

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Sixty-Four



February 7, 2023

The opinions expressed in this bulletin are those of the Board of Directors of the Sul Ross Group and do not represent the opinions of The Association of Former Students, its officers, or its Leadership.

STATE LAWMAKERS CAN REFORM HIGHER ED



As reported by Ilya Shapiro and Christopher E. Rufo on January 17, 2023 in the Wall Street Journal, the vast majority of college students attend state universities which can be reformed by state legislators.

The authors say, “ Many Americans despair of reforming the culture of higher education. But a substantial majority of college students

attend public institutions, and these schools are subject to state law. If legislators are determined to restore free speech and academic freedom, there’s a lot they can do. In cooperation with the Goldwater Institute, we’ve developed model state legislation based on four reform proposals.”

The model legislation they propose includes the following elements:

“Abolish “diversity, equity, and inclusion” bureaucracies, which work actively against norms of academic freedom and truth-seeking, advance primarily political aims, and fuel administrative bloat that raises costs and exacerbates student debt.”

“Forbid mandatory diversity training for students, faculty and staff. Even when DEI officials claim their training is “voluntary,” it’s often required for faculty who wish to perform basic extracurricular roles, such as serving on hiring committees. Typical diversity training includes unscientific claims about “microaggressions” and “implicit bias” and rejects the basic American principle that everyone should be treated equally.”

“Curtail the use of “diversity statements” as a means of political coercion. These serve as litmus tests in employment processes to exclude applicants who don’t adhere to critical race theory and other radical beliefs. compelled speech—universities increasingly require that applicants state their belief in the importance of DEI, cite prior personal efforts to promote DEI and pledge to integrate DEI into their teaching. Applicants for many positions have been eliminated on the basis of diversity statements alone and many universities condition their hiring decisions on the applicant’s ideological conformity”

“End racial and other identity-based preferences. The Supreme Court may do this in a few months anyway by holding that racial preferences violate the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and, in the case of public institutions, the 14th Amendment. Regardless of how the justices rule, discriminating based on race, sex, ethnicity or national origin is antithetical to universities’ basic missions. Outlawing admissions and hiring based on these characteristics would curtail universities’ efforts to evade a mandate against them from the high court.

House Bill HB 1006 was introduced in the 88th Texas Legislature which is in session from January 10, 2023, until May 29, 2023. HB 1006 accomplishes these goals.

https://www.wsj.com/articles/state-lawmakers-can-reform-higher-ed-critical-race-theory-diversity-statements-bureaucracies-11673978891?mod=hp_opin_pos_4#cxrecs_s

WHO WAS FREDRICK E. GIESECKE?



Through 1939, Giesecke participated in the designing and supervising the construction of many historic campus buildings still standing today. It was during his tenure that the primary direction of the Texas A&M campus was reversed to face the new Highway 6 in recognition of the growing importance of the automobile as the means of arrival at the campus compared to trains. Significant historical buildings constructed during Giesecke’s tenure include the following:

- Academic Building
- Animal Industries Building
- Chemistry Building
- Civil Engineering Building
- Cushing Memorial Library
- Equestrian Center & Horse Barn
- Halbouty Petroleum Engineering Building
- Hart Hall
- Jack Williams Administration Building
- Sbisá Dining Hall
- Scoates Hall
- Walton Hall

Dr. Fredrick E. Giesecke, 1886 (MENG), established Texas' first formal program in architectural education at Texas A&M in 1905 and over the next five decades would oversee the major facilities grow on the A&M campus. A former Captain (now Corps Commander) in the A&M Corp of Cadets, Giesecke joined the A&M faculty after graduating in 1886 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering, and within two years he was appointed head of A&M's Department of Mechanical Drawing.

After completing a Mechanical Engineering degree at A&M in 1886 he earned a S.B. degree in architecture from MIT in 1904. Giesecke served as head of the A&M architecture program until 1912, when he accepted a job at the University of Texas conducting research as the head of the Division of Engineering's Bureau of Economic Geology and Technology. In 1927, three years after completing a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, Giesecke returned to Texas A&M as head of the Department of Architecture and college architect and was named head of the Texas Engineering Experiment Station within a year.

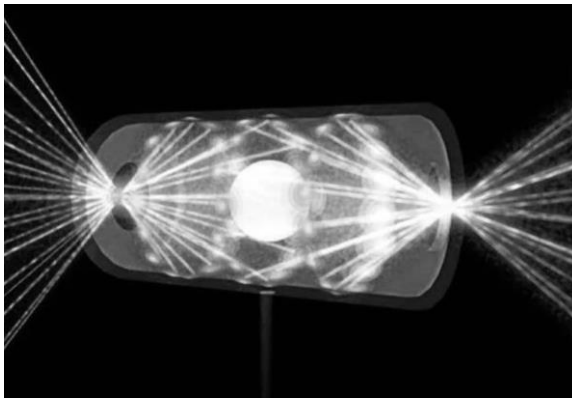
In this role he led the extension of practical engineering services to all 254 counties in Texas. These programs and services impacted thousands of Texans in both industry and private business. He visited the Ruhr Valley in Germany to study their techniques on sewage management. The result was an experimental pond that was developed in 1931 and after positive results the pond was expanded into a fourteen-acre lake in 1933, known as Lake Shinola.

In 1943, at the age of 74, Giesecke earned his fifth degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois. Throughout his career, Giesecke wrote numerous books and over 100 scholarly papers and received many honors for his accomplishments. In 1942, he received the F. Paul Anderson Gold Medal for outstanding contribution to the science of heating and ventilating. Giesecke's life was characterized by his desire to learn by study, experimentation and observation. His daily notebook contained an entry from an experiment he was conducting just two hours before he died of a heart attack on June 27, 1953.

A&M PLAYS VITAL ROLE IN FUSION SUCCESS

Nuclear fusion is the physics occurrence that powers the sun and giant stars. For decades fusion has been the holy grail to provide limitless clean power for the energy grid. As reported by Ale Miller in the Eagle on January 27, 2023, A&M faculty scientists, and engineers played a large role in a major scientific break-through. On December 5, 2023, positive ignition was achieved at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory for the first time in which more power output occurred than was put in to cause the event.

Yu Ding and T.S. Bukkapatnam are two Texas A&M scientists among many who played a part in the fusion ignition breakthrough. A&M has a standing relationship with the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) resulting from collaboration as the management team at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL).



Former students who work on the project at LLNL include Kelli Humbird, a design physicist. According to Miller, “Humbird, who has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nuclear engineering from A&M, moved to the lab in 2017 and did most of her Ph.D. work there before she completed her degree in 2017 and became a staff physicist. “

“The team Humbird has worked on for this experiment focused its efforts on finding ways

to improve computer models that would be more reflective of what is seen in reality. For the December 5 experiment, her team predicted for the first time ever a greater than 50% chance of the design achieving ignition. Humbird said it was an exciting, yet bold claim, since it hadn’t happened before.”

“On December 13, the Department of Energy (DOE) announced the official results of the experiment and that it surpassed the fusion threshold by delivering 2.04 megajoules(MJ) of energy to the target resulting in 3.14 MJ of fusion energy output.”

Humbird said “I hope other nuclear engineering students that don’t want to go work at a fusion power plant see this result and see that there’s this whole other field of physics that I can go do research in that’s really exciting, and hopefully we can recruit more people to come join us in the future.”

https://theeagle.com/edition/page-a01/page_bde8b7aa-87de-548b-9c90-155bc2f903e1.html

REPORT: UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS-AUSTIN CREATES BUREAUCRACY TO PUSH DIVERSITY AGENDA



According to a report published by the National Association of Scholars (NAS) t.u. has created a vast bureaucracy to push the “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion” (DEI) agenda. Based on its published statement “the NAS is an independent membership association of academics and others working to sustain the tradition of reasoned scholarship and civil debate in America’s colleges and universities. We uphold the standards of a liberal arts education that fosters intellectual freedom,

searches for the truth, and promotes virtuous citizenship.”

Key takeaways in the NAS report are the following:

“UT Austin’s DEI initiatives espouse a clear ideological agenda. Consistently, the initiatives amplify controversial claims about race, gender, oppression, and privilege.

Under the banner of DEI, the university has trained faculty and students in ‘critical race theory,’ promoted the thinking of Ibram X. Kendi and Robin DiAngelo, and implemented curricula laden with the watchwords of identity politics, such as ‘microaggressions,’ ‘systemic racism,’ and ‘intersectionality.’”

“The initiatives call for a vast overhaul of curriculum and instruction, guided by an ideologically charged notion of equity. The Dell Medical School has adopted a long list of health equity competencies; many colleges and schools have created new DEI-themed courses, such as ‘Equity in STEM,’ or required DEI materials; and the university has created various layers of DEI training for students and faculty alike. “

“The initiatives make a commitment to DEI an effective job requirement for faculty members. The ‘Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity’ mandates that each college and school develop mechanisms for evaluating faculty contributions to DEI. The Cockrell School of Engineering revised its promotion and tenure guidelines ‘to explicitly consider efforts related to DEI in the context of all three of research, teaching, and service.’ The Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs now incorporates ‘dimensions of DEI into peer observations.’ This marks a huge shift in the basic priorities of the university, tying employment to political goals.

”The initiatives create and feed a large bureaucracy devoted to advancing the vague goals of DEI throughout the university. The ‘Strategic Plan for Faculty Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity’ promises to create ‘a diversity officer position in the dean’s office of each [college and school] responsible for faculty diversity.’⁵ The ‘You Belong Here’ plan notes that ‘Every college, school and unit has appointed a Diversity Officer to lead initiatives tailored to the needs of their students, staff and faculty.’⁶ The initiatives also call for various new DEI committees that effectively ensure that the cause will remain a perpetual priority for the university.”

[Comprehensive Restructuring DEI at UT Austin Sailer NAS-1.pdf](#)

LIA MUSGRAVE ‘19: BLAZING A TRAIL FOR WOMEN IN SPORTS



Figure 1 - Lia Musgrave '19

As reported in a press release from the Texas A&M College of Arts and Sciences on December 14, 2023 Emily Godsey '14, says that “as a woman in sports media, Lia Musgrave '19 has had to work hard to make her voice heard.”

While at A&M, Lia was already planning out her career by gaining experience working for the Brazos Valley Bombers, TexAgs, the Bryan-College Station Eagle, KBTX TV, the Corps of Cadets and KAMU TV.

After graduation from A&M with a degree in telecommunications she obtained a job with the Brazos Valley Bombers Baseball where she had to assert herself to gain recognition and the responsibility she sought. “I’ll go make the connections, I’ll talk to the players,” she said

to the room of experienced announcers and analysts, “just give me a microphone, give me a chance and let me see what I can do”.

She formerly served as director of digital and social media content for the Dallas Wings. One of Lia’s goals is to become vice president for a major sports team. She presently works for the XFL creating digital content on the marketing team.

“I want to be a trailblazer for women in sports — that’s always been something I’ve been really passionate about,” Musgrave said. “I’ve been in the industry for five years now, and just in five years, I’ve seen a ton of progress for women in the industry and the way that we’re able to have a seat at the table.”

Lia Musgrave ‘19: Blazing A Trail for Women in Sports | Texas A&M University College of Arts and Science (tamu.edu)

WHO, WHY, AND HOW TO RECEIVE THE SRG BULLETINS?

It was previously The Association of Former Students’ policy that anyone could “opt in” (register and grant permission) to receive the 56 SRG produced Bulletins which began in 2020. In mid-April 2022, the policy guidance was changed so that only SRG members can now receive them. The “opt in” system was rescinded by The Association so that now, non-SRG persons no longer can be recipients. That rescission and change in policy also included three conditions: (1) that SRG can no longer express opinions or include “opinion-based” material in the bulletins, (2) that the SRG can only issue one bulletin each month, and (3) that our “bulletins” be simply typical SRG newsletters. Accordingly, in order to maintain our independence of thought and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to abandon the email service of The Association, known as “ListServe”, and to communicate with you directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents. The Board intends to maintain our policy of complete transparency and that is the reason we have inserted the disclaimer on the front page of this bulletin. To communicate with the SRG address your emails to SRGPresident@gmail.com

The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are responsible for producing the SRG Bulletins. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution’s purposes, which is to ensure our represented SRG Membership is kept informed in a timely manner.

**DON'T FORGET TO REGISTER
SUL ROSS GROUP REUNION
March 7-9, 2023**

A block of rooms is available on a first-come, first-served basis, for the 2023 Sul Ross Group Reunion. Make your reservations by calling the College Station Hilton directly before Feb. 13, at 979-693-7500, or by booking online. Be sure to reference the group code **ROSS23** to receive the rate of \$129 per night, plus tax.

For more information, go to the Sul Ross Group web page link below:

<https://www.aggienetwork.com/events/2023/sulross.aspx>

IF YOU WISH COMMENT TO THOSE WHO DECIDE:

Chancellor Sharp: chancellor@tamus.edu

The Board of Regents: vickie@tamus.edu or jbell@tamus.edu

President Banks: president@tamu.edu

COO Hartman: gharman@tamu.edu

Interim Provost Alan Sams: asams@tamu.edu

VP Student Affairs Ramirez: jramirez@vpsa.tamu.edu

Athletic Director Bjork: rrabun@athletics.tamu.edu