soars at Texas Community Colleges

For the first time, more than 500,000 students are registered in academic and technical programs at Texas community colleges, according to the Texas Association of Community Colleges.

Of the 50 community college districts in Texas, 39 report record enrollment this fall, reflecting an increase of 66,750 students from fall 2000, the last reporting period. In addition, an estimated 250,000-plus are enrolled in workforce training programs.

The largest gains have come from the state’s largest growing population centers. In the past two years, Alamo Community College (San Antonio) has grown by 5,099 students; Austin Community College, 3,292; Collin County Community College, 2,974; Dallas Community College, 9,945; El Paso Community College, 1,929; North Harris Montgomery Community College, 10,257; South Texas Community College, 2,536; and Tarrant County College, 4,333.

More enrollment information is available at the TACC Web site at www.tacc.org.

New Study on Transfers Points to Texas

A study released in September analyzes the transfer policies and records of six states, including Texas, to determine how state policy affects transfer rates.

The study, “State Policy and Community College-Baccalaureate Transfer,” was conducted by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, and the Institute for Higher Education Policy. The report concludes that states with more centralized higher education governance structures tend to have more success.

Although Texas is categorized by the study as a “low-performing” state (along with Arkansas and New Mexico), the analysis does not reflect recent information from the Coordinating Board’s Transfer Issues Advisory Committee, which found definitively that Texas community college students who transfer to universities perform as well as those who start at universities. The committee is currently examining other transfer issues. Community college faculty members on the committee include Joan Kennedy, Collin County Community College-Spring Creek Campus and Anna Maria Mendiola, Laredo Community College.

The entire study can be accessed online at www.highereducation.org/reports/transfer/transfer1.shtml.

Effective Programs for Minority Students Profiled by ERIC

The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse for Community Colleges, in its Summer 2002 Information Bulletin, lists a bibliography of recent literature on successful programs for minority students in community colleges.

Publications that are available include, “The Retention of Black Male Students in Texas Community Colleges,” and “Celebratory Socialization: Welcoming Latino Students to College.” Single copies of ERIC publications are available for free.

The ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges Web site can be accessed under “Links” at www.tccta.org.

TCCTA Links with Adobe for Campus Agreements

In an exclusive agreement with Adobe Corporation, TCCTA is offering community and technical colleges an opportunity to purchase software products from Adobe at vastly discounted prices.

Adobe is a leader in desktop publishing and graphics technology, both in print and on the World Wide Web. Products that will be available include the latest versions of Acrobat, PageMaker, Photoshop, and GoLive, among others.

Those interested should contact Adrienne Pubylski, SHI Governmental Solutions, at 1-800-845-6801.

Report on Workforce Training Offers Mixed Reviews

The nation’s community colleges are uniquely situated to lift people out of poverty, but often suffer from disjointed policies at all levels, according to a report issued in October by the Workforce Strategy Center.

The analysis criticizes policies that primarily reward success in academic transfers at the expense of workforce training to help disadvantaged students achieve high paying jobs. Giving financial aid primarily to full time students is another common practice that should be changed, the report stated.

The study praises initiatives in California, North Carolina, Washington State, and Texas. Austin Community College’s efforts in workforce training are profiled favorably also in a special segment of the analysis.

The entire report is available online at www.workforcestrategy.org.

Rural College Group Issues Strategic Plan

The Rural College Focus Group has issued a plan to identify and address barriers that prevent some schools from participating fully in statewide initiatives. Nineteen colleges, identified as “rural” by the Coordinating Board, participated in a survey of common issues and concerns. Their report was issued in September.

Rural schools are unable to take advantage of “economies of scale” that are available to colleges in urban or metropolitan areas, the report stated. For example, the cost of full time grant writers or directors is often beyond the means of many colleges, making it more difficult to seek external revenue for certain programs.

The group has plans for regional workshops and STARLINK teleconferences to explore further possibilities.

“Homework, What Homework?”

The December 6 issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education contains a major article validating the prevalent suspicion that high school and college students spend less time studying now than they did a decade ago.

The poor study habits are particularly true of high school students. In a national study called “The American Freshman,” published by the American Council on Education, 65 percent of high school students reported studying less than six hours per week.
Great Ideas for Teaching Students

“Public Speaking v. Death”
Jessica Green
Instructor of Speech Communication
Northeast Texas Community College
At one time or another most courses require some type of student presentation. This session is a short cut to a few simple things that can be passed on to students to help prepare them to deal better with this most common of fears.

“The Use of Supplementary Instruction, Group Quizzes, and Presentation in the Classroom”
Matthew Craig
Assistant Professor of Biology
Amarillo College
This session gives the pros and cons of using supplementary instruction and presentations in the classroom as well as individual versus group quizzes to aid in the retention of knowledge. It will also discuss the importance of creating an appropriate learning environment when using these tools.

“E-mail Reflections”
Dan Porter
Professor of Biology
Amarillo College
The use, assessment, and importance of e-mail as an instructional tool in the classroom will be the subject of this session.

“Dynamic Groups”
Timothy Hopp and Melinda McGuire
Instructors of English
Northeast Texas Community College
The dynamic duo of Tim and Melinda will discuss strategies to enable instructors to strengthen group assignments and enhance the overall effectiveness of collaborative learning.

“Using Mini-Courses and Seminars to Enrich Student Learning”
Steve Lewis
Instructor of Government and Chair
Department of Behavioral Science
Laredo Community College
An overview of unconventional resources such as mini-courses and seminars to help students learn material in a hands-on way and to encourage them to think “outside the box.” Imagination is an instructor’s only limitation.

“Creative Classrooms”
Linda Autry
Instructor, General Education
Texas State Technical College–Brownwood
Learn how to enable students to recognize or uncover their creativity and how it can enhance their understanding of any subject.

Managing the Classroom”
Lola King
Professor of English
Trinity Valley Community College
Find out about strategies that instructors can use to deal with disruptions in a quick, consistent, respectful way with clearly defined consequences. The session is designed to help create an environment in which students are free to learn, and teachers are free to teach.

“Classical Rhetoric for High Risk Students”
Mitchel T. Burchfield
Chair, Developmental Education
Southwest Texas Junior College
This session will show instructors how to use the key questions posed by the classical stasis theory to develop writing topics and analyze reading selection. Methods will be discussed to allow instructors to give high risk students a foundation in composition and rhetoric that is compatible with instruction in all disciplines.

“Motivating Students: Mission Impossible—Without the Im!”
Charla Crump
Instructor of Speech
Clarendon College
This session will provide strategies and activities for teachers to reduce student boredom and enhance motivation. Effective learning in the classroom depends upon the teacher’s ability to maintain interest, inspire, challenge, and stimulate students.

“WebQuests”
Karen Angelin
Instructor of Mathematics
Blinn College
This project engages students and uses the Internet to incorporate all competencies as defined by the Coordinating Board. This session will demonstrate how WebQuests can be constructed for any discipline.

“A Simple Listening Ceremony”
Cassandra Knobloch
Instructor of Speech,
Austin Community College
This session will show how to use an American Indian listening ceremony to take “active listening” and “paraphrasing” activities one step further, toward supportive and empathic listening practices.
The Professional Development Committee of the Texas Community College Teachers Association and the Virtual College of Texas will sponsor eleven seminars on Thursday, February 20, in conjunction with the 56th annual TCCTA convention, in Austin. The seminars, which will cover many aspects of the use of technology in the classroom, are designed to provide practical, hands-on instruction in the use of new teaching technologies.

**Seating for these seminars is limited, and reservations will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.**

To register, place a check mark next to the desired session(s) and complete the form below. Confirmation—or notice the session has been filled—will be given by February 13. The deadline to register is February 7.

**Alternative Assessments for Distance Education**

9:00–11:45 a.m.

Make your online life easier with new methods for assigning grades.

**Adding Flash to Your Web Site**

9:00–11:45 a.m.

Create your first Flash files and add motion to illustrate new concepts or create online excitement.

**Microsoft Producer for Video and Streaming Media**

9:00–11:45 a.m.

Gain hands-on experience in creating your first streaming file with all the bells and whistles you can imagine.

**A WebCT Introduction**

9:00–11:45 a.m.

Start your first online course or learn to use this popular program in a campus classroom.

**Microsoft Office Classroom Tools**

9:00–11:45 a.m.

Put all the tools of your Microsoft Office Suite to use as a teacher. Collaborate online, review Word and Excel documents from students, build a Web page with Word, or use Excel to create a gradebook.

**Civility in the Online Classroom**

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Join this panel discussion as a group of veteran online faculty explore issues from classroom control to online harassment.

**Adobe Acrobat and Photoshop Elements**

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Learn all the basics about the classroom applications of the latest versions of these exciting and innovative software programs from Adobe.

**Playground of Emerging Technologies**

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Hear brief presentations by faculty on Tutor’s Edge, Palmtop, Audio Streaming, Impatica, and other new tools.

**Advanced Tips in Course Management**

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Veteran faculty from the Internet Teachers at Every College Project will share a bevy of insights regarding WebCT, Blackboard, Instant Messaging, chat rooms, test and grade exporting, and other tools.

**TexShare: Tools for Online Research**

1:15–2:45 p.m.

Learn about hundreds of online databases, journals, and even 20,000 full-text books, ready for use by students and faculty.

**Success Stories**

3:00–4:30 p.m.

Faculty who entered the online world kicking and screaming and emerged as real advocates will share their experiences.
MEMORANDUM

TO: TCCTA Membership
FROM: TCCTA Ad Hoc Committee on Election Reform
Brian Dille, Odessa College, Chair
Ellen Brennan, San Antonio College
Vivian Dennis-Monzingo, Eastfield College
Richard Elam, Hill College, Johnson County Branch Campus
Patricia Smith, Temple College
David Wilcox, Houston Community College

RE: Recommended amendments to the TCCTA Constitution and Bylaws

Background

TCCTA President Susan Hult Edwards established the TCCTA Ad Hoc Committee on Election Reform in May, 2002, in response to the discussion during the 2001 state convention’s general session of the resolutions advocating changes in the nomination and election process. It was agreed at that meeting that the issue should be studied further.

The Ad Hoc Committee met four times during the summer and fall of 2002. The changes suggested below were also submitted to the Resolutions Committee for their review and comments. The suggestions were then reviewed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Election Reform and several were acted upon.

Pursuant to the Constitution, Article X, Section 1, the proposals were submitted prior to November 15 to president Susan Hult Edwards for publication and endorsed by at least 25 professional members.

The proposals for constitutional change are offered, the Constitution stipulates, “for purposes of discussion, debate, and amendment” at the forthcoming general session on February 20, 2003, at the Austin Convention Center. “The Amendment, only in the form in which it emerges from the annual convention, shall be published in the TCCTA Messenger in the succeeding year and may be adopted, unamended, at the next annual convention by a two-thirds vote of professional members casting votes at the convention and by absentee ballot as prescribed in the Bylaws of the Association,” the Constitution states.

Amendments to the Bylaws may be adopted by a majority vote of the professional members present and voting at a general session of the annual convention.

All of the proposed changes will be presented and explained at the February 20, 2003, general session in Austin. There will be ample opportunity for questions from those attending. The membership will then have one year, until the 2004 state convention general session, to consider the proposed amendments to the TCCTA constitution. They will then be voted on at the 2004 general session. With one exception, the proposed amendments to the Bylaws will also be voted on at the 2004 general convention, giving TCCTA members a year to consider those changes. The only proposed change to be voted on at the 2003 general session in Austin involves the proposed Bylaw amendments on campaigning by candidates for TCCTA office. (Change 16—explained below.)
Each of the five suggested changes to be presented at the 2003 State Convention and voted on as five separate amendments at the 2004 State Convention

1. **Changing “Executive Committee” to “Executive Board.”**
   
   This recommendation is being made because the EC functions not as a committee but as a governing board for the organization. The rationale was to change the name of the EC to reflect its actual role and purpose within TCCTA. *(Beginning in Article I,—Meetings, and continued throughout the Constitution and Bylaws.)*

2. **Changing the titles of the officers—Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer—to “First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Third Vice President.”**
   
   This recommendation came from the consensus that the present officer titles are misleading. The Secretary has rarely kept the official notes of the EC meetings. This has been a function performed by the state office in the past. The Treasurer signs the checks but does not manage the Association's finances. Fiscal matters and decisions are decided by the EC as a whole. Renaming these three positions more accurately reflects their true functions and duties on the EC. *(Beginning in Article VI, Section 1. Officers—and continued throughout the Constitution and Bylaws.)*

3. **Changing the procedure for filling vacancies on the EC.**
   
   Currently, when a vacancy in the positions of the President or President-Elect becomes vacant, the President-Elect and Vice President both move up, leaving the Vice President position vacant, to be filled by an appointment made by the EC. The Secretary and Treasurer currently do NOT move up, but remain in the same positions. The committee believes that the Secretary and Treasurer, both on the EC, will most likely have more knowledge and experience in EC and association matters than a new appointee; therefore, all officers should move up. This would then leave the bottom position, Treasurer (or “Third Vice President”—if that change is approved), vacant and the two bottom positions on the EC would be filled in the next election, both in contested races. *(Article VI, Section 5. Vacancies.)*

4. **Specifying that officers moving up to the next highest position to fill a vacancy will serve the remainder of that term as an “Acting” officer and shall serve in that same office for one full term the following year.**
   
   The Ad Hoc Committee recommends this because if a sudden vacancy occurred in the office of President, the President-Elect would move up and become TCCTA President, but they would be working with the committee chairs and appointees of their predecessor, thus depriving that person of the opportunity to appoint his/her own committee chairs and fill vacancies on TCCTA committees. Under the current constitutional provisions, the President-Elect who moves up to become President due to a vacancy would not only serve the remainder of the term of his/her predecessor, but then serve as President for the following year. The recommended change here would apply this same provision to all officers on the EC. *(Article VI, Section 5.)

5. **Insertion of a specific provision that no more than one officer on the EC can be elected from any one college district.**
   
   This has been the unwritten, de facto practice followed by the Nominating Committee. However, the Ad Hoc Committee felt that this was such an important principle, it should be specifically stated in the Constitution. *(Article VI, Section 6. Qualifications.)*

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**Changes to the Bylaws**

Each is to be presented at the 2003 State Convention and voted on at the 2004 State Convention—with the exception of Change 16 which will be voted on at the 2003 general session.

6. **Changes in the Nominating Committee Chair—to be chaired by Immediate Past President.**
   
   Because the function of the Nominating Committee has always been to ensure that the best-qualified members willing to run for a TCCTA office were nominated, the Ad Hoc Committee recommends that the Nominating Committee be chaired by the Immediate Past President, a person familiar with the duties of and talents required by service on the EC. *(Article III, Section 1. Nominations.)*

7. **Changes in the composition of the Nominating Committee—to be composed of seven members, the chair and six additional appointees, at least three of whom must be past presidents of TCCTA.**
   
   For many of the same reasons cited in recommending Change 6, the Ad Hoc Committee also concluded that,
although the President will still appoint the remaining six members of the Nominating Committee, three of those members should be past presidents of TCCTA, who can bring their experience, knowledge, and perspectives to the nominating process. *(Article VI, Section 4, Nominating Committee)*

8. **The Nominating Committee will nominate an unopposed slate of candidates for each of the top three offices—President-Elect, Vice President (1st Vice President), and Secretary (2nd Vice President). For the office of Treasurer (3rd Vice President) the Nominating Committee will nominate up to but not exceeding five candidates.** *(Article III, Section 1, Nominations)*

This change is being recommended in response to the complaints of many members about contested elections. In the past, it was often difficult for the Nominating Committee to find members willing to challenge an incumbent, and when they did, it was often with the understanding that they were a “sacrificial lamb.” Both members and candidates alike have expressed concerns about asking a qualified and dedicated TCCTA member to run under these conditions.

*The bottom office where no incumbent is running would be the contested race.* Exactly how five candidates could compete and one candidate be the winner is explained in Change 13, where “preference voting” or IRV—instant runoff voting—is proposed.

*Why five candidates instead of the traditional two?* The benefits include the following:

- The contested race becomes less personal—candidates would not be running against an opponent, but simply on their own merits
- More candidates produce more choices for members and more interest in the election.

9. **Nomination by petition**

The Nominating Committee’s role would be to ascertain that a member nominated by petition met the four requirements (refer to Item 14 below) and to ascertain that no more than five candidates compete for any one office in which an incumbent is not running for the next highest office. *(Article III, Section 1, (B) Nominations by Petition)*

Nomination by petition is being retained, with some minor changes, for several reasons:

- To keep the process democratic and allow any group of TCCTA members to challenge an incumbent if they believe it to be in the best interests of TCCTA
- To guarantee that there could be a contested race in the event of dissatisfaction with an incumbent running for the next highest position on the EC.

10. **Elimination of nominations from the floor**

*(Article III, Section 1, (C) Nominations from the Floor)* The committee believes it best to eliminate this provision for several reasons:

- It has rarely been used.
- It would make it impossible for the Nominating Committee to have time to ascertain whether the candidate being nominated on the floor met the four requirements.
- It would complicate electronic voting (see Change 11 below), which would already be set up with the candidates’ names.

11. **Electronic Voting**

This is being recommended to improve the accuracy and speed of tallying votes. Why not utilize new technology that will simplify the electoral process (and possibly increase voter participation)? *(Article III, Section 2, Electronic Voting)*

12. **Early Voting (formerly Absentee Voting)**

To reflect current practices, in which many members vote absentee although they attend the convention, a change in terminology is long overdue. The *Ad Hoc* Committee also recommends that with the use of electronic voting, early voting can continue right up until the official voting commences at the annual state convention. Members who are planning on attending the convention but have last minute changes in plans, due to illness, weather, or some other reason, will not lose their opportunity to vote.

13. **Preference Voting (Instant Runoff Voting—IRV)**

Instant Runoff Voting will allow members to vote for three candidates, indicating their first, second, and third preferences. *(Article III, Section 4, Preference/Instant Runoff Voting)* Instant Runoff Voting has the following advantages:

- The winning candidate in a contested race with up to five candidates would be more likely to achieve either a simple majority of the votes, or a strong plurality.
- It would eliminate the possibility that a candidate could win a contested race with 21 to 25 percent plurality of the vote.
- Voters whose first or second choice candidate “lost” or were eliminated, would still have their votes counted, and thus have a say in determining the winning candidate.
- Unlike cumulative voting, it does not encourage voters to vote for their first choice and then the two weakest candidates.
14. **List specific minimum qualifications or criteria that candidates for the TCCTA E.C. must meet. All candidates would have to satisfy ALL FOUR qualifications.** *(Article VI, Section 4. Nominating Committee)*

To address the concerns of some members that qualified candidates might not be nominated, the Ad Hoc Committee concluded that if a potential candidate met all four of the qualifications, they were qualified to run for the EC. The Ad Hoc Committee attempted to balance specific criteria to produce qualified candidates with flexibility, recognizing that “quality” can be measured, and “leadership experience” earned, in a variety of ways. The Nominating Committee will still continue to screen potential candidates to ensure they are qualified to run. The specific written criteria in the TCCTA Bylaws will produce two clear benefits:

- It offers a better guarantee than the current system that all candidates nominated are qualified to serve as a TCCTA officer.
- It offers the assurance that a member who meets all four qualifications cannot arbitrarily be denied the opportunity to be a candidate for the EC.

If more than the maximum number of five potential candidates file nomination forms to run for office, the Nominating Committee will continue to retain its responsibility to choose the best (five) candidates.

15. **Article VI—Duties of the Executive Board.**

This change simply replaces the old “Section 1” under “Duties of Committees.” Since we are recommending the EC be renamed the Executive Board, this section could not be included under “Duties of Committees,” but needed its own paragraph.

16. **New Responsibilities of the Elections Committee—and new limits on campaigning at the convention.** *(This is the one Bylaw amendment the Ad Hoc Committee recommends be introduced and voted on at the 2003 State Convention.)*

This recommendation comes as a result of overwhelming opposition to, and distaste for, campaigning at the convention. Many members commented that the campaigning was unprofessional and they resented being approached, given free gifts, and having to listen to a campaign pitch. The Election Committee’s expanded duties would include enforcing these new campaign rules, which basically prohibit all campaigning at the convention. One campaign poster per candidate would be allowed—at the voting site. There would still be these three opportunities for candidates to present themselves to members and for members to learn more about each candidate:

- Two one-hour “Meet the Candidate” sessions, one before the Thursday evening general session, and one after.
- Platforms and other information still printed in the convention issue of *The Messenger*.
- A brief electronic presentation on the TCCTA Web site (lasting no more than five minutes and using a template provided by the state office) to insure fairness for those candidates who may come from campuses or colleges that are less technologically equipped or trained.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Election Reform believes all of these numbered changes can stand alone, with two exceptions:

- **Items 8, 9, and 13—all Bylaws changes.** These three suggested changes all deal with the proposal to allow up to five candidates for the bottom position (Treasurer/Third Vice President) and thus, Preference/Instant Runoff Voting and the changes in the “Nominations from the Floor” process would also be affected. All three will have to be approved as a package for each to work. Thus, these three changes are submitted as one amendment with three separate sections.
- **Items 11 and 12—both Bylaws changes.** It would be difficult to allow early/absentee voting to continue up until the start of official voting at the state convention if electronic voting was not approved and used. Thus, these two changes are submitted as a package.

**Note:** Affected portions of the Constitution and Bylaws are found on the following three pages. Proposed additions are underlined. Proposed deletions are struck through with horizontal lines.
CONSTITUTION

Article VI

Officers
Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Association shall be the President, President-Elect, Vice President, Secretary, Second Vice President, Treasurer, Third Vice President, and Immediate Past President.

Section 5. Vacancies. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall succeed to the presidency. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President-Elect, the First Vice President shall succeed to that position. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the President-Elect shall continue to serve as President Elect. Provided for under the provisions of this section, the Executive Committee shall select an individual to fill the vacancy. First Vice President, the Second Vice President shall succeed to that position. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Second Vice President, the Third Vice President shall succeed to that position. In the event of a vacancy in the office of Third Vice President, that position shall remain vacant and will be filled in the next election. A President-Elect who shall have succeeded to the presidency as provided for in this section shall serve for the remainder of the term to which he or she shall have succeeded and shall thereafter serve as President for one full term. A First Vice President who shall have succeeded to the office of President-Elect shall serve for the remainder of the term to which he or she shall have succeeded and shall thereafter succeed automatically to the office of President as provided for in Section 1 of this article; provided, however, that if the office of President shall be occupied by an individual who shall have succeeded to that office as provided for under the provisions of this section, the President-Elect shall continue to serve as President-Elect for one full term, and thereafter succeed to the presidency. An individual who shall have been selected to fill a vacancy in the office of Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer, as provided for in this section, an officer who shall have moved up to fill a vacancy on the Executive Board shall serve for the remainder of the term to which he or she shall have succeeded. An officer who shall have succeeded to the next highest office as provided for in this section shall serve for the remainder of the term to which he or she shall have succeeded as an "Acting" officer in that position and shall thereafter serve in that office for one full term. A vacancy in the office of Immediate Past President shall remain unfilled.

Section 6. Qualifications. No person shall be eligible for election to an office in the Association who shall not, at the time of such election, be a professional member of the Association. If any officer, subsequent to the election, shall cease voluntarily to be a professional member of the Association, as provided for in Article III of this Constitution, his or her office shall be declared vacant by the remaining members of the Executive Committee Board, and the vacancy shall be filled in the manner prescribed in Article VI, Section 5 of this Constitution. No more than one officer on the Executive Board can be elected from any one college district. However, this provision shall not be construed as to make ineligible from Executive Board membership a person who, in changing positions after election to the Executive Board relocates to a college district where another Executive Board member is employed.

Article VIII

Executive Board

Executive Board. The Executive Board of the Association shall consist of the President, President-Elect, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, and Immediate Past President.

Commitees

Section 1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee of the Association shall consist of the President, President-Elect, First Vice President, Second Vice President, Third Vice President, and Immediate Past President.

BYLAWS

Article III

Nominations, Absentee Early Voting, and Elections

Section 1. Nominations.
(A) Nominations by Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall be chaired by the Immediate Past President. The Nominating Committee shall submit to the President of the Association an unopposed slate of candidates for each of the top three offices—President-Elect, First Vice President, and Second Vice President—if the incumbent chooses to run for the next higher position. For the office of Third Vice President, the Nominating Committee shall submit to the President of the Association no more than five candidates. If an incumbent chooses not to run for the next highest position, then the Nominating Committee will follow the same procedures established for the Third Vice Presidency, for the office of President-Elect, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Treasurer. The report of the Nominating Committee shall be published in the TCCTA Messenger prior to the annual convention. The report shall include pertinent biographical and professional data concerning...
candidates nominated for offices in the Association.

(B) Nominations by Petition. Names of other candidates may be put before the membership upon submission by them, or in their behalf and with their written consent, of petitions bearing the signatures of at least 75 professional members of the Association. Candidates nominated by petition will be submitted to the Nominating Committee to determine eligibility. The Nominating Committee shall ascertain that no more than five candidates compete for any one office in which an incumbent is not running for the next highest office. Such nominating petitions shall be submitted not later than December 1 preceding the annual convention of the Association to the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee. Upon verification of the validity of the signatures, the names of candidates thus nominated shall be included on the official ballot, and biographical and professional data concerning such candidates shall be included in the TCCTA Messenger prior to the convention.

Section 2. Electronic Voting
The Association will provide a mechanism for electronic voting.

Section 3. Absentee Early Voting. Any professional member of the Association may cast a ballot by mail an early vote. A form requesting the privilege of absentee voting shall be included in the TCCTA Messenger prior to the convention. Any professional member who properly completes the request form and sends it to the State Office shall be provided with an official ballot. The properly marked, signed ballot shall be received in the State Office not later than three days immediately preceding the opening of the annual convention in the official envelope bearing the signature of the voting member. Upon receipt of the ballot in the State Office, an appropriate notation shall be made on the official membership roster of the Association indicating that the member has cast a vote in the election and shall not be entitled to receive a ballot at the time of the convention. All absentee ballots thus cast and received in the State Office as hereinbefore provided shall be delivered to the President of the Association at the time of the annual convention and shall be transmitted by the President to the Chairperson of the Election Committee so that such ballots may be tabulated together with those cast during the convention. No voting by proxy shall be permitted, and no absentee ballots shall be accepted by any officer or member of the Association except as hereinbefore provided. Early voting will continue until the official voting commences at the annual state convention.

Absentee Early voting shall be permitted for elections of officers of the Association and adoption of Amendments to the Constitution, as provided for in Article X of the Constitution.

Section 4. Preference/Instant Runoff Voting. The candidate who receives the largest number of votes for each office shall be elected. If the votes should be evenly divided between two candidates for an office, the candidates shall determine the winner by lot or a coin toss by the Election Committee chair. Preference or Instant Runoff Voting will be used to determine the winner for the Third Vice President Position. In preference voting each voter indicates their preference on the ballot. When tallying votes, only the first choice is initially counted. If no candidate has a simple majority of the total number of votes cast for that position, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated and his/her second choice votes are then distributed to the remaining candidates. If none of the remaining candidates has a simple majority, again the candidate with the least number of votes is eliminated and his/her third choice votes (or third place votes if their second place votes went to a candidate already eliminated) are distributed to the remaining candidates. This process continues until one candidate emerges with a simple majority. If neither of the two remaining candidates has a simple majority of votes cast, the candidate with the largest number of votes is declared the winning candidate.

Section 5. Secretary
Second Vice President. The Secretary Second Vice President shall be responsible for the maintenance of accurate records of the proceedings of the Association and the Executive Committee.

Section 6. Treasurer
Third Vice President. The Treasurer Third Vice President shall be responsible for the maintenance of all financial records required by law or by the Association. If the Third Vice President moves up to the Second Vice President position to fill a vacancy, that person will continue to be responsible for the maintenance of all financial records required by law or by the Association.

Section 6. Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President shall provide advice and counsel concerning operation of the business of the Association. The Immediate Past President will chair the Nominating Committee. In the event the position of Immediate Past President is vacant, the Past President who served in the year immediately preceding the Immediate Past President will chair the Nomi-
Section 7. General Responsibilities. In addition to the foregoing specific duties prescribed for officers of the Association, each officer shall perform other duties and assume other responsibilities as may be delegated by the Association or the Executive Committee Board.

Article VI

Duties of Executive Board. The Executive Board shall exercise general managerial authority and responsibility over the work of the Association. It shall establish policies of the Association, consistent with the TCCTA Constitution and actions of the Association in its annual conventions. It shall adopt the budget of the Association, confirm presidential appointments of committee members, contract for professional services of an Executive Director and delegate to him or her such duties, responsibilities, and authority as shall be deemed appropriate. The Executive Board shall establish the general policies of the publications of the Association. It shall exercise all other duties and assume all other responsibilities as may be required by law or directed by the Association.

Duties of Committees

Section 4. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall exercise general managerial authority and responsibility over the work of the Association. It shall establish policies of the Association, consistent with the TCCTA Constitution and actions of the Association in its annual conventions. It shall adopt the budget of the Association, confirm presidential appointments of committee members, contract for professional services of an Executive Director and delegate to him or her such duties, responsibilities, and authority as shall be deemed appropriate. The Executive Committee shall establish the general policies of the publications of the Association. It shall exercise all other duties and assume all other responsibilities as may be required by law or directed by the Association.

Section 5. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee, chaired by the Immediate Past President, shall consist of seven members. Three of the remaining six members shall be Past Presidents. The Nomination Committee shall nominate highly-qualified those candidates for offices in the Association who meet all of the following four qualifications:

1. Professional membership in TCCTA for at least 5 consecutive years immediately preceding the nomination.
2. Leadership experience in any one of the following five areas:
   A. served as a chair of a TCCTA standing committee
   B. chaired a section meeting once in the 5 years immediately preceding the nomination
   C. served as a campus representative
   D. elected to serve in a faculty organization
   E. held an elected position in a faculty organization or other demonstrated college leadership
3. Have attended at least one TCCTA-sponsored conference or seminar (such as the Fall Leadership Conference) in the five years preceding the nomination
4. Have attended the TCCTA convention at least 4 of the 5 years immediately preceding the nomination

Section 10. Election Committee. The Election Committee shall have general responsibility for conducting elections of officers and voting on proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws and assuring that voting in such elections is conducted properly and in accordance with provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws. The responsibilities of the Election Committee include the following:

1. Meet with all candidates prior to the first “Meet the Candidates” session to review the campaign rules that all candidates pledged to follow
2. Organize and host two one-hour informal “Meet the Candidates” sessions in one room, both prior to and after the Thursday evening general session
3. Enforce the following campaign rules:
   A. A brief electronic presentation by each candidate (lasting no more than 5 minutes) and the candidate platforms are to be put on the TCCTA Web site using a template provided by the TCCTA state office
   B. Campaigning is prohibited at the convention site, including all locations where TCCTA-sanctioned convention activities are scheduled or located
   C. Campaign materials or gifts are prohibited at the convention site, including all locations where TCCTA-sanctioned convention activities are scheduled or located
   D. One poster per candidate is allowed, to be located at the voting booth only—in the standard 22 inches by 28 inches size
   E. The TCCTA state office will not make available mailing addresses, stickers, or email addresses.
The Membership Services Committee of the Texas Community College Teachers Association will sponsor a grant-writing seminar on Thursday, February 20, 9:00 a.m. to Noon, at the Austin Convention Center.

Three highly successful grant writers—Lillian Cook, Barbara Buchanan, and Ann Morris, will lead the seminar.

Seating for the seminar is limited, and reservations will be processed on a first-come, first serve basis. Cost of the seminar is $100 per person.

This three hour morning seminar is designed for those who want training in writing a winning grant proposal. The program includes:

- an overview of identifying funding sources,
- practical tips on writing a good proposal,
- suggestions for writing a budget and implementing a workable evaluation plan,
- handouts including Internet and other resources, as well as helpful instructions on how to get funded.

Time will be also be allotted for questions from the group.

REGISTRATION FOR GRANT-WRITING WORKSHOP

Please reserve ________ ticket(s) at $100 each for the TCCTA Grant-Writing Pre-Conference Workshop scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Thursday, February 20, 2003, at the Austin Convention Center.

❑ My check in the amount of $__________, payable to TCCTA, is enclosed.
❑ Please charge my credit card in the amount of $__________.
   ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa
   
   Account Number ____________________________ Expires ____ / ____

Name _______________________________________________________________________________________
College _____________________________________________________________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________________________________
City _________________________________________________________ ZIP _______________________
FAX ____________________________ Phone ____________________________
E-Mail _______________________________________________________________________________________

Registration may be accomplished by sending this form by fax to 903-572-6712, or by mail to:
   TCCTA Pre-Conference Grant-Writing Workshops
   ATTN: Kevin P. Rose
   Northeast Texas Community College
   P.O. Box 1307
   Mt. Pleasant, TX 75456-1307
   College Phone: (903) 572-1911, ext. 360
   EMail: krose@ntcc.cc.tx.us

Full refunds will be made if reservations are cancelled before 12:00 Noon, Friday, February 14.
Don Brown, Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, explains the urgency of the “Closing the Gaps” initiative. Although college and university enrollments are growing, they do not reflect the ethnic composition of the state.

Commissioner Brown shares a laugh with TCCTA president-elect Lola King, Trinity Valley Community College–Terrell.

Anamaria Shaw, Chair, Professional Development Committee (Tarrant County College–Southeast), welcomes attendees to the 23rd Annual Conference for Faculty Leaders on October 11-12 in Austin.

Austin professional lobbyist Beaman Floyd tells conference attendees how to communicate effectively with lawmakers as the Regular Session of the Texas Legislature approaches. Mr. Floyd urged community college faculty members to get to know their representatives “at home” in their districts.

Longtime TCCTA attorney Frank Hill speaks to the audience on “Current Legal Issues in Higher Education.” Mr. Hill is a specialist in the rights and responsibilities of public educators.


The Fall Conference for Faculty Leaders gives faculty organization officers an opportunity to discuss important issues and share ideas.

Anamaria Shaw, Chair, Professional Development Committee (Tarrant County College–Southeast), welcomes attendees to the 23rd Annual Conference for Faculty Leaders on October 11-12 in Austin.
TCCTA President Testifies in Preliminary Hearing

On September 4 at the Capitol, representatives of community and technical colleges offered testimony to staff members of the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor’s Office of Budget, Planning, and Policy. The hearing was the first official opportunity to present budget requests to key executive and legislative staffers, who will help lawmakers formulate spending priorities for the Regular Session when it convenes in January.

TCCTA president Susan Hult Edwards, Cy-Fair College, made the following remarks (in part):

I represent more than 6000 teachers, librarians, counselors, and administrators who are members of our association and work to “close the gaps” for students in our 50 community and technical colleges in Texas.

My colleague, Richard Elam of Hill College, said two years ago, “Closing the Gaps begins in my classroom.” It begins in each of the classrooms, libraries, and offices of the teachers, librarians, counselors, and administrators who work day in and day out with our state’s students.

Working with students always reminds me of a favorite quote by Mark Twain that I keep in my office. Twain wrote, “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn’t do than by the ones you did. So throw off the boilines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

At community colleges that’s what we do—help our students sail away from safe harbor to explore new worlds, dream about what they can be and do, and discover how to make their dreams come true. Twain’s quote reminds me, first of all, of some students who are well prepared for college, even brilliant, and could go anywhere to school, but who, for a variety of reasons, stay home. They come to us to explore their options before setting sail for another college or university. It reminds me of Lutalo Kyles, who went from the streets of Atlanta and Houston into our classrooms and landed a spot of the second national team of the All-USA academic team before moving on to study law.

Twain’s quote also reminds me of other students who are under-prepared and need remediation to do the work they must do to complete their degrees—people who are discovering how it feels to read and write well and understand math, perhaps for the first time in their educational careers. It reminds me, for instance, of students who come to us to learn English as a second language. Community colleges teach the lion’s share of developmental studies and ESL courses in our state. One such student is Silvia Mintz, who came to Houston from Guatemala to study and ended up an officer in her Phi Theta Kappa chapter. She’s now a regional Vice President of Phi Theta Kappa, looking forward to continuing her studies at the University of Houston and to an internship in Washington, D.C., next summer.

Twain’s quote further reminds me of students who are first-generation college students—the dreamers who have not let uncharted territory deter them from their dreams of a higher education.

One is Dottie Pearle, who began studying office technology, because she works as a secretary. She went on to become an award-winning student leader and is completing her Microsoft certification this semester.

I have taught online courses in history for the past two years. It has been both interesting and challenging. Twain’s quote reminds me of Kitty Wasmage, who is taking online courses from a Texas community college while in Saudi Arabia. Despite a few technical glitches and some late night hours working with the course, Kitty successfully completed her history course and is taking Texas government this semester.

Lutalo, Silvia, Dottie, and Kitty represent thousands of student success stories we see every day in Texas community and technical colleges. Thank you for your commitment to these unique schools. We support the appropriations proposed by the Texas Association of Community Colleges and urge you to continue funding our work. Please help us help our students to explore their options, discover who they can be, and dream. Dream big. Dream big for themselves, for their communities, and for Texas.

2003 TCCTA LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
(Approved by Executive Committee
December 7, 2002)

1. Support increasing the community and technical college formula funding as recommended by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for the cost of instruction and administration.

2. Support ERS funding to ensure and improve quality health insurance benefits for all covered community and technical college employees.

3. Support the current state requirement and state funding of skills assessment and funding remediation in a uniform fashion.

4. Support measures to ensure that the quality of all courses and assessments offered through two-year institutions meet a standard of academic excellence and enhance goals to close the gaps. Academic standards for courses and assessments should not be compromised to achieve measurable student success.

5. Support measures necessary to ensure that state approved community college transfer courses apply fully toward baccalaureate degree requirements.

6. Support continued efforts to restore and enhance funding and benefits for the Teachers Retirement System and the Optional Retirement Program.

7. Support legislation to permit the actuarially neutral transfer between TRS and ORP.

8. Support for continuation of the Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (TIF) and the TexShare library program.

Members are invited to participate in the new forum feature of the TCCTA Web site and to follow “tracked” bills potentially affecting two-year colleges at www.tccta.org.
Today, few topics generate more comment from community and technical college educators than the difficulty of maintaining standards of “civil” behavior. Today’s “new” student increasingly comes from a background with little or no exposure to the “traditional” decorum of college life.

Is rudeness just a sign of the times? To what degree is the college teacher responsible for the proper social behavior of students? What are the common threads of such behavior? When can hostility become dangerous? What can the individual teacher, counselor, librarian, or administrator do in response to inappropriate behavior?

While there are obviously no easy answers to these questions, perhaps a place to begin is with a rational dialogue between faculty and prominent experts.

As part of the TCCTA annual convention, the Professional Development Committee presents “Cooperation, Compassion, and Civility in the Classroom,” featuring noted psychologists Carol Tavris and Elliot Aronson, on Friday, February 21, from 1:00 to 2:15 p.m., at the Austin Convention Center. The program will be broadcast live to colleges and universities across the United States and Canada by STARLINK.

Dr. Tavris earned her Ph.D. in social psychology at the University of Michigan, and her career as a writer, teacher, and lecturer has been devoted to educating the public about the importance of scientific and critical thinking in psychology. Her books include the landmark Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion, a critical examination of many popular myths about anger; The Mismeasure of Woman; and Psychobabble and Biobunk: Using Psychology to Think Critically about Issues in the News, a collection of her opinion essays and book reviews for the New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, Scientific American, and other publications.

Dr. Tavris is coauthor, with Carole Wade, of three introductory psychology textbooks that pioneered in the integration of critical thinking: Psychology, Psychology in Perspective, and Invitation to Psychology. The coauthors also wrote one of the first textbooks in women’s studies, The Longest War: Sex Differences in Perspective. She has lectured widely to students, teachers, lawyers, judges, mental-health professionals, and many other groups on anger in the family, classroom, and society; on critical thinking; on science and pseudoscience in psychology; and on the science and politics of research on gender and sexuality.

Dr. Tavris has taught in the psychology department at UCLA and at the New School for Social Research in New York City. She is currently a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the American Psychological Society, a member of the editorial board of Psychological Science in the Public Interest, and a member of the Council for Scientific Clinical Psychology and Psychiatry.

Dr. Aronson was born in Revere, Massachusetts, to a working class family. Although only a media-
PROGRAM ON ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION OFFERED

On Thursday, February 20, from 1:00 to 4:00 at the Austin Convention Center, a new organization will meet to discuss the “Para-educator Initiative” in the State of Texas.

Representatives from the State Board of Teacher Certification, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Association of Community Colleges will be presenting updates. This will also be an organizational meeting for the consortium.

Alternative Teacher Certification is a rapidly growing activity of Texas community colleges. All interested educators are invited to attend. The group will also discuss ATC and the federal “No Child Left Behind” legislation as they relate to the para-educator.

For more information, contact Sandy H. Gaskin, dean of continuing education at Austin Community College, at san@austincc.edu.

FINANCIAL PLANNING AND SOCIAL SECURITY PRESENTATIONS SLATED

The Membership Services Committee has planned two seminars, to be presented on Friday, February 21.

At 8:00 a.m., a program on personal financial planning will be offered. Details will be provided as they become available. Updates will be posted on the TCCTA Web site (www.tccta.org).

At 4:00 p.m., a special seminar will be presented by a field representative from the Social Security Administration. John P. (Jack) Scruggs will address current laws and policies, especially the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). Mr. Scruggs has been with the Social Security Administration for 37 years, and serves a ten county area providing service to people unable to visit a district or branch office.

Mr. Scruggs also promotes a public information program by making frequent presentations on Social Security issues. Time will be provided for questions from the audience. Those who plan to retire from schools not participating in Social Security (and hence may be affected by the WEP or GPO) are especially urged to attend.

GREAT IDEAS FOR FITNESS (GIFFS) SESSIONS PLANNED

A number of wellness activities sponsored by the TCCTA Membership Services Committee will be available during the TCCTA convention.

Sessions at stations in the exhibit area of the Austin Convention Center will feature brief presentations on blood pressure, stress management, breathing and stretching, dieting, and vitamins. More sessions may be added as the convention approaches.

For specific information, including the names of presenters, visit the TCCTA Web site (www.tccta.org) under “Convention.”

The coordinator of the GIFFS Sessions is Janna Holt-Day, South Plains College.

PASSING THE TORCH: INFORMATION FOR NEW FACULTY

In a highly interactive encore session, veteran faculty and novice community college teachers will discuss tips and techniques for surviving and succeeding in the community college environment. Panelists will discuss what their own first-time experiences were like and how they managed them, as well as new developments that affect all community college faculty today.

Both new and veteran faculty (full and part-time), administrators, counselors, and librarians are invited to attend. The program is sponsored by the TCCTA Professional Development Committee. Coordinator for the event is Terry Stewart, Austin Community College.

TCCTA HOSTS MEETING OF FACULTY TEACHING IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE FACILITIES

Faculty who teach in units of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice will meet on Friday, February 21, at 2:30 p.m. to discuss mutual concerns and share ideas. This is the second such meeting at the TCCTA convention designed for educators in this unique category. TCCTA meeting planners hope it will become an annual event.

Mike Morrow, superintendent of the Windham School District, will speak on “The Role of the Community College in Correctional Education.”

Prior to his current assignment, Mr. Morrow served in the Texas public schools as teacher, high school assistant principal, and superintendent. The Windham School District provides literacy and vocational education programs to offenders in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. This school district is one of the largest correctional education systems in the nation, with a staff of 1500 employees serving 79,000 offenders in 89 prison locations statewide.

Mr. Morrow is a well-known public speaker, having delivered motivational and keynote addresses to more than 500 state and national audiences. He has served on numerous state and national boards and commissions, including two terms as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. The Texas House of Representatives awarded him a citation for his work in human relations. Mr. Morrow earned his Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degrees from Texas A&M, Commerce.
Luncheon Featuring Liz Carpenter
Added to Thursday Program

The TCCTA annual convention begins with a bang at Noon on Thursday, February 20, with a special appearance by noted author, journalist, humorist, and political activist Liz Carpenter.

When LBJ was nominated for vice president in 1960, he asked Ms. Carpenter to “share the great adventure of our lives.” She served as the first woman executive assistant to a vice president until 1963, when she returned from the Kennedy assassination aboard Air Force One. She wrote the 58-word speech that LBJ used when arriving in Washington. Ms. Carpenter’s memoir of the period was a national best seller.

Ms. Carpenter began her lifelong writing career in Washington as a reporter covering the Roosevelt Administration. In 1944, she married Leslie Carpenter with whom she had two children, Scott and Christy. She is a grandmother, and upon the death of her oldest brother became the unexpected surrogate mother of three. She has become an influential advocate for aging Americans.


Ms. Carpenter, who in 1971 was one of 271 founders of the National Women’s Political Caucus, notes, “My mother instilled in her children the belief that we could do anything. So we learned to dream big and strive to realize those dreams.”

A native of Salado with a degree in journalism from the University of Texas, Ms. Carpenter left for Capitol Hill soon after college and believes she has twisted more arms and cajoled more people than any politician, lobbyist, or journalist she knows. As a Washington news correspondent, she covered many of the century’s most important events. Always known for her irreverence and humor, Ms. Carpenter now lives in Austin, where she writes and speaks to a variety of audiences. Her home is a gathering place for movers and shakers, and is her launching pad for speeches and articles.

“No one remains the same person after meeting Liz,” said the late Erma Bombeck. “She makes Auntie Mame look like a shut-in.”

Please reserve __________ ticket(s) at $15 each for the TCCTA luncheon scheduled for 12:00 Noon, Thursday, February 20, 2003, at the Austin Convention Center.

Please reserve __________ ticket(s) at $15 each for the barbecue scheduled for 6:30 p.m.

Please reserve __________ COMBINATION tickets for BOTH events, at $25 each.

☐ My check in the amount of $__________, payable to TCCTA, is enclosed.

☐ Please charge my credit card in the amount of $__________.

☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa Account Number ____________________________ Expires ____ / ____

I understand that full refunds will be made if reservations are cancelled before 12:00 Noon, Friday, February 14, and that no refund will be made for reservations cancelled after that time. (Tickets are transferrable.)

PRINT NAME: ___________________________

COLLEGE: ___________________________

Ticket(s) will be held at the convention registration desk under your name.

NOTE: TICKET ORDER SHOULD BE RECEIVED IN STATE OFFICE BY FEB. 13 TO ALLOW TIME FOR PROCESSING. MAIL TO: TCCTA, 5113 Southwest Parkway, Suite 185, Austin, Texas 78735. (If paying by credit card, you may fax the form to Area Code 512, 328-1086.)
MAKING HOTEL RESERVATIONS NOW!

TCCTA members planning to attend the 56th annual convention, February 20-22, 2003, in Austin, are encouraged to reserve hotel accommodations early—members who wait until the last minute to make reservations will be disappointed.

With the exception of a few special functions arranged for some of the section meetings, all convention activities will be held at the Austin Convention Center. Hotel accommodations may be reserved online, from the TCCTA Web site at www.tccta.org by clicking on “Convention” or by completing the form below and mailing or faxing it to the Austin Convention Housing Bureau. Reservations will be processed as they are received, on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations received after January 29 will be subject to availability. Reservations may NOT be made directly with the convention hotels.

SPECIAL OFFER FROM SOUTHWEST AIRLINES

Southwest Airlines offers a ten percent discount off most fares for air travel to and from the event. Call Southwest for availability.

RESERVATIONS MAY BE MADE BY:

- Call Southwest Airlines Group and Meetings Reservations at 1-800-433-5368
- Use the online facility from the TCCTA Web site at www.tccta.org
- Faxing it to the Convention Housing Bureau
- Completing the form below and mailing or faxing to the Austin Convention Housing Bureau. Reservations may NOT be made directly with the convention hotels.

CONVENTION HOTEL FACILITIES AND RATES

The Austin Convention Center is located at 500 East Cesar Chavez Street. TCCTA has arranged for shuttle service between the Convention Center and the hotels listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOTEL / ADDRESS</th>
<th>Single Occupancy</th>
<th>Double Occupancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Hyatt Regency Hotel 208 Barton Springs Road</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>$129*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Radisson Hotel on Town Lake 111 E. Cesar Chavez</td>
<td>$129</td>
<td>$129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Hampton Inn and Suites 200 San Jacinto</td>
<td>SOLD OUT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Omni Austin at Downtown 700 San Jacinto</td>
<td>$127</td>
<td>$127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Crowne Plaza (formerly Sheraton) 500 North Interstate 35</td>
<td>$119</td>
<td>$119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Holiday Inn on Town Lake 20 North Interstate 35</td>
<td>$105</td>
<td>$105</td>
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</tbody>
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Convention hotels accept all major credit cards. Hotels are unable to grant direct billing for room or incidental accounts. In the absence of an approved credit card, hotels request payment by cash or traveler’s checks. Credit information will be required at time of check-in. Hotels will not accept personal or institutional checks unless definite arrangements are made with the Credit Department at time of check-in.

* There is a $15 fee for each additional occupant.

available 7:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, or 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Central Standard Time. Make reservations five or more days before you want to travel to take advantage of this offer.

MAILED RESERVATIONS

Mail to: Convention Housing Bureau
201 East 2nd Street
Austin, Texas 78701
OR FAX: (512) 583-7283
OR REGISTER ONLINE: www.tccta.org (click on “Convention”)

HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

Mail To: Convention Housing Bureau
201 East 2nd Street
Austin, Texas 78701
OR FAX: (512) 583-7283
OR REGISTER ONLINE: www.tccta.org (click on “Convention”)
Patricia C. Knight, Amarillo College, chair of the TCCTA Nominating Committee, has announced the names of candidates for state office for 2003-2004. Five candidates were selected by the committee on November 9.

The committee nominated Gail M. Platt for president-elect. Dr. Platt has been the director of the Learning Center at South Plains College since 1980.

Larry C. Allen was nominated for vice president. Mr. Allen has taught accounting and economics at Panola College since 1988.

Nominated for the office of secretary was Danita L. McAnally. Ms. McAnally taught radio and television at Amarillo College for fourteen years, and currently serves as director of institutional effectiveness and advancement.

Jeff D. Edwards and Terry E. Stewart were nominated for the office of treasurer. Mr. Edwards has taught economics at Collin County Community College for sixteen years. Ms. Stewart is director of faculty development programs at Austin Community College and taught previously in the English department at Amarillo College.

Detailed background information on each of the nominees and platform statements from the candidates will appear in the convention issue of the Messenger and will also be available on the TCCTA Web site at www.tccta.org.

The Bylaws provide that candidates may also be nominated from the floor during the general session of the TCCTA annual convention, scheduled to begin at 7:15 p.m., Thursday, February 20, at the Austin Convention Center.

Members of the Nominating Committee this year are: Patricia C. Knight, Amarillo College, chair; Glenda H. Easter, El Centro College, vice chair; Michael G. Golden, Houston Community College–Central; Ronnie E. Hall, Angelina College; Rosemary M. Karr, Collin County Community College–Spring Creek; David J. Ligon, Tyler Junior College; and C. Sue Poor, Wharton County Junior College.