

Financial Aid Advisory Committee  
Meeting Notes  
March 5, 2020  
(Approved at September 3, 2020, FAAC Meeting)

<b>Committee Members in Attendance</b>		<b>Committee Members Absent</b>
Robert Merino (Chair) Ed Kerestly (Vice Chair) Charles Contéro-Puls Tacey Anderson Dr. Ben Bholan Shannon Crossland Rachele Garrett Lyn Kinyon Thomas Ratliff	Joy Thomas Denise Welch Brent Williford  <u>Via Teleconference:</u> Karla Flores Heidi Granger Tam Nguyen Formon Thompson	Paul Galyean Diane Todd Sprague (Past Chair) Samantha Stalnaker Christine Stuart-Carruthers Brent Williford  Marilyn Abedrabbo (Student Rep) Johnathan Cereceres (Student Rep)

<b>Agenda Item A. Welcome, Introductions, and Overview of Meeting</b>	<b>Robert Merino, Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A

<b>Agenda Item B. Consideration of Approval of Minutes from meetings held November 21, 2019</b>	<b>Robert Merino, Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Minutes approved
<b>Action Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No corrections were identified</li> <li>• Motion to approve minutes by Denise Welch; motion was seconded by Shannon Crossland; all members voted in favor</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item C. Recognition of Outgoing Student Representatives</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls, Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The committee recognized the two students with terms ending</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item D. Update: Prior FAAC Business</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls, Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Action Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All prior business has been included in the day's agenda</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item E. Presentation: Senate Bill 1474 and Its Impact on New Student Loan Options</b>	<b>Mr. Ken Martin, Assistant Commissioner/CFO and Debra Urias, Vice President, Brazos Higher Education Servicing Corporation</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SB 1474 enables other providers to pursue student and parent lending products</li> <li>• Deborah Urias and Justin Green from Brazos Higher Education Servicing Corporation provided details on the parent loan product Brazos has developed based on SB 1474.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item F. Presentation: Department of Education Experimental Sites Initiative; Second Chance Pell (Via Skype)</b>	<b>Felipe Leal, Director of Financial Aid, Lee College, and Cynthia Martinez, Financial Aid Senior Advisor, Southwest Texas Junior College</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cynthia Martinez provided an overview of how the Second Chance Pell program has been implemented by Southwest Texas Junior College at the Dolph Briscoe Correctional Institution.</li> </ul>	

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<b>Agenda Item G. Presentation: Department of Education Experimental Sites Initiative; Pell Grants for Students in Dual Enrollment</b>	<b>Don Hilton, Director of Financial Aid, Ranger College</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don Hilton provided an overview of how the Pell Grant program for Dual Credit students has been implemented by Ranger College</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ed Kerestly raised the point that ongoing interest in expanding and strengthening dual credit enrollment in the state may result in legislative interest in this program and how it fits into the state's overall goals, which the agency may wish to follow closely.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item H. Discussion: House Bill 3 (FAFSA/TASFA Graduation Requirement) and House Bill 2140 (Online TASFAA)</b>	<b>Claudette Jenks, Director, College Readiness and Success</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Claudette Jenks provided an overview of the activities that are occurring at TEA and THECB regarding the FAFSA/TASFA high school graduation requirement in HB 3 and the online TASFA requirement in HB</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lyn Kinyon raised the point regarding associated costs and questioned whether students would be charged for filing a TASFA. Claudette clarified that the advisory committee would provide guidance on how development and maintenance costs would most appropriately be addressed.</li> <li>Ed Kerestly raised the point that involving financial aid software providers early in the planning process is critical. Claudette clarified that the advisory committee would solicit information from vendors/stakeholders as part of their discussions.</li> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls raised the point of the difference between the timeliness of receiving FAFSA data and needing to understand why institutions receive data much faster than the agency does.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item I. Discussion: Proposed Update to Texas Administrative Code Related to TEXAS Grants</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls, Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Proposed rules will be posted in the <i>Texas Register</i>
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls reviewed proposed updates to the Texas Administrative Code regarding TEXAS Grant prior to posting the proposed rules in the <i>Texas Register</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members confirmed that the term "award" is being replaced by "grant" and "offer" in published materials. As changes are proposed to the administrative code in the future, this will be integrated into proposed rules.</li> <li>Committee members did not raise any concerns regarding the proposed rules as they exist within statutory limitations.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item J. Discussion: Proposed Update to Texas Administrative Code Related to Adding a Definition of Academic Year</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls, Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Proposed rules will be posted in the <i>Texas Register</i>
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls reviewed a proposed update to the Texas Administrative Code regarding the definition of "academic year," prior to posting the proposed rule in the <i>Texas Register</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members agreed that aligning the state definition with the federal definition would be helpful.</li> <li>Shannon Crossland suggested a change in wording that will be incorporated into the proposed rule before it is published in the <i>Texas Register</i>.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item K. Discussion: Proposed Update to Texas Administrative Code Related to Repealing the Grant Pro-Ration Requirements</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls, Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Proposed rules will be posted in the <i>Texas Register</i>
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls reviewed a proposed update to the Texas Administrative Code regarding the elimination of grant pro-ration in TEXAS Grant, TEOG, and TEG, prior to posting in the <i>Texas Register</i>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members agreed that elimination of grant pro-ration would provide institutions with greater flexibility to make determinations as to what best suits the needs of their student population.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item L. Discussion: Proposed Convening of a Negotiated Rule-Making Committee on Texas College Work-Study</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Charles Contéro-Puls will begin agency discussions on launching negotiated rulemaking
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls reviewed a proposal to convene a negotiated rule-making committee focused on the allocation process for the Texas Work-Study Program with a focus on greater flexibility for institutions. He also reviewed the plan to shift the Texas Work-Study Program disbursement process from a single disbursement at the start of the year to disbursements on an as-needed basis.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members agreed that a negotiated rule-making process would be a good use of participants time.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item M. Update: TASFA Sub-Committee</b>	<b>Robert Merino Sub-Committee Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Merino provided an overview of the TASFA sub-committee discussions which have occurred since the last FAAC meeting.</li> <li>Items being considered: including AGI on the TASFA; considering September 1 release date for institutions and October 1 for students; additional institutional surveys to gather more feedback</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item N. Update: Data Collection Sub-Committee</b>	<b>Samantha Stalnaker, Sub-Committee Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Samantha Stalnaker provided an overview of the Data Collection sub-committee discussions which have occurred since the last FAAC meeting.</li> <li>Four agenda items at the last subcommittee meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update on grants payments system – two enhancements –email notifications for fund requests, return of funds and payment; additional role for access – processing access or review access (viewing only)</li> <li>FAD Data Review Findings – FAD edits that weren't working as intended have been fixed, and additional edits have been added to address data inconsistencies</li> <li>TCWS funds request form – Subcommittee provided input on potential approaches to institutional fund requests that better align with when institutions expend the funds.</li> <li>Updates: Subcommittee provided feedback on upcoming SFAP activities and challenges being reviewed</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to a question about how coronavirus -related events might impact student eligibility, Charles Contéro-Puls indicated that the agency is meeting to discuss efforts and management procedures in relation to the coronavirus.</li> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls raised the question of how Federal Work-Study Funds are dawn down through the federal system to better understand how the state work-study approach might align with the federal approach. He will review the federal approach in more detail.</li> </ul>	

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<b>Agenda Item O. Update: Legislative Recommendations Subcommittee</b>	<b>Shannon Crossland, Sub-Committee Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> The subcommittee will update their report to incorporate the items proposed by FAAC members.
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shannon Crossland presented the recommendations of the Legislative Recommendations sub-committee.</li> </ul> <b>Action Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kelly Steelman proposed adding the state's "debt letter" to the list of discussion items for the sub-committee to review in considering federal and state alignment.</li> <li>Ed Kerestly proposed having the subcommittee address whether the financial implications of the expanded eligibility based on aligning the state SAP guidelines with federal guidelines would influence the subcommittee's recommendation.</li> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls proposed having the subcommittee address whether the lack of legislative appropriations to fund an increase to the Target Award would influence the subcommittee's recommendation.</li> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls proposed (during Agenda Item S) having the subcommittee indicate more detail on what they would be looking for in a data-informed study on the Priority Deadline.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item P. Update: TASFAA Recommendations and Feedback</b>	<b>Lyn Kinyon, TASFAA President</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lyn Kinyon presented an update on recent TASFAA activities and upcoming events.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item Q. Update: School District Recommendations and Feedback</b>	<b>Ben Bholan, Arlington ISD</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ben Bholan provided a School District perspective based on the new state requirements regarding FAFSA completion.</li> <li>School Districts are encouraged by the new requirements, though there are concerns as to how the 100% expectations will be implemented given the challenges that may prevent families from following through on the requirement.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item R. Discussion: Interaction of Priorities Impacting State Financial Aid</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Program Guidelines will be updated to provide clarity on the interaction of the various priorities
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls presented the agency's interpretation of how the various TEXAS grant priorities interact to gather committee feedback on how the agency's interpretation aligns with institutional practice.</li> </ul> <b>Action Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members indicated that the agency's interpretation largely aligns with institutional practice.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item S. Discussion: Priority Deadline</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Similar charts will be assembled looking at all eligible students
<b>Presentation Summary:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls presented data that had been assembled regarding TEXAS Grant, TEOG, and TEG recipients in relation to FAFSA filing date and demographics.</li> </ul>	

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<b>Agenda Item T. FAAC Nomination Process</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: Yes</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> The nomination timeline will be revised to allow new members to start their term in September
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls presented the process for collecting nominations for the FAAC. He also raised the question of whether the committee thought the start of the term dates should be shifted from December, back to September.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee members supported the proposed change to have terms start in September and adjusting the nomination timeline accordingly.</li> <li>Lyn Kinyon raised the point that the TASFAA President has typically been the TASFAA Representative on the FAAC, but the individual's term as TASFAA President does not start until November 1. Charles will review this with TASFAA to determine how best to accommodate this.</li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item U. Update: Office of Student Financial Aid Programs</b>	<b>Charles Contéro-Puls Deputy Assistant Commissioner</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> N/A
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Charles Contéro-Puls presented an update of recent activities in the Office of Student Financial Aid Programs</li> <li>Recent updates to our resources (training materials, guidelines, memos, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutions Calendar – Spring 2020</li> <li>Consanguinity or Affinity Scholarship Statement</li> <li>Six new exemption guidelines</li> <li>Announcements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Grant Award Amounts – FY 2021</li> <li>Tuition Set-Asides – Uniform Standards</li> <li>FAD Cycle One opened Feb 21</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Upcoming items that will occur before the June FAAC meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TASFAA Regional Trainings</li> <li>FAS Webcast – Mar. 10</li> </ul> </li> <li>Deadlines (processing, reports, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opt In/Out Survey (all institutions) - deadline Feb. 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Texas College Work-Study (TCWS)</li> <li>Work-Study Student Mentorship (WSMP)</li> <li>Educational Aide Exemption (EAE)</li> <li>Tuition Equalization Grant (TEG)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Good Neighbor Recommendations – deadline Mar. 15</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Recent SFAP Accomplishments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant Payment Platform Enhancements (discussed in Agenda Item N)</li> <li>Loan origination automation was implemented Dec 17 to speed the approval of borrower applications so that institutions can certify loans more quickly</li> <li>Enhanced due diligence efforts have been implemented to provide more active outreach to support borrowers who may be more likely to become delinquent</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<b>Agenda Item V. Discussion: Topics for Future Meetings</b>	<b>Robert Merino, Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Members will e-mail Robert with recommended meeting topics
<p><b>Presentation Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Merino requested input from the committee on future meeting topics</li> </ul> <p><b>Action Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Topic suggestion: Are there opportunities to expand financial literacy efforts for parents and high school students given the new FAFSA graduation requirement</li> </ul>	

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<b>Agenda Item W. Adjournment</b>	<b>Robert Merino, Chair</b>
<b>Handout Provided: No</b>	<b>Formal Decision/Action Required</b> Meeting Adjourned
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Next meeting June 4, 2020</li><li>• Be sure to send in your Attendance Form to Michelle, even if you attended on the phone</li><li>• Shannon Crossland moved to adjourn; Thomas Ratliff seconded the motion.</li></ul>	