

Financial Aid Advisory Committee

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

COMMITTEE CHAIR	VICE CHAIR
<p>Zelma De Leon Executive Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships University of North Texas System/UNT Email: zelma.deleon@unt.edu Term: 12/01/2015 – 11/30/2019</p> <p>Zelma's career spans over 30 years in student financial aid and scholarships. She has extensive knowledge and experience with helping students meet their educational needs and goals through financial assistance and scholarship programs. In 2011, Zelma became the Executive Director of Student Financial Aid Services, (SFAS) where she leads 59 staff members. Under her leadership, SFAS was named the Outstanding Department for Service in 2013-2014. Zelma has participated in professional organizations, which consist of several advisory committees: Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TAFSAA), National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA).</p>	<p>Diane Todd Sprague Director of Financial Aid The University of Texas at Austin Email: DTSprague@austin.utexas.edu Term: 11/01/2016 – 11/30/2019</p> <p>Diane has 30 years of financial aid experience at several institutions, including the state grant program for the state of Michigan. Diane understands the needs of the university as well as the legislative process. She is able to see the big picture and discuss potentially controversial topics with a balanced voice. Diane has held leadership roles in several state financial aid organizations, as well as working on various task forces and committees for NASFAA.</p>

COMMITTEE MEMBERS	
<p>Delisa Falks – Past Chair Executive Director, Scholarships & Financial Aid Texas A&M University Email: delisaf@tamu.edu Term: 12/01/2014 – 11/30/2018</p> <p>Delisa has served 26 years in the Scholarships & Financial Aid Office at Texas A&M University. She has been involved in the Texas Association of Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA) as a Regional trainer, Committee Chair, Co-Chair, organizer, member of the Bylaws Committee, and currently serves as TASFAA's Secretary. As Executive Director, Scholarships & Financial Aid, Delisa leads a team of over 60 members and serves as the Terry Scholarship Program coordinator. During her tenure, Delisa received the prestigious Traditions of Excellence Award and been recognized as an outstanding employee by her staff, the faculty, and students.</p>	<p>Karla Flores Associate Director of Financial Aid The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Email: karla.flores@utrgv.edu Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2020</p> <p>Karla has 20 years of progressive experience with higher education institutions. She has a strong ability to understand and manage regulations gained through her 13 years in financial aid management. Karla developed and implemented a Student Loan Default Management Plan and established a Default Management Task Force, resulting in campus wide default aversion involvement and lower default rates for the institution.</p>

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Jeannie Gage

Director of Financial Aid
Texas A&M University Corpus Christi
Email: jeannie.gage@tamucc.edu

Term: 12/01/2015 – 11/30/2018

Jeannie has over 26 years of experience at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Her experience in higher education consists of serving in the office of Admissions, Fiscal Affairs, Bursar's Office, Athletics, Scholarships, Student Recruitment and Financial Aid. Her diverse experience provides her with the tools necessary to be an active participant in the Financial Aid Advisory Committee (FAAC). Jeannie currently serves on the College Board National Scholarship Service Assembly. She has been an active member of TASFAA, and has served on its Board of Directors.

Bridget Jans

Executive Director, Scholarships and Financial Aid
University of Houston
Email: Bajans@central.uh.edu

Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2019

Bridget has a resume of experience and education that is both diverse and distinct. She has her juris doctorate which translates into an understanding and knowledge of legal issues. During the course of her career, she has worked as a National Account Manager for Sallie Mae and as an Institutional Review Specialist for the United States Department of Education.

Sandi Jones

Associate Director of Financial Aid
McLennan Community College
Email: sjones@mclennan.edu

Term: 12/01/2015 – 11/30/2018

Sandi has 24 years of experience at McLennan Community College and currently serves as the Associate Director of Financial Aid. During this time, she has held several positions in the Financial Aid office, including Financial Aid Specialist, Sr. Financial Aid Specialist, Assistant and Associate Director. She is a long time member of TASFAA and NASFAA, and has extensive experience administering state and federal financial aid programs.

Robert Merino

Dean of Financial Aid
San Jacinto Community College District
Email: Robert.merino@sjcd.edu

Term: 11/01/2016 – 11/30/2019

Robert Merino has a comprehensive awareness of federal and state regulations. He has led projects that improved students' lives, and fully understands the barriers students face as they attempt to be the first members of their family to attend college. Robert embraces the Texas Higher Education Strategic Plan: 60x30TX.

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<p>Dr. Chris Murr President, Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA) Email: cm18@txstate.edu Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2018</p> <p>In addition to serving as the current president of TASFAA, Dr. Murr is also the Director of Financial Aid and Scholarships at Texas State University-San Marcos. He serves on the Board of Directors and is Committee Chair for NASFAA. His published works include, <i>Journal of Student Financial Aid</i>, <i>Research in Geographic Education</i>, and <i>Journal of Geography</i>.</p>	<p>Alan Pixley Director of Financial Aid and Veteran’s Services Collin College Email: apixley@collin.edu Term: 11/01/2016 – 11/30/2019</p> <p>Alan has 27 years of experience in higher education, including an extensive background in business office operations. For the past ten years, he served as Director of Financial Aid at the university and community college level. Alan is passionate about helping students and sees the ‘big picture’ of higher education. He has worked to reduce barriers for students and to improve financial aid processing for students, while maintaining a strong sense of accountability and transparency. Alan has been actively involved in the Arkansas and Texas state financial aid associations, and received a leadership award from the regional financial aid association.</p>
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<p>Cathy Sanchez Assistant Director of Financial Aid University of N. Texas Health Science Center Email: cathy.sanchez@unthsc.edu Term: 12/01/2015 – 11/30/2018</p> <p>Cathy has 17 years of experience working in the financial aid industry. For the last six years, she has worked at the University of North Texas Health Science (HSC) in Fort Worth as a Financial Aid Counselor. She is currently over the HSC’s Texas Work-Study Program.</p>	<p>Mike Scott Director of Scholarships and Student Financial Aid Texas Christian University Email: m.scott@tcu.edu Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2019</p> <p>Mike has 30 years of experience managing Texas Christian University’s financial aid operations. He is knowledgeable about issues concerning state funding in Texas, and works with the Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas association, Texas Guaranteed, and the Coordinating Board on a variety of issues. Nationally, Mike is active with the College Board and the National Collegiate Athletic Association and is a regular presenter at industry organizations’ conferences and meetings, such as the Association of College Admission Counselors, the European Council of International Schools, the Association of Foreign Student Advisors, and NASFAA.</p>
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Dr. Terry Sheneman

Coordinator of College Readiness and Success
Fort Bend ISD

Email: terry.sheneman@fortbendisd.com

Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2020

Terry has been working closely with students and financial aid for the past 9 years. Since 2013, he has worked as a College and Career Counselor at Hendrickson High School, Pflugerville ISD, where he assists students and families with completing their FAFSA and scholarship applications. He also collaborated with the Austin Chamber of Commerce to hold FAFSA Saturdays for students and parents. For the past 4 years, Terry has served as the Coordinator of College and Career Readiness for Fort Bend ISD where he oversees the College and Career Readiness Advisors, Financial Aid, and Scholarships for the district.

Samantha Stalnaker

District Director of Student Financial Aid Services
Tarrant County College

Email: samantha.stalnaker@tccd.edu

Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2020

Samantha has been in financial aid for over 22 years and has spent the last 14 years at Tarrant County College working directly with state financial aid programs. As the District Director of Student Financial Aid Services, she provides district-wide leadership for the Financial Aid Department. She is responsible for compliance with all federal and state financial aid regulations.

Dr. Christine Stuart-Carruthers

VP for Student Development/Chief Enrollment
Service Officer

Texas State Technical College

Email: Christine.Stuart-Carruthers@tstc.edu

Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2020

Christine has worked in higher education for 16 years and has spent the last five in Enrollment Services at Texas State Technical College. Currently, Christine oversees Financial Aid, Admissions & Records, Testing & Advisement, and New Student Outreach at all ten locations. She works with all areas related to enrollment and provides guidance on how policy changes will affect financial aid.

Kara Tappendorf

Pflugerville ISD Representative
Hendrickson High School

Email: kara.tappendorf@pfisd.net

Term: 01/26/2017 – 11/30/2019

Kara has served as a high school counselor for 10 years. In her current position as Transition Counselor, she works closely with students and families to finalize college, financial aid, and scholarship applications.

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Peggy Watts

Director of Financial Aid

Temple College

Email: peggy.watts@templejc.edu

Term: 12/1/2017 – 11/31/2020

Peggy has over 10 years of experience in financial aid. She has been serving at Temple College as Director of Financial Aid since 2014 and previously served as Assistant Director of Financial Aid at McLennan Community College. Peggy is an active member of NASFAA and TASFAA. Under her direction, the Financial Aid Office launched many initiatives, including online gainful employment disclosures, the Temple College shopping sheet, and the recent development of the "Earn as You Learn" program. Her number one mission is to serve students well.

Brent Williford

Dean Financial Aid and Scholarships

Blinn College

Email: brent.williford@blinn.edu

Term end: 12/1/2017 – 11/30/2018

Mr. Williford has over 19 years in financial aid management positions, working in all aspects of financial aid at Blinn College, Lamar University, and Texas A&M. Over the last 8 years, he was a lead in implementing Banner at Lamar University, over hauling the processing at the Texas A&M Veteran Services Office in College Station, and making significant processing changes at Blinn College. Additionally, he served on the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant Program Negotiated Rule Making Committee in July 2015. Brent continues to work on behalf of his students, providing good customer service while maintaining strict compliance with state and federal laws and regulations.

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STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Johnathan A. Cereceres
University of Texas at El Paso
Email: jacereceres@miners.utep.edu
Term: **06/01/2018 – 05/31/2020**

Jonathan attends the University of Texas at El Paso and plans to graduate in May 2019. As the Financial Aid Advisory Committee's Student Representative, he is most concerned with the retention and completion of higher education for first generation students. Johnathan feels that first generation students are less likely to attend a four-year institution and yet more likely to drop out before completing their degree program. Johnathan believes that first generation students must also adjust to breaking the "intergenerational continuity" in which the knowledge and customs passed down from previous generations must be reconfigured to encourage access to higher education, and with the proper support and resources will assist students in becoming successful members of our communities.

THECB REPRESENTATIVE

Charles W. Puls
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Phone: (512) 427-6365 / (800) 242-3062, Ext. 6365
Email: Charles.Puls@thecb.state.tx.us

Charles currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Student Financial Aid Programs at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Office of Student Financial Aid Programs was formed in 2015 to bring a greater degree of coordination to the state's financial aid programs (grants, scholarships, loan repayment, work-study, loans, exemptions, waivers, etc.) and is built around the needs of its two primary customers: institutions and borrowers. Prior to arriving at the Coordinating Board, Charles spent 24 years as a financial aid administrator, working at institutions such as Boston College, University of Massachusetts Boston, Dartmouth College, and Indiana University Bloomington. Most recently he spent 10 years as the Associate Dean of College Enrollment and Director of Financial Aid at the University of Rochester.