

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Seventy-Seven (77)



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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 leadership. The SRG is a nonpartisan organization. Our intention is in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's purposes, to keep the Sul Ross Group membership informed on pertinent topics and occurrences at TAMU in a timely manner and enlist their support when required.

WELSH ADDRESSES FACULTY AND REVISITS THE PATH FORWARD



Figure 1 - Texas A&M Interim President Gen. Mark A. Welsh.

As reported by Laura McKinsie, Texas A & M Division of Marketing and Communications, in Texas A&M Today, on October 5, 2023, Texas A&M Interim President Gen. Mark A Welsh conducted an all-faculty meeting to discuss his decisions regarding The Path Forward, an initiative created by former president M. Katherine Banks.

During the past few months Welsh has revisited The Path Forward through a survey which elicited 2,500 responses, interviews, and listening sessions to determine which components of the program to keep and which to modify or eliminate. Welsh's presentation was held in the Kyle Field Hall of Champions and was attended by nearly 600 people live and another 2,000 + on-line.

"The conversation has to continue," Welsh said. "The difference, I hope, from here is we're going to be looking through the windshield, not in the rearview mirror. Because it's time to start looking forward, and then just continue this conversation and make it part of our normal routine."

In an effort to satisfy a major concern of the faculty, Welsh elevated the role of the provost and changed the title to "Executive Vice President and Provost" to clearly identify the provost as the no. 2 position in the university responsible for handling all

academic affairs. Faculty members had expressed the previous arrangement had reduced their access to key administrators. Programs returned to the Office of the Provost are the following:

- The Aggie Honor System Office
- Transition Academic Programs
- Public Policy Intern Program

Welsh said another key element to study is enrollment management and capacity as it relates to the nation's largest student body.

McKenzie's report also said that "Welsh announces the following the meeting:

- retaining the merged College of Arts & Sciences, which resulted from the combination of the former colleges of Liberal Arts, Science and Geosciences. The college's dean and faculty will be tasked with recommending a governance structure to the provost. It now is the second largest college behind engineering.
- Maintaining the current library services model and adding \$3.3 million to the University Libraries' annual operating budget. A task force charged with developing recommendations on procedures to protect faculty members' academic freedom will also include academic freedom for librarians as an action item.
- Under The Path Forward, seven colleges were designated as schools. Welsh said colleges and schools will be able to submit their preference for naming to the provost for approval."

Overall, Welsh's presentation has received a favorable response can enable Aggieland to march forward into continuing its rise to a top-ranked institution.

To read the full article click on the link below:

[Interim President Welsh Outlines Next Steps Following Quick-Look Assessment - Texas A&M Today \(tamu.edu\)](#)



HOUSE ARMED SERVICES CHAIRMAN VISITS BCDC



Figure 2 - U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers and Chancellor John Sharp.

A key U.S. leader in the fight to accelerate military innovation came away impressed from his visit last Friday (Sep. 22) to the George H.W. Bush Combat Development Complex (BCDC) at Texas A&M-RELLIS.

U.S. Rep. Mike Rogers, a Republican from Alabama and the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, witnessed the testing of an operational laser weapon that was manufactured by Raytheon in McKinney, Texas. The live, open-air testing, a first in Texas, is an example of how the BCDC will help the defense industry accelerate

innovation and production.

Rogers also toured the BCDC labs to see their wide array of capabilities. The complex is a hub for collaboration between the military and partners from universities, industry, national labs and the tech sector.

He heard about the latest research in hypersonic flight systems and progress on the Ballistic, Aero-optic and Materials range, a high-tech tunnel being built for testing laser and hypersonic technologies.

Texas A&M is manager of the University Consortium for Applied Hypersonics (UCAH) for the U.S. Defense Department. UCAH coordinates R&D collaboration among academia, government, and industry.

“This work in hypersonics is especially critical, given the challenges we have with our testing capabilities,” Rogers said. “You are really leading the way for the nation. I’m impressed with that.”

As we left the BCDC, Rogers added, “This is a remarkable facility. We appreciate everything that Texas A&M is doing for the nation.”

TEXAS A&M NAMES 14 HAGLER FELLOWS IN 2023 – 2024 CLASS



As reported in an Eagle Staff report on September 29, 2023, Texas A&M University's Hagler Institute for Advanced Study announced 14 Hagler Fellows and two distinguished lecturers for its 2023-24 class on Tuesday.

The Hagler Institute for Advanced Study was established in 2010 to attract scholars for yearlong appointments across A&M campuses, institutes and agencies. This is the 13th and largest Hagler Fellows class. This year's group features a Nobel physicist, a Nobel economist and the first female astronaut of color to travel into space. The fellows will be inducted at a gala next March.

The new Hagler Institute's fellows and lecturers include:

Philip Calder, head of the University of Southampton's School of Human Development and Health. Calder will work with A&M's School of Medicine.

Alicia Carriquiry, a distinguished professor and the President's Chair in Statistics at Iowa State University. Carriquiry will collaborate with A&M's College of Arts and Sciences.

George Georgiou, an engineering chair at The University of Texas at Austin. Georgiou will work with A&M's School of Medicine.

Jody Gookin, a professor at North Carolina State University's Veterinary Scholars Research Education. Gookin will work with A&M's School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

Mae Jemison, president of The Jemison Group. She was the first female astronaut of color to travel into space. Jemison will work with A&M's School of Engineering Medicine.

Eric Maskin, professor at Harvard University. He received the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics. Maskin will work with A&M's College of Arts and Sciences.

H. Richard "Rich" Milner IV, professor at Vanderbilt University. Milner will work with A&M's School of Education and Human Development.

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Kyle Myers, an independent consultant and former director of the Division of Imaging, Diagnostics, and Software Reliability at the Food and Drug Administration. Myers will work with A&M's College of Engineering.

Sir Konstantin Novoselov, a professor at the National University of Singapore. He shared the 2004 Nobel Prize for Physics. Novoselov will work with A&M's College of Arts and Sciences.

Eleftherios "Terry" Papoutsakis, a professor at the University of Delaware. Papoutsakis will collaborate with faculty, researchers and students in the College of Engineering.

Radia Perlman, a fellow at Dell EMC. Perlman will work with A&M's College of Engineering.

Soroosh Sorooshian, a distinguished professor at the University of California-Irvine. Sorooshian will work with A&M's College of Arts and Sciences.

Robyn Tanguay, a distinguished professor at Oregon State University. Tanguay will work with people at A&M-Galveston.

Günter Wagner, a professor emeritus at Yale University. Wagner will work with A&M's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

The two Hagler Distinguished Lecturers for 2023-24 are:

Julio Ottino, a professor at Northwestern University. Ottino will work with A&M's College of Engineering.

Mark Zoback, a professor at Stanford University. Zoback will work with A&M's College of Engineering.

To read the full story, go below:

Texas A&M names 14 Hagler Fellows in 2023-24 class (theeagle.com)

THE A&M SYSTEM ANNOUNCES A FEDERAL LAWSUIT HAS BEEN DISMISSED AGAINST TEXAS A&M



As reported in a piece by Bill Oliver on September 29, 2023 at WTAW in a news release by Texas A&M, a federal judge in Houston on Friday dismissed a discrimination case against Texas A&M University that was brought by a white male who alleged unlawful hiring practices by the university without every applying for a job.

Despite never actually submitting a job application, the plaintiff – Richard Lowery, a finance professor from the University of Texas – claimed Texas A&M engaged in unlawful hiring practices “by giving discriminatory preferences to females and non-Asian racial minorities at the expense of white and Asian men.”

Lowery had said he was interested in leaving the University of Texas because he dislikes its leadership and has been the target of intense criticism for his conservatism. He added that he believed the Mays Business School at Texas A&M would be a better fit, according to court documents.

Through its lawyers, Texas A&M moved to dismiss the lawsuit because Lowery did not claim an actual legal injury that can support a suit because Lowery never applied for a job at A&M and “disavows any present intention to apply” to do so.

United States District Judge Charles Eskridge granted Texas A&M’s motion to dismiss.

Texas A&M also moved to dismiss Lowery’s suit for related reasons. For example, they pointed to recently passed legislation in the Texas Legislature as removing any need for judicial relief, and the Court agreed.

Senate Bill No 17, which was signed into law in June 2023 and takes effect on January 1, 2024, prohibits public universities from giving “preference on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin to an applicant for employment,” the Court’s opinion noted. The Court also noted a recent Supreme Court case that found race-based university admissions programs are unlawful. The new state law and the court case render the case moot as to alleged past conduct, and that the fact that the state law does not take effect until 2024 renders Lowery’s complaints of future conduct not yet

ripe. The Court's opinion closed by noting that, after the state law becomes effective, nothing prevents Lowery from filing suit if he believes that Texas A&M's hiring practices at that time are unlawful.

To read more, click on the following link:

Texas A&M System Announces a Federal Lawsuit Has Been Dismissed Against Texas A&M - WTAW | 1620AM & 94.5FM

TEXAS UNIVERSITIES STRUGGLE WITH DEI LAW COMPLIANCE



Figure 3 - Texas State Capitol.

As reported by Caroline Wilburn in the Texas Tribune on September 18, 2023, in a piece entitled *"Texas A&M System's guidance on the state's DEI ban shows compliance might be a hard needle to thread"*, the public Texas colleges and universities are struggling with how to comply with the new Texas law originated by SB 17. Her piece said, "The Texas A&M University System issued staff guidance earlier this month on how to comply with the state's ban on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, providing a first glimpse into how Texas universities are navigating the thorny implementation of the new law."

Many Texas universities, including Texas A&M, had previously embraced a rubric developed at The University of California at Berkeley which embedded the concept of "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" known as DEI in the faculty hiring and student enrollment process. This rubric was previously administered through an Office of Diversity and was widely shared on university web sites.

Wilburn's piece further states "Guidance for university website and social media administrators states that "DEI information should not be on university websites, including but not limited to the acronym, DEI, or the phrase 'diversity, equity, and inclusion.'" Universities might organize events that "support diversity in a general way" but must not "promote preferential treatment of any particular group and are open to everyone."

The A&M implementation guidelines provide the approved revisions by the Board or Regents of the Texas A&M university System.

- No Diversity Offices
- No diversity statement/essays by job applicants pledging fealty to diversity.
- No consideration of race, sex, color, or ethnicity in hiring.

- No training or promoting policies related to DEI.

Wilburn further reports, “Senate Bill 17, which goes into effect at the beginning of next year, was a high legislative priority this year for Texas Republicans who accused DEI offices and programs of indoctrinating students with left-wing ideology and forcing schools to prioritize hiring based on how much job candidates supported diversity rather than merit. Critics of the law say it is a step backward for higher education in Texas, saying DEI initiatives boost student enrollment numbers among underrepresented populations and help universities hire employees from more diverse backgrounds.”

Wilburn’s piece concluded, “In a message sent to faculty, staff and students earlier this month, Texas A&M University interim President Mark Welsh III said the school will change its hiring practices and training, dissolve its office for diversity and seek other revisions to university policies.”

To read the full article, click on the link below:

[Texas A&M University System issues staff guidance on DEI ban | The Texas Tribune](#)



Figure 4 - Reveille X – April 2021 – Texas A&M Today – Jesse Everett/Texas A&M Marketing & Communications

Reveille X

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

In order to maintain independence of thought and communication with our membership, the SRG board has decided to communicate directly through bulletins sent by email to the Class Agents and then shared with those in their Classes. Anyone is free to pass these bulletins to any Aggie, friends of Aggies, or just friends. The Board plans to maintain our policy of complete transparency and that is the reason we have inserted the disclaimer on the front page of this bulletin. **You can contact us at:**
SRGbulletin@gmail.com

The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are solely 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 on pertinent topics in a timely manner.

To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution and By-Laws, and the SRG's history and what we are about, please refer to our new "**SRG Tab**" (Under "**Programs**") on The Association's website, at:
aggienetwork.com.

Mark your calendar - Sul Ross '24 Reunion will be March 5 – 7, 2024 in College Station

The Hilton Hotel room block is open and ready to book room nights. The Group Code is ROSS24 and the cut-off date to make reservations is February 12, 2024.

**Hilton Hotel - 801 University Dr E, College Station, TX 77840
Phone (979) 693-7500**

If you wish to comment to those who decide:

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