

## Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Thirty-Five

3 June 2021

### OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT ---

**1 June 2021**

*First and foremost, it is with immense pride and enthusiasm that I begin my service as president of this great institution today. It is truly an honor to be part of something so respected and admired around the world.*

*Over the next few months, I look forward to meeting with students, faculty, staff, former students and other valued stakeholders in small listening sessions. As a result of these conversations, together, we will develop a framework for the future. I am eager to hear about your experiences, thoughts, concerns and aspirations for Aggieland as we identify key priorities for our university. We all recognize that Texas A&M University has limitless potential. We also know that we need to work together to consistently achieve greatness. We have tremendous talent, support and spirit, which are anchored in unique and rich traditions. The candid input, feedback and discussion from these sessions will allow us to improve as a university family and as an institution.*

*In addition to these sessions, to meet our full collective potential, I believe we must ensure that our administrative structure is the right one to support a university of this size and stature for today and for many years to come. Therefore, I am conducting a comprehensive review of the university's operations with the goal of achieving a structure that is effective, efficient and flexible, while aligning our valuable resources to attain our mission: the success of our students, faculty and staff. Changes will be made where warranted and necessary as we continue to improve our operational performance in ways that provide the most value to our many stakeholders.*

*I would like to thank Professor John Junkins for his strong leadership as interim president during the transition. We owe him a debt of gratitude. In true Aggie spirit, he answered the call to serve during a period of unprecedented challenges facing the university and our nation. In all that I do as your president, I am committed to this university and its success. I will uphold the Aggie core values and traditions, while ensuring a culture of respect for all. Together, we will take this university to new levels without compromising what makes us, uniquely, Texas A&M.*

**M. Katherine Banks**  
President

**Welcome Officially, Dr. Banks!**

**The Sul Ross Group welcomes you as our new Fightin' Texas Aggie President on your first official duty day (1 June 2021)!!**

This is an excerpt from SRG Bulletin Four, 14 August 2021 from our letter to your predecessor's Commission on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, (CDEI):

*"If we all love our great Institution, and we believe that we are set apart transcendently from any others (which we do), this is derived from our rich history of selfless service, our sense of duty culture, our core values system, and resultant traditions which bind us together as one wherein the parts equal a sum greater than the whole (and our strength). This Spirit, which others covet but cannot replicate, is definitely worth preserving as we march along into modernity - for a multitude of noble reasons - which we also believe. Thus, the leadership, including the administration, faculty, and coaches, all need to understand it, embrace it, nurture it and explain it to all newcomers (not that they don't, to some degree for sure). What has happened in the past two months has revealed some serious and embarrassing voids where the "optics" have been pathetic if we believe "We are the Aggies; the Aggies are we!" We in our cohort group of elder Texas Aggie former students, some 15,000, believe we well understand all this, and we shall be most pleased to assist in any way we can in a mentoring, supporting and enlightening manner."*

### **Interim President's Report - DEI Actions**

On 27 May, Dr. John Junkins, the TAMU Interim President reached out to the SRG Board of Directors in a virtual meeting and gave us his report, and as he described it, "Thursday [is] my last day in the Interim President role, and our discussion will be a nice punctuation mark for my time in this position."

Back in January, he reached out to us several times and we let him know that we appreciated it then, and we do now. Our readers can access the report below and we encourage you to read it. As you will recall, the TAMUS Regents approved his recommendations of Eight Actions after the TAMU Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (CDEI) issued their report about the time he first assumed his position as Interim President. The recommendations centered on the need and plan to increase African American enrollment at TAMU. But it also, in its Action Seven, addressed historical displays and the redesign of Academic Plaza and other designated historical areas. As you will see in the report, the latter part turned out to be much more comprehensive. It also lacks specificity regarding funding sourcing and completion timing.

Again, we encourage our readers to access the material and become informed about it at: [https://president.tamu.edu/documents/TAMU\\_DEI\\_Actions\\_05272021.pdf](https://president.tamu.edu/documents/TAMU_DEI_Actions_05272021.pdf)

**The Sul Ross Group Board of Directors thanks the Interim TAMU President Junkins for his service, and we wish him well!.**

### **President Banks Announces Personnel Changes 3 June 2021**

#### **OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT** \_\_\_\_\_

**To: The Texas A&M Community**

**3 June 20201**

*Earlier this week, I announced that I am conducting a comprehensive review of the university's operations with the goal of developing an administrative structure that is effective, efficient and*

*flexible, while directing our valuable resources toward our mission: the success of our students, faculty and staff.*

*As a first step in this process, I have identified several individuals who will serve in university leadership roles. The following newly-appointed individuals will assume their roles effective June 3, 2021.*

*Joe E. Ramirez, Jr. '79, Brigadier General, USA (Ret.) has been appointed interim vice president for student affairs. In this role, Ramirez is responsible for leadership of student affairs departments, programs and services designed for the success of more than 71,000 students. For the past 10 years, he has served as commandant of the Corps of Cadets and has 31 years of military service and leadership positions in various joint and operational commands.*

*I would like to thank Dr. Danny Pugh for serving as vice president of student affairs for the past six years where he has been a passionate advocate for our students.*

*Greg Hartman has been appointed chief operations officer and will be responsible for all university operations, including human resources, transportation services, IT, facilities, safety and security. Hartman previously served as senior vice president and chief operating officer of Texas A&M Health. A former industry executive with more than 30 years of experience and responsibility in executive management, strategy, policy, marketing, communications and government, Hartman joined The Texas A&M University System as vice chancellor of strategic initiatives in January 2019.*

*John W. Crawford '93 has been appointed chief financial officer and will be responsible for managing all financial resources for the university, including fiscal operations, short- and long-range planning, budgeting, financial analysis, payroll, procurement and contracting. Crawford previously served as assistant vice chancellor for business management and chief financial officer for the Texas A&M Engineering Program for the past eight years and, prior to that, served as controller at Texas A&M University for five years. He has more than 23 years of service to the university.*

*The previous position of vice president of finance and operations and chief financial officer was held by Dr. Jerry Strawser since 2014. I want to thank Jerry who supervised unprecedented growth while ensuring our university's resources were used appropriately.*

*Dr. Jon Mogford '90 has been appointed interim vice president and chief operating officer of Texas A&M Health, replacing Greg Hartman. Dr. Mogford will be responsible for implementing a comprehensive strategic plan to leverage system resources and modernize the Health Science Center. Previously, Mogford served as vice chancellor for research for The Texas A&M University System and worked in close collaboration with The Texas A&M System's 11 universities and eight state agencies to facilitate the growth of research for all system members.*

*Marilyn M. Martell has been appointed vice president for marketing and communications and chief marketing and communications officer. Martell will be responsible for university-wide brand management, media relations, digital communications, campus sponsorships and trademark and licensing of the Texas A&M brand. For the past 19 years, Martell was senior assistant vice chancellor for marketing and communications for the Texas A&M Engineering Program, where she led strategic direction and coordination of public relations, communications and marketing.*

*I would like to thank Amy Smith for serving as senior vice president of marketing and communications for the last five years. During that time, Amy expanded the Texas A&M brand globally and addressed many challenges.*

*Dr. Jack G. Baldauf has been appointed interim vice president for research. In this role, he will lead Texas A&M's Division of Research, which delivers strategic support to further the university's research mission by facilitating collaborations to increase federal funding, strengthening the research infrastructure, encouraging commercialization partnerships and ensuring research compliance. Baldauf, a professor in the College of Geosciences, currently serves as senior associate vice president for research in the Texas A&M Division of Research.*

*I want to thank Dr. Mark Barteau for his service as vice president for research since 2018, where he worked closely with university researchers to build collaboration and momentum.*

*Norman Garza, Jr. has been appointed vice president of government relations. He will lead the implementation of Congressional and legislative initiatives through coordination with The Texas A&M System Offices of State and Federal Relations. He served as assistant vice chancellor of government relations and external affairs for three state agencies since 2014 and was previously associate legislative director for Texas Farm Bureau.*

*Garza replaces Michael O'Quinn '86, who will assume a new role as senior advisor where he will assist with strategy development and organizational effectiveness. O'Quinn previously served as vice president of governmental relations in several Texas A&M administrations.*

*Ed Pierson '82 has been named interim vice president for information technology and chief information officer. Previously, Pierson served as director of IT, chief information officer and assistant vice chancellor of industry partnerships for the Texas A&M Engineering Experiment Station since 2014. Prior to Texas A&M, he worked for healthcare, energy, public safety, and data center operations companies.*

*I want to thank M. Dee Childs for serving as vice president of information technology for the past five years. Childs implemented many operational changes that advanced our cybersecurity, IT and service offerings.*

*I appreciate the significant contributions of those who previously served the administration and welcome the new members of the team. Sincerely,*

**M. Katherine Banks**  
**President**

## **Two Sul Ross Group Members Selected as Distinguished Alumni Posthumously**

Two members of the Sul Ross Group, the late E.E. "Mr. Mac" McQuillen, Class of 1920, and the late Ray B. Nesbitt '55, are among Texas A&M's 2021 Distinguished Alumni. This year's awards are posthumous. Mr. Nesbitt passed away in 2014, and Mr. McQuillen passed away in 1979.



**E.E. "Mr. Mac" McQuillen, Class of 1920**, led The Association of Former Students as Executive Secretary from 1926 to 1947. He firmly established Aggie Muster as a worldwide tradition; reorganized and encouraged A&M Clubs throughout Texas and beyond; created an Opportunity Award Scholarship Program that helped thousands attend A&M; and introduced annual giving in 1942. In 1943, McQuillen created the first Muster packets sent worldwide, formalizing Aggies' practice of gathering on April 21 under the name of "Muster." He initiated the Gold Star Fund for children of former students killed in combat and led fundraising for A&M's Memorial Student Center. From 1947 to 1963, he was director of the Texas A&M Development Office; he led the Texas

A&M Development Foundation (today's Texas A&M Foundation) 1953-63. A former A&M basketball captain, he was elected to the Texas A&M Athletic Hall of Fame in 1975.



**Ray B. Nesbitt '55** retired in 1998 as president of Exxon Chemical Co. after a 43-year career with Exxon; previous positions included vice president of Exxon Chemical Europe and president of Exxon Chemical Americas. A recipient of the Texas A&M Engineering Outstanding Alumni Award, he and wife Sarah created A&M chemical engineering scholarships, a professorship, chair, faculty endowment and an engineering study classroom; they also co-chaired capital campaigns for St. Francis Episcopal Church and The Women's Home in Houston. He served on industry councils and boards, as a director of the Houston branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas and on boards for Hibernia Bank and Marshall National Bank. Nesbitt supported The Association of

Former Students, the 12th Man Foundation and Texas A&M Foundation and was a member of the Chemical Engineering Advisory Council and A&M Legacy Society. He served on the executive committee for A&M's "One Spirit, One Vision" capital campaign.

### **Texas Aggie History Good Bull Pop Quiz!**

1. In 1973, \_\_\_\_\_ told an assembly at AMC that "doing is one of the great Aggie traditions. Aggies are doers, not booers!"
2. In 1878, AMC President James strengthened the military training program and helped encourage among the student body the esprit de corps. That became the source of the early \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Reference the previous question – that esprit gave rise in 1880 to the establishment of the Ex-Cadets Association which was the forerunner to today's \_\_\_\_\_.
4. E.B Cushing, class of 1880, then Chief Secretary of the Ex-Cadets Association in 1881, requested that his members forward to him their addresses and a summary of activities for an information file. This was probably the forerunner to today's \_\_\_\_\_ of Former Students.
5. Explain why AMC, in its early days, had two "alumni" organizations.
6. What were the two names of these organizations: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?
7. What were the two differing "conditions of qualifications" to membership for the two: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Why \_\_\_\_\_?
8. What was the original initiation and then annual membership for the Alumni Association \_\_\_\_\_? For what purpose was the revenue spent \_\_\_\_\_?



9. The AMC Scott Guard was the forerunner for what TAMU student organization (which happens to be the oldest, continuously active in the State of Texas) \_\_\_\_\_?
10. The "College Journal" and the early "Battalion" were the forerunners to what monthly now called the \_\_\_\_\_?
11. Class Agents were appointed in 1893 what primary reason/task: \_\_\_\_\_?
12. The Alumni Bureau was created in 1893 for what two main purposes: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?
13. EB Cushing, class of 1880, in 1896 organized ex-cadets in Houston into a fraternity called \_\_\_\_\_?
14. Of the two early "alumni organizations," which one evolved into the famous, present day The Association of Former Students \_\_\_\_\_? Why \_\_\_\_\_?

(Note: for a slight "hint" on where to search for answers, one might try: We are The Aggies, Dr. John A. Adams. Jr. '73, Copyright 1979, The Association of Former Students, TAMU)

### BLM Course Offered by TAMU History Department this Summer

**Black  
Lives  
Matter**

HIST  
489  
SUMMER  
SESSION  
ONE

HEALTHCARE EDUCATION JUSTICE SYSTEM  
ECONOMIC ACCESS GENDER EQUALITY  
ATHLETICS HOUSING SOCIAL JUSTICE  
POLITICAL AGENCY THE AMERICAN D  
ALL MAJORS WELCOME

Here is a recent "advertisement" for HIST 489: Black Lives Matter at Texas A&M, Texas, and the World. "On occasion, the History Department, frequently in conjunction with other departments, offers special course offerings called "topic courses." These courses are new courses that our faculty members are in the process of designing. If the "special topic" is arranged in conjunction with another department, it is cross listed with that department and may be credited either as history or as an elective. HIST 489 class is experimental and temporary.

Black Lives Matter at Texas A&M, Texas, and the World is one of these courses. The History Department will offer this course for undergraduate studies. The course will be taught in Summer Session 1 2021 remotely.

Dr. Cynthia Bouton in the History Department will be teaching the course. The syllabus or curriculum will be available for the public prior to class." One can learn about Dr. Bouton here: <https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/history/profile/cynthia-a-bouton/>

### Campus Reform Report



McKenna Dallmeyer, Campus Reform's Texas and Virginia Senior Campus Correspondent, on 21 May 2021, issued an article entitled

"Texas A&M Class Requires Attendance at 'Race Talks' Lectures." A popular elective course called "Performance in World Cultures" at Texas A&M University is requiring students to read articles and attend a lecture series about racism and intersectionality.

Students say the course description is very misleading. The "Performance in World Cultures" (PERF 301) course is often taken by students to fulfill the "Cultural Discourse" graduation

requirement. One section of the course is requiring students to attend sessions of the Liberal Arts College new lecture series “Race Talks.” In “The White Racial Frame” lecture of the series, Dr. Joe Feagin discussed the “massive cover-up of our racist history in this country.”

*Students were given a handout featuring the “long timeline of U.S. racial oppression.” “If you want to understand US society and US racism, it is essential to memorize this timeline and embed it into most discussions you get into on racism issues,” Feagin said.*

*Feagin began by discussing America’s founding characterizing George Washington as an “authoritarian slaveholder. We still live under a highly undemocratic 1787 U.S. Constitution substantially made, undemocratically, by elite white slaveholders and their white business allies,” Feagin said.”*

*Feagin also went after Francis Scott Key describing him as a “bloody major wealthy slaveholder and back to Africa colonialist.” He went on to say that Kaepernick “maybe” should have been protesting the national anthem. Surely, we can come up with a national anthem that’s written by a true small d democrat. Throughout the talk, Feagin advocated for reparations, “anti-racist training” for students and “racism countering strategies.”*

*While discussing the “white racial frame,” Feagin said that “racist narratives and myths and interpretations” such as “reverse racism against whites,” “we are making great racial progress and we don’t need aggressive affirmative action or reparations programs,” and “whites are the superior and black folks should be glad they were brought here as enslaved people” are what perpetuate the ideal. Towards the end, Feagin claimed that there is a “strong underbelly” of people “trying to preserve this racial totalitarian system” in America.*

*Students were also required to watch an eight-part video series called #RaceAnd which “explores the many ways race intersects with all the other important issues that impact people of color. I think a lot of it I felt like I had to write in agreement with [the professor]. I felt like I had to do that for the grade,” the student said.*

*The student told Campus Reform that she was misled by the course description and caught off guard by the course material focusing so heavily on race.*

*“From the description I thought the class would focus more on things like plays, concerts, music videos, and movies. I figured there would be other races because the fact that it’s in world cultures, but I didn’t think it would be THAT big of a topic and it would be so one sided political,” she said. A student currently in the class told Campus Reform that he was “caught off guard, but not surprised since even the classes that have nothing to do with race somehow find ways to incorporate it for at least one lesson.”*

One can access the article in its entirety here: [Campus Reform | Texas A&M class requires attendance at 'Race Talks' lectures](#)

## **Texas Senate Reviving House Bill 3979**



On Friday, May the 28<sup>th</sup>, as reported by the Texas Tribune (Kate McGee and other news outlets) the Texas Senate revived a contentious House Bill 3979 that would limit how Texas teachers can talk about current events and America’s

history of racism in the classroom. The Bill now is working its way through the process so it can find its way to Governor Abbott's desk for signature.

The Bill says teachers cannot be compelled to discuss current events and must explore various viewpoints without giving deference to either side. It also bans the teaching of The New York Times' "1619 Project", a reporting endeavor that examines US history from the date when enslaved people first arrived on American soil – marking that as the country's foundational date. As we have Included in a recent Bulletin and reference the Hillsdale College Imprimis article on "Critical Race Theory" by Christopher Rufo. This is an academic discipline, formulated in the 1990s, and built on the intellectual framework of identity-based Marxism. There were Democratic Party amendments to the Bill requiring Texas educators to teach the history of white supremacy.

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### **Notes:**

**SRG Bulletin Sign-Up Reminder:** Anyone (Ags and non Ags, SRG Ags and all other Ags too) can "opt in" and sign up by going to: <https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/sulrossgroup.aspx> and simply putting in your name and email address, and then clicking on "submit." You will then automatically receive all the SRG Bulletins.

### **If you wish comment to those who decide:**

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The Board of Regents: [vickie@tamus.edu](mailto:vickie@tamus.edu) or [jbelle@tamus.edu](mailto:jbelle@tamus.edu)

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**You can reach us at:** [SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com](mailto:SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com). The Sul Ross Group (SRG) Board of Directors (BoD) are responsible for producing and editing these SRG Bulletins, with transparency and advice from The Association of Former Students, under whose auspices we operate. We do so in keeping with one of our four charged SRG Constitution's Purposes, which is keeping our represented SRG Membership informed in a timely manner. To access information about us as the elected SRG Board of Directors, and our Constitution, we shall soon have an "SRG Tab" on The Association's website at: [aggienetwork.com](http://aggienetwork.com) so you can access information about us.

**Pop Quiz Answers:** 1. VP Ford 2. Aggie Spirt 3. The Association of Former Students 4. Directory 5. This is an extra credit OR double jeopardy question – figure it out! 6. Alumni Association and Former Student Association 7. Grads, and grads/non-grad former students; and the latter numbers were way higher, plus, "Once an Aggie always an Aggie" 8. \$1.00, and stamps 9. Ross Volunteers 10. Texas Aggie 11. Increase membership in the Association of Former Students 12. Jobs placement and lobbying 13. Alpha Phi 14. Association of Former Students (Alpha Phi) and you should have already figured this out!