



The Advocate

We Care.

We Show Up.

We Advocate Together.

AFT-Lone Star College



Whether you have been at LSC for a long time or are just beginning your career, joining AFT-Lone Star is the best way to ensure your voice at work on issues that matter to you.

Our Union has a solid history of going to bat for our members when they need help and speaking up on issues that concern our members system-wide.

- ☑ If you believe faculty and staff should have a voice in educational issues, you should join.
- ☑ If you believe employees should have a voice in the political process, you should join.
- ☑ If you believe in the value of employees helping out each other, you should join.
- ☑ If you believe employees should be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, you should join.

Joining AFT-Lone Star is the best thing you can do to ensure that you have a voice on work-related issues that matter to you!

Your dues help support these values.

Membership should not be thought of as only for "protection", but if you need help in a conflict, we will be there for you.

Don't join because you think you might get into trouble; join because you embrace the values we embrace.

**Join AFT-Lone Star
TODAY!**

<http://join.aft.org>

More details on membership benefits
and how to join are on pages 2-3

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**Join
Today!**

<https://join.aft.org>



We're on theWeb!

www.aftlonestar.org

E-mail:

aftlonestar@yahoo.com

Congratulations to our new LSC Trustees!

- **Position 1:** Earnestine pierce (AFT endorsed)
- **Position 2:** Mike Stoma (AFT endorsed)
- **Position 8:** Mike Sullivan

**AFT-Lone Star welcomes you
to LSC! We look forward to
working with you !**

Join AFT Lone Star

Call: 281-889-1009



AFT-Lone Star College

AFT Local Union # 4518

GOALS

- To promote academic excellence
- To protect academic freedom in higher education
- To preserve and protect the integrity and unique identity of each of the institutions of higher education in Texas
- To protect the dignity and rights of faculty against discrimination
- To ensure that faculty have an effective voice on all matters pertaining to their welfare
- To secure for all members the rights to which they are entitled
- To raise the standards of the profession by establishing professional working conditions
- To encourage democratization of higher education
- To promote the welfare of the citizens of Texas by providing better educational opportunities for all
- To initiate and support state legislation which will benefit the students and faculty of Texas
- To promote and assist the formation and growth of Texas United Faculty chapters throughout Texas
- To maintain and promote the aims of the American Federation of Teachers and other affiliated labor bodies

Professional career
protection and a united
voice at work.
Join us today!

BENEFITS

- \$8,000,000 Occupational Liability Insurance
 - provides security while teaching
 - protection against litigation
 - malpractice protection
- \$25,000 Accidental Death Insurance
- Legal Assistance
 - Free consultation and representation on grievances and job related problems
 - Services of leading labor attorneys
 - Legal Defense Fund protection
- Political Power
 - Texas AFT lobbyists in Austin
 - AFT lobbyists in Washington
 - Representation at the Coordinating Board
 - Support for local electoral work
- Affiliations
 - Affiliated with the Texas AFL-CIO
 - Affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and Texas AFT
- Staff Services
 - Professional representatives to assist and advise in processing grievances
 - AFT research facilities
 - Leadership Training
- Savings and discounts on goods and services with AFT PLUS Benefits
- Free \$5,000 term life insurance policy for first year of membership

Monthly AFT Dues

Full-time Faculty	\$42.50
Full-time Professional Staff	\$31.10
Full-time Support Staff	\$28.38
Adjunct Faculty	\$16.50
Part-time Staff	\$16.50

Membership Eligibility

Membership in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is open to full-time and part-time faculty and staff up through the dean level. If you would like to join or find out more information about membership, please contact any of the officers listed on the back of this newsletter, or check out our online information and application at:



www.texasaft.org

American Federation of Teachers
Texas AFT
AFL-CIO



www.aft.org



American Federation of Teachers

Lone Star College



Directions: How to Join the AFT

AFT-Lone Star has a new online form that makes it easy for new members to join or for current members to switch to our new system.

Here's the best way to sign up:

1. Go to <https://join.aft.org>. From the pull-down menu in the box under "FIND A LOCAL," choose "Texas." Click "search" and then scroll down to find "AFT Lone Star College, Local 4518."
2. Fill out the form that appears; you're asked to provide your name, address and so on. Toward the bottom of the page, a question asks, "Are you an AFT member transitioning from payroll deduction to e-bank transfer system?" Check "yes" if you have previously been a member and are transitioning to the new payment system.
3. You're then asked to identify your membership category: Full-time faculty, Full-time professional staff, etc.
4. You're then asked to provide your bank name, routing number and account number, check boxes authorizing the semi-monthly deductions for dues, and type your name. Then, press "SUBMIT." YOU'RE DONE! (in minutes!)

Our new system:

- Is PCI Level I Compliant and adheres to all payment card industry standards and best practices for the utmost security.
- Includes multiple secure layers of hardware, software and processes to ensure safety & security of valuable information.
- Uses industry-leading firewall technology and software. All critical customer data is transmitted and stored using high-grade encryption, and its leading technology monitors data 24/7 from multiple sources, ensuring protection against security breaches and reducing vulnerability.

JOIN AFT - LONE STAR TODAY!



<https://join.aft.org>



Contact us at aftlonestar@yahoo.com or visit our webpage: www.aftlonestar.org.



If you are interested in membership, benefits, or would like to discuss a work-related issue, our AFT Faculty and Staff Vice-Presidents are here to assist. Please don't hesitate to contact them. See the back page of this publication for contact information.



AFT and OGC Cosponsor Hispanic Heritage Event

Eight decades before Donald Trump brought us family separation camps, massive troop deployments, and boasts of a mammoth wall at the southern border, another wave of anti-Hispanic hysteria, largely forgotten, resulted in a mass deportation of Mexicans during the Great Depression.

On October 30, 2018 AFT-Lone Star College and the Lone Star College Office of the General Counsel cosponsored a speech on the CyFair campus by Dr. Francisco Balderrama, professor emeritus at California State University, Los Angeles, an expert on the Orwellian-named “repatriation” movement during the 1930s. The event was organized by LSC-CyFair history professor and union member Raúl Reyes. The speech was extremely well attended. An estimated 300 people were present; the vast majority of those were Lone Star students. Dr. Balderrama’s speech drew on material from the book *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s*, which he coauthored with Raymond Rodríguez.¹

Much like today, Mexican migrant workers moved north during the boom years of the early twentieth century, largely to work in agriculture. As the Great Depression sank all Americans into poverty, misery, and doubt about the future of our country, opportunists did what opportunists have done throughout history: get one group of poor people to scapegoat another group of poor people for problems that are far more systemic in nature.

Arguing that Mexicans would be happier living with their own kind back home, communities and states passed laws denying work to persons of Mexican descent and authorizing mass deportations across the border. Many of those who were sent back were here legally. Some of them were U.S. citizens under the provisions of the 14th Amendment. Many of them had spent much of their lives here and barely knew anything of the culture, or even the language, of their ancestral home. Does any of that sound familiar?

An interesting fact that Dr. Balderrama reported was that several large corporations, including General Motors and the Southern Pacific Railroad, were complicit in pushing for these laws. They were up-

set about efforts among the immigrant community to unionize to advocate for their rights. Many of the first people of Mexican descent to be targeted for deportation were union activists. Hostility towards the labor movement doesn’t sound unfamiliar in the twenty-first century either, does it?

Although those who pushed “repatriation” claimed that their intent was to keep families together, in fact families were torn apart. Some were sent to Mexico; others managed to stay here. Family members were separated for decades. Does that sound familiar, too?

In what is likely to be prophetic foreshadowing, as the economy improved, many of those who had once been deported were quietly allowed to return. America needed the workers. However, the trauma of repatriation left lasting scars on adults and children alike. In 2006, the California Assembly passed a bill officially apologizing for the repatriation movement and establishing a memorial. Study of these events is now a mandatory part of the school curriculum in California thanks to the work of a group of fifth graders. The goal of these efforts is to declare “¡nunca más!” (“never again”).

Unfortunately, waves of hysteria are crashing on our shores once again. However, the union fully believes that events such as the one hosted at LSC-CyFair will inform and open dialog so that wisdom will prevail before it is too late. We are grateful to Dr. Balderrama for his valuable insights and for his compassionate interaction with the many students who wanted to ask questions. Thanks are also due to Professor Reyes and the administration and staff of the Division of Art, Humanities, and Social Sciences at LSC-CyFair for organizing the event.

Worker rights and migrant rights are intersectional because, ultimately, both are human rights. Therefore, AFT-Lone Star College is pleased and proud to have been able to partner with the Office of the General Counsel in sponsoring this important event.

John Burghduff, LSC-CyFair
Professor of Math

1. Balderrama, Francisco and Raymond, Rodriguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s, revised edition*, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque, NM, 2006



Disciplinary Action

Aristotle once stated, “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” This basic statement of systems theory is assessed in many disciplines — Biology, Sociology, Communication, Psychology, and Business, for example —and often touted in most professional organizations.

When looking at the LSC System, one can see that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts when it comes to classes offered, course objectives, credit hours, and, of course, graduation/completion requirements. As a system, all faculty are reviewed according to the System’s standards, and the process of everyday operational procedures for each college and centers are in place – basically, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Unfortunately, when it comes to disciplinary action for students who do not adhere to the prescribed classroom rules and policies set forth in an instructor’s course syllabus, many instructors have found that there is no system policy that is consistent across all the colleges and centers — all it is, is parts. What would be considered totally inappropriate classroom behavior at one location is given a pass at another location. The process of dealing with inappropriate and/or disruptive behavior in the classroom is so disjointed across the system that it is not unusual to hear totally different stories as to how a faculty member should handle a disruptive student. I have heard that the instructor should go right to the Dean, then another faculty member states you are supposed to go to your Chair, then another faculty member states you must fill out some elusive paper work, or you must send the issue right to the VP of Student Services that handles student discipline.

Many of the classrooms have this sign posted: According to the LSC System, *Faculty members have full authority to set reasonable standards of conduct that are acceptable in their classrooms. These include, but are not limited to the following:*

- *Academic dishonesty*
- *Use of personal technology devices in classrooms*

- *Behavior*
- *Dress code*

If faculty have the full authority to set reasonable standards of conduct for their classrooms, then why does it take weeks or even months to get a student who has explicitly shown repeated inappropriate behavior removed from the classroom?

And why is the process at the colleges/centers in the system vastly different from location to location? Our students are not ignorant when it comes to recognizing where they can “get away” with something and where they cannot, so it only seems judicious that the policies regarding these reasonable standards

of conduct and the consequences of not following them be the same across the system and not be in parts.

Faculty want to walk into a classroom and give students the pertinent information that will allow them to be successful in their careers and to have a classroom that is conducive to the rigors of a quality education; however, faculty

need to know that when there is an issue, it is going to be handled in a prompt manner and with the consideration of all concerned, not just the student who is practicing the inappropriate behavior. Most faculty do not appreciate trite remarks such as, “Oh, there is nothing we can do about it,” “Oh, students are a just a little strange,” “You have to go through the proper channels,” “That student has rights,” or “There is a privacy issue.” Faculty want their issue to be taken seriously.

Granted, everyone has rights but why should a faculty member be anxious about going to a class when he/she has reported an issue and the student is still coming to class or taking classes at a sister college? What about the other students in the classroom when they come to the instructor and have spoken about inappropriate comments from a disruptive student – what do we tell them when they ask, “Why can’t you do something?”

Recently, the LSC System held a “training” to discuss Behavioral Intervention Teams (BIT) on various campuses. A BIT sounds exactly like the kind of entity we would want on campus to help faculty deal





with student behavioral issues. Yet, a gathering of *mostly staff* listened for nearly 7 hours while a NAB-ITA representative regaled us with personal anecdotes about the people he works with in Congress, rather than providing information that might actually help campuses more appropriately deal with student behavioral issues. It was through this process that I learned that the LSC system campuses already have BITs in place. But if faculty do not even have a seat at the table when it comes to these BITs, how can they ever be effective?

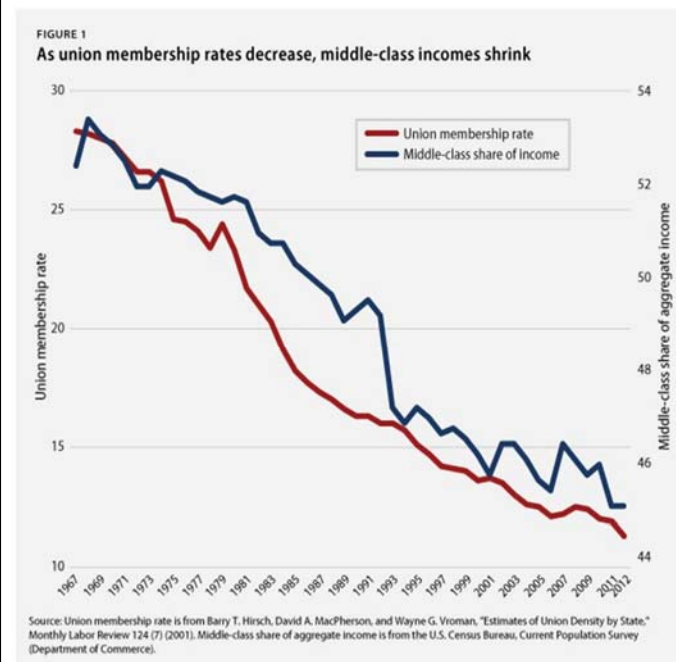
Faculty need to have direct input on any policy that may be implemented. At the very least, faculty should be backed if we continue to interpret/follow the aforementioned LSC System policy as it applies to discipline and/or disruptive behavior.

So, my question to the LSC System: What is the policy for dealing with disruptive/inappropriate behavior and shouldn't it be consistent across the system, since "The **whole** is greater than the sum of its parts"?

This article was written by a LSC faculty member.

Why I Am A Union Member

[graph from "Middle-Class Decline Mirrors the Fall of Unions In One Chart," Huffpost, Caroline Fairchild, Dec. 6, 2017.]



Without doing a thing to earn it, I was born into the Promised Land. A white, male baby boomer, I grew up with a devoted mother and a white-collar father in a still-triumphant America shaped by the generation that had crushed Naziism and militaristic Japan, liberated Europe and Asia, and stood stalwart against evil Communism. In grade school, my history books told the story of the American giants who had founded the country in freedom and expanded its borders despite the "bloodthirsty savages" who sought to stop the inevitable victory of Manifest Destiny.

Yes, there had been problems, missteps, but they had virtually all been solved. The Civil War, for example, had freed the slaves, and now their descendants enjoyed equal rights and opportunities with all other Americans; the two Roosevelts had broken up the corporate monopolies, and now the American worker was guaranteed a good wage and a decent living standard. The world on *my* side of the Iron Curtain was just and good, and it was only a matter of time, no doubt, until America and its Western allies freed the poor oppressed on the *other* side and everywhere else in the world. The world was good and going to get better.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, I know. Hey, I was a kid.

Later in life, though, after learning deeper history, I could still reflect on how lucky I was not to have been, say, black in 1820, to have endured the despicable evil that slavery was at a time it still controlled half the country and was bent on expanding. Southern leaders adamant the peculiar institution was irrefutably an expression of God's will and obviously a part of the natural order. How lucky I was not to have been a worker in 1885, when workers had few rights at all and bosses maintained the industrial order with murderous violence, convinced their wealth proved their superiority in a survival-of-the-fittest natural economy. How lucky I was not have been unemployed in 1931, with the Great Depression near its deepest, much of Congress and President Hoover himself proclaiming that the best way forward was to do *nothing* and let the market right itself, regardless of the casualties; better that than violate the austere principle of governmental non-interference in the economy. How lucky I was, indeed, to have been a boy toddler in 1958 instead of an adult woman whose circumstances and opportunities were circumscribed by nearly universal sexist attitudes about what was natural and right for her.



Now far removed from that boy in the 1950s, I can see what, in his blessed ignorance, he could not: in too many ways, it *is* 1820; it *is* 1885; it *is* 1931; it *is* 1958. The battles fought to shape the time I grew up in were partial victories at best and never guaranteed a better future; indeed, I look around me now and see a country backsliding as forces once thought defeated, ideas wholly contrary to everything America recently understood itself to be, become shockingly vigorous again. The struggle for human dignity and decency has never stopped, and the forces that promote these values are still losing just as many, or more, battles as they win.

Quite often, they lose these battles because too many American leaders still take as a given received ideas that act directly *against* the common good and prosperity of the vast majority of the American people—such as the idea that workers cannot be trusted enough to be given meaningful, powerful voices within their places of employment. Anti-unionism belongs, along with racism and sexism, on the ash heap of history. Until it is put there—that is, until American leadership accepts the moral case for such a voice—millions of us will live lives of much greater insecurity, instability, and hardship than should ever be the case in the richest country in history.

This argument for unions is laughable to many in the current American context—just as equal rights for women and non-whites were once considered laughable—a context shaped by a decades-old anti-union movement that has been hugely successful in diminishing the role and power of unions within American society. The cheerleaders for the massive income inequality that now defines American life applaud this development, convinced as they are that giving employees the real power and protections afforded by unionism is somehow fatal to the institutions whose mission those same workers carry out. This helps explain how, over the last several decades as union power in the United States has declined, wealth and the power to sustain that wealth have shifted inexorably to the top, with a concurrent decline in the fortunes of the five-figure-income millions, the majority of this country.

Regrettably, current American leadership in whatever sphere seems more and more to reject the very *legitimacy* of divergent opinion, disagreement, even loyal opposition. In politics, it seems that

people in the other party aren't real Americans; only one side of the issue is patriotic; only one side reflects bedrock American values. The irony here is that the American system, as constructed by our Constitution, *integrates* the legitimacy of principled opposition into its fundamental structure of checks and balances, recognizing the inevitability of disagreement and forcing each component to deal with, not dismiss, the others. It is a system built on compromise and consensus building. This system breaks down when opposition itself is understood as illegitimate and *winning* becomes paramount, becomes an end in itself, as eventually one party comes to believe that *its* interests outweigh all others', everyone else's considered insignificant, unworkable, or even absurd.

If an institution fundamentally structured as a balance of powers can become so damaged through the de-legitimization of one of its essential components (such as the opposing political party), how much more so might that occur in an institution built as a simple hierarchy? Corporations, for example, are not democratic institutions. Power is a function of hierarchical status. And those at the top (understatement here) often have quite different interests, quite different agendas, than those lower down. The CEO who outsources production overseas to lower costs and raise stock prices—and, often enough, his or her compensation in the bargain—regards the disruption, the disaster, that this can be in the lives of those laid-off workers and the communities they live in as just a cost of doing business—and certainly not the CEO's cost, either. In these scenarios, the people who actually produce the product the corporation sells change from "valued employees" to, well, unfortunate victims of "market forces"—the euphemism that masks conscious choices to value stock price and profits far, far beyond workers' lives—including the lives of their spouses, their children, as well as the communities now drained of the middle-class purchasing power that makes families and communities thrive. Note that in contemporary American leadership culture, the CEOs who do these things are often regarded as rock stars. They are lauded for their genius, praised for their vision, their photos put on magazine covers, buildings and more named after them. The laid-off workers? More or less forgotten.

A strong case can be made that one reason these things happen with so much regularity in the con-



temporary American workplace is the decline in unionism, as well as a decline in respect for the values that unionism embodies. One such value is egalitarianism, the idea that we mortals in this worldly struggle *together*, and that the best way to live our contemporaneous lives is in support of, not mainly in competition with or in indifference to, each other. To see the daily history we live together in such a way is to run counter to many trends in contemporary America, with our polarized politics, our way of seeing ourselves divided into warring camps of every sort. Egalitarianism, which flattens hierarchies and emphasizes shared interests and purposes, sees the enemy as those obstacles that must be overcome to achieve the goals we want *for each other*.

In fact, in its advocacy for workers, unions are forces for the dignity that comes from having enough income to feed a family and keep a roof over their heads; enough time to take care of oneself and spend time with friends; and the decency that derives from being treated fairly on the job, listened to, respected and engaged without recourse to threats or unfair treatment from an employer who might consider a civil attitude an optional, paternal favor given to the questionably-deserving lower ranks.

Unfortunately, here at LSC, such an attitude seems to inform policies such as the six-signature rule, one patently designed to provide the appearance of an impartial review of firing decisions while actually confirming them as a matter of course. This policy echoes a trend Americans see throughout our society, from Washington to Wall Street to the NFL: *Winners rig the game*. The level playing field is for fools. The desired strategy is to ensure victory before ever taking the field. The policy equates rank with right; it is designed to save face, not to honestly examine the often complex chain of events and decisions that lead to a firing. The perception that procedures are rigged and that hierarchy, not fairness or truth, determines outcomes promotes apathy, cynicism, and fear.

In the American context especially, with its extremely weak economic safety net compared to other first-world countries, one in which, for example, access to healthcare—your spouse’s healthcare, your child’s healthcare—is controlled by one’s employer, the notion that one can work without fear of one’s supervisor is somewhat

comic. We are all aware that in so-called “right-to-work” states—more accurately called “right-to-work-for-less” states, or “management’s-right-to-fire-for-no-good-reason” states—our ability to pay mortgage bills, car notes, grocery bills, and so on, are all ultimately provided at management’s discretion. In the absence of rules that constrain management, the power to fire at will becomes a weapon, a sort of invisible pistol carried at the hip, always there even if seldom used; thus, the essential role unions have in constraining a bad manager’s bad actions.

The trends in the American workplace as shaped by current American leadership culture are frightening. A recent NPR/Marist poll found that at present, one in five American workers is a contractor, not a full-time employee, and thus not someone with stable access to health insurance or other common workplace benefits. “Within a decade, contractors and freelancers could make up half the workforce, a shift with far-reaching implications.” (“Freelanced: The Rise of the Contract Workforce.” By Yuki Noguchi. Jan. 22, 2018. NPR).

Imagine your children growing up and looking for jobs in a world in which the benefits of full-time employment, including medical insurance and retirement benefits, not to mention job stability and security, are the exception, not the rule. This is, in fact, the situation *right now* for adjunct instructors, who make up a majority of the post-secondary teaching workforce. Indeed, American higher education has been an economic pioneer in the exploitation of the workers who produce the product their institutions deliver.

The status of the majority of the teaching faculty as contingent labor is shameful on its face. That it is commonplace excuses it not at all. Yet it is consistent with the trend Noguchi has identified. Throughout the economy, jobs once done by company employees get outsourced, and one set of workers gets replaced by another set with lower pay and fewer benefits, quickening the larger economy’s downward spiral, one good job at a time, from general prosperity to massive inequality and all the social and economic misery that goes with it. All this receives the moral justification that those on the bottom end are *losers*; they weren’t trained enough, weren’t smart enough, weren’t shrewd enough to compete, and thus their



economic fates are deserved—as are the higher pay and benefits at the top. This is another reason I am a union member: To the extent my union membership helps preserve unions in America, it helps preserve the hope future workers won't be completely shaped by those forces that have now pushed America in the direction of gross income inequality and the wide divergence in opportunity and quality of life that goes with it. America's contemporary anti-union leadership works against the re-emergence of an era in which wealth is shared more widely, distributed much more evenly than in today's winner-take-all society.

In fact, it must be realized that our changed circumstances are the result of *choices* made by our leaders to promote policies and practices that have led to today's precarious situation for the American middle-class. There was nothing inevitable about it. One need only regard the comparatively better situation of workers in Western Europe and in Scandinavian countries—where the assumption of the necessity of an adversarial relationship between unions and corporate leadership does *not* hold; where, in fact, unions are largely accepted and respected by management—to see that there was nothing inevitable about the decline of union membership in the U.S. or the decline of the fortunes of the American middle-class. As a union member, I help preserve the notion that an economy that does *not* work for the many is an economy that is not properly working *at all*. This is a notion worth preserving.

On the other hand, *not* to be a union member suggests the belief that this struggle is over; that we've reached the Promised Land; that decency and dignity have won their final victories and workplace injustice has been forever overcome. It suggests the feeling that one's own fate is sufficiently protected by individual circumstances of income or position to insulate oneself from the bad fates that certainly befall others. The former notion is plainly illusory, the latter reflective of the gated community mindset that informs so much of contemporary American society. Both reflect a certain indifference to the fate of others, as if when we avoid looking in

that direction, and we don't see what is happening there, *then it's not happening*. But, of course, it is.

When something is happening that might affect me in the workplace, the AFT is there. An AFT officer attends every LSC board meeting so that I don't have to. The AFT scrutinizes public information about changes in LSC policies so that I don't have to. When policy changes have the potential to affect the working lives of me and my colleagues and the educational success of my students, the AFT does its best to get the word out so that I don't have to.

The AFT is in both Austin and Washington working on my behalf, something I'm not always so certain of regarding my state legislator, congressman or senator—who often, quite frankly, seem to be working *against* me. It's the AFT that I can be confident of working to improve my own working life, to listen to my complaints, to offer counsel

I can trust as sincere and informed. All of that makes the dues I pay worth every penny—not least because some of those dues go toward a legal defense fund that the AFT has used over and over again to defend workers we believe, and evidence suggests, have been treated badly by administration.

LABOR UNIONS:
THE FOLKS WHO BROUGHT YOU THE WEEKEND.
CHILD LABOR LAWS, OVERTIME,
MINIMUM WAGE, INJURY PROTECTION,
WORKMENS COMPENSATION INSURANCE,
PENSION SECURITY, RIGHT TO ORGANIZE . ETC.

It's true that to be involved in a union struggle in an anti-union state seems always to be bringing fists to a gunfight. Or, more accurately, bringing only voices because ultimately the only weapons union members have are the constant expression of the principles they act upon, the solidarity they create, and the vision they work toward.

In fact, union membership in an organization without union contracts is an act of hope. It takes the long view. Indeed, a future when all Texas college employees are protected by union contracts may not be reached in my lifetime. That makes it consistent with other long-shot causes that guide my everyday actions, such as recycling, voting Democratic in Texas, and teaching Developmental Studies.



This hope grew from the era in which I came of age, the 60s, when high idealism and practical activism successfully drove movements that challenged and often triumphed (if only partly) over seemingly unbeatable foes: the war in Vietnam and opposition to civil rights, women's rights, and gay rights. It is my small, nevertheless substantive, means of declaring my position in what I believe is the right side of history. That is another reason I am a union member: I wish to be part of something greater than myself, something wholly consistent with the better angels of our natures, a movement informed by the positive values that shaped the decade I grew up in. Like the truth, the Promised Land is out there, but we must all work together to achieve it for each other.

Stephen King
Professor of Developmental Studies/English, LSC-
North Harris

AFT Solutions Committee

Cultural transformation has been a major theme of conversation at Lone Star College for a while now. We in the AFT had been regularly hearing from employees that, although everyone appreciates the attention focused on cultural change through LSC 20/20, there are areas where significant work needs to be done to turn promises into reality.

Therefore, we decided to conduct a survey this past spring inviting employees (faculty and staff, full time and part time) to share any concerns they have about the direction the college is heading. We saw a number of regularly occurring themes in employee comments. Four prominent themes involved campus safety, collaborative governance, adjunct compensation and rights, and grievances and appeals of disciplinary action.

Drawing attention to areas of concern is always important. Offering concrete recommendations on how to address those concerns is how we, as union members, can actually help the college move for-

ward. Calling ourselves the AFT Solutions Committee, a group of twenty AFT members agreed to work with each other on a regular basis over this past summer to do exactly that. We took time to research current Lone Star policy and the policies and practices of schools, colleges, and universities around the country, and we crafted concrete proposals that we believe will impact these key issues.

At the October 2018 meeting of the Lone Star College Board of Trustees, four members of our union addressed the board, presenting summaries of each of our proposals. Our speakers and their topics were Earl Brewer (adjunct compensation and rights), Gemini Wahhaj (grievances and appeals of disciplinary action), Leah Kirell (campus safety), and Chris Partida (collaborative governance). We are publishing the full texts of these speeches in this edition of *The Advocate*, and we urge everyone to read them.

Complete texts of all of our proposals were presented to the Board of Trustees and to the Office of the General Counsel. We invite all employees and friends of Lone Star College to read our proposals. They are published in their entirety on our local chapter's website, www.aftlonestar.org.

To underscore how important cultural change is to Lone Star employees, especially in these four areas, we invited as many union members as could make it to join us at the Board meeting. It's not easy to take off time on a weeknight and to drive to a far off campus to attend a very long meeting, but we are proud to say that 44 faculty and staff were able to come to show solidarity for our speakers and our proposals. We express our sincerest thanks to everyone who could come. We packed the room—it was standing room only. We couldn't be missed because we all wore matching shirts with the slogan "We care. We show up. We advocate together."

The October Board meeting was covered by Jane Stueckemann of *The Houston Chronicle*, which published an account of the meeting in several of their community papers. Her article can be found online at

<https://www.chron.com/neighborhood/moco/news/article/Union-group-lobbies-for-Lone-Star-College-System-13315406.php>.



Change takes time. Proposals need to be considered carefully and debated thoroughly. Some ideas will be fine tuned to make them better. AFT – Lone Star College hopes that the solutions we have proposed will jumpstart a vigorous, widespread, and greatly needed conversation about critical areas of concern that must be addressed. Let us all work together—faculty, staff, administrators, and board members—to make substantive cultural change a reality at Lone Star College.

John Burdhduff
Professor of Math, LSC-CyFair

Adjunct Compensation and Rights

I would like to talk to you about the practices that affect the lives and well-being of every adjunct at Lone Star College. The practices that are of concern tonight are the ones affecting how adjuncts are paid.

One example of these practices is that adjuncts are not promptly paid at the beginning of every semester. Unlike full-time faculty, some adjuncts have not been fully paid for services rendered. Why must adjuncts wait almost a month after the start of every semester to receive their first paycheck? Waiting so long for that first paycheck puts many adjuncts behind on paying their bills.

Another example of unfair treatment of adjunct faculty is that only full-time faculty are paid for their office hours and preparation time. Is it fair that adjuncts teach sixty percent of the classes at this college but receive the least amount of money for their dedication and hard work to our students and the community? This is unequal pay for equal work. This current situation is the primary root of resentment and low morale among adjuncts at our college. In fact, we have learned that some adjunct faculty are eligible for SNAP [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program] and **MUST** rely on it to buy food.

To be clear, we have professionals who have multiple university de-

grees, doing their best to teach our students, but these professionals must rely on state benefits because of the college's low remuneration. In the September-October 2018 issue of *The Advocate*, John Burghduff points out in his article, "Money Matters-Analyzing the Salary Increase," Buc-ees is more financially attractive to an academic professional than Lone Star College (page 7).

In addition to these two examples of unfair practices, we have a third one that needs to be addressed. Adjunct faculty are never paid according to their academic credentials. Currently, an adjunct instructor with a master's degree is paid the same hourly rate as an instructor with a doctoral degree.

Lone Star College cannot afford to continue to treat adjunct faculty differently from full-time faculty. To retain academically qualified adjuncts, there must be a change. We believe that every adjunct deserves fair treatment and equal pay for equal work. In the attached addendum, we include adjunct pay scale tables from Blinn, Austin, and Alamo Community Colleges. We would like LSC to consider following this model as we did in the 1990s.

2.19.6 PART-TIME FACULTY PAY SCALE

Faculty members teaching less than a full (basic) teaching load shall be paid at the rates approved by the Board. See Board Policy [DEA \(Local\)](#). Part-time faculty salary rates are as follows:

	Pay Per One Hour Course	Pay Per Three Hour Course	Pay Per Three Hour with Lab Course	Pay Per Four Hour Course
Kinesiology (PHED)	\$1,550.00			
Bachelor's Degree	\$800.00	\$1,975.00	\$2,250.00	\$2,700.00
Master's Degree	800.00	2,250.00	2,700.00	3,250.00
Doctor's Degree	800.00	2,350.00	2,800.00	3,350.00

(Blinn College, 2018-2019, Accessed 10-01-2018)

What is the solution to unfair financial treatment to adjuncts? We would like to bring some of them to your attention. This past summer, several of our professional colleagues and fellow AFT Union members spent many weeks researching the treatment of adjunct faculty at other community colleges in Texas. We discovered that Alamo, Austin, and Blinn have recognized that adjunct faculty deserve equal pay for equal work. These community colleges have adopted practices that pay adjuncts in ways that recognize their academic credentials by awarding compensation according to a tiered pay scale.

Therefore, we would like to propose the following recommendations to address the issues of how adjuncts should receive equal pay for equal work:

Our Mission

“Lone Star College System provides comprehensive educational opportunities and programs to enrich lives.”



1. Adjunct faculty must be fully paid for their services promptly at the beginning of each semester.
2. Adjunct faculty must be paid for a minimum of one hour per week for each assigned class to hold office hours, correct assignments, and prepare for class lectures, just like full-time faculty.
3. Adjunct faculty must be paid according to a tiered-pay scale that recognizes academic credentials.

We believe that Lone Star College should adopt practices that reflect our proposed recommendations. We are here tonight to ask you to support a tiered pay scale that would recognize the credentials of adjuncts at Lone Star College. We also recommend that the new policy include a paid hour of preparation time per week for every course the adjunct instructor teaches. This would recognize academically qualified adjunct faculty who have devoted their service to Lone Star College. Only then will adjunct faculty be treated fairly.

Lone Star College should also consider tutoring opportunities for adjunct faculty. Lone Star College fails to provide opportunities when adjuncts are not allowed to hold part-time staff positions, such as tutoring, to supplement their income. Houston Community College allows adjunct faculty to work eight hours of tutoring if carrying two classes, and five hours if carrying three classes. Lone Star College needs to do the same. The U.S. Department of Labor explains how this can be done. This is stated in the addendum for your review.

Therefore, adjunct faculty would greatly appreciate your support.
Thank you.

Earl Brewer
Maintenance Technician, LSC-CyFair, Fairbanks Center.



Grievances and Appeals of Disciplinary Action

Lone Star College is a place where people have worked for many years and want to work for many more. However, as the Board is aware, there are times when employees have faced abusive work situations or disciplinary action where secrecy and lack of due process have produced unfair outcomes.

An AFT survey showed that LSC faculty and staff feel that the college's grievance policy is not fair and that employee rights are not protected. Over the summer, a team of 20 AFT-Lone Star Members met to look at these concerns, to arrive at a fair grievance policy that would protect the interests of employees. We looked at our current policy and studied the grievance policies of other institutions, including UH, UT Austin, Barnard College, Spring ISD, and Houston ISD, to name a few.

I present to you today our proposal for a fair grievance policy that will take away the secrecy we have had in the past in favor of equity, due process, and transparency. By adopting this policy, of a standard with other institutions of higher education, the college will ensure that all employees feel confident of a clearly defined and transparent process both when the college brings a disciplinary action against an employee and also when an employee has a grievance to air.

These policy recommendations will ensure that:

- employees have confidence in due process and feel secure in their employment;
- the administration feels confident in its decisions, vetted by a large number of people at many levels;
- There is transparency and accountability so that bad decisions are stopped and bad actors think twice before acting in bad faith; and
- Grievances rarely reach the Board, as issues get resolved through a transparent and fair process.

In brief, we propose:

1. An ombudsperson reporting to the Board who will actively review policy and recommend changes AND act as a resource for employees when there is a conflict.
2. A college level review committee (College Level Employee Affairs Review Committee)



of elected staff and faculty that will hear grievances when there is a proposed disciplinary action against an employee, and make its recommendations to the president.

3. A system level review committee of elected employees from each of the colleges and the system office to review a grievance that does not get resolved at the college level, and make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. Both committees can ask for a hearing, call witnesses, and ask for documentation and evidence. We also propose that...
4. In cases of proposed disciplinary action against an employee,
 - a. The employee should be informed at each level of the decision-making process in writing and given an opportunity to respond.
 - b. The employee can seek to informally resolve the conflict with guidance from a neutral ombudsperson if desired. If this fails, the employee can appeal to the College Level Employee Affairs Review Committee for a hearing.
 - c. The college president will seek the recommendation of the College Level Employee Affairs Review Committee *before* making a final decision.
 - d. If the employee is not satisfied with the college-level decision, s/he can appeal the decision to the Chancellor and be granted a hearing with the Chancellor *before* the Chancellor makes a decision.
 - e. Following the Chancellor's decision, the employee can appeal to the System Level Employee Affairs Review Committee, which will make its recommendations to the Board.
 - f. Only those decisions that do not get resolved at this stage, with utmost effort at transparency, vetting, and checks and balances, will go to the Board for a final appeal.

The AFT's recommendations on grievance mirror the policies that already exist at other institutions of learning in Texas and at institutions of higher education across the nation. We believe that these processes will help Lone Star employees and administration feel confident about a due process with transparency

and equity where we are all accountable for our actions and we all have a right to due process.

Gemini Wahhaj
Professor of English, LSC-North Harris

Campus Safety



Each fall, faculty and staff re-commit ourselves to serving students. We work to ensure their academic growth and help them to cultivate the physical and emotional health needed to be successful students. Sadly, too many students struggle to form healthy relationships with peers and instructors. This generation of students is reporting record-breaking levels of stress, anxiety, and isolation.

In response to these trends, we have three recommendations we believe will improve student well-being.

Increase availability of counseling services on all campuses

We believe it is incumbent upon institutions of higher education to acknowledge this generation's struggles. LSCS has traditionally provided wrap around support services for students. Indeed, our new campus, LSC North, has embedded this commitment into its foundations.

AFT wants to ensure that all students on all campuses have access to the support they need. We recommend changing policy language to codify the System's commitment to student welfare. Copies of our recommendations, which draw from those of Foothill's D'Anza Community College, will be provided. They include the following:

- Increase the number of crisis counselors on each campus. Ensure that these counselors, who would be full-time faculty members, have many opportunities to meet not only with students, but also with other faculty and staff to build



relationships that allow for quick and effective responses to students' needs.

- These counselors should also be available to work with students to improve interpersonal skills or help students balance work, family, and school obligations.
- Academic advisors, who also play an important role in student success, should focus on helping students with course scheduling and career planning.

Consistent identification and response to disruptive student behavior

The inclusion of more qualified counselors on campus will likely reduce the number of disruptive students since a student who is struggling can, with the help of a counselor, often return to class quickly and productively. In such cases, faculty are more willing to re-admit students because they know a trusted colleague is working with that student to resolve behavior problems.

Nevertheless, some students will persist in poor behavior. In these cases, we believe everyone would be best served if clear, descriptive language about what constitutes disruptive behavior—and the consequences for that behavior—is included in the LSCS policy.

Since many adjunct professors work on different campuses, clarifying the policy language will help these employees and ensure transparency and consistency across the system.

Campus Policing

AFT members are grateful for the work our campus police have done in the past and their handling of the implementation of the Campus Carry Law. Still, the inclusion of guns on campus, coupled with frequent school shootings, has renewed awareness of how vital police are to campus safety.

Members on some campuses report seeing an increase in police presence, but we would like to see more police on every campus and center. Faculty, in particular, are heartened to see friendly conversations between police and students in our hallways and common areas—these are the kinds of relationships with police that make our campuses safer.

However, for many faculty and staff, opportunities to create these relationships with police are rare.

While we know the police are not waiting around for us to call them in an emergency—they are working to prevent emergencies—most employees have little understanding of what that work entails.

We ask the Board to facilitate a system-wide conversation among all stakeholders to discuss how best to integrate police into the everyday working of the campus and to help forge closer relationships between police and faculty and staff.

Leah Kirrell

Professor of Developmental English,
Chair of Developmental Studies, LSC-North Harris

Collaborative Governance

In Section I.C, the board's policy manual defines *participatory governance* as “the process whereby faculty and staff have the opportunity and the responsibility to provide input, ask questions, and pose possible outcomes during the information-gathering phase of decision making.”

I wish to briefly talk about this definition of participatory governance. It has served as a standard for various decisions made at the leadership level of the college, but it is still not perfect.

Without a doubt, ModernThink LLC observed evidence of this standard when it conducted surveys last spring for the Chronicle of Higher Education's Great Colleges to Work For 2018 list.

The ModernThink survey gives a different name for employee participation in decision making: “**Collaborative Governance.**”

We have been “participating” at high level—in fact, we have established a core set of values that encourages us to do so—but there is a gap between *participation* and *collaboration*. Employees feel this gap. We feel it every time we are asked for suggestions and are then locked out of the rest of the decision making process. True collaborative governance would allow employees to offer feedback and advice during every stage of the decision-making process, not just the “information-gathering” stage.

If the college were to establish a system of **collaborative** governance instead of participatory governance, it would solidify an environment of trust



among faculty, staff, administrators, and students.

This summer, a group of Lone Star College employees examined the practices of our peer institutions at Alamo Community College, Austin Community College, and Northern Virginia Community College. Copies of policies showing how these institutions have adopted collaborative governance are included in the documents I have submitted to the board.

Inspired by these examples, we drafted a structure which we are confident will establish true collaborative governance at Lone Star College. To that end, today we propose a revision to Board Policy to create two new employee entities—the Collaborative Governance Committee and the College Advisory Council.

The primary charge of the Collaborative Governance Committee will be to facilitate and make recommendations for the implementation of system-wide collaborative governance directly to the chancellor and the Board of Trustees. Before taking on its primary charge, however, this committee will first assemble the College Advisory Council. The College Advisory Council will establish several sub-committees tasked with addressing collaborative governance in all areas of Lone Star College, including academic affairs, student services, administrative services, safety, and employee relations.

We believe that the creation of the Collaborative Governance Committee and the College Advisory Council will live up to the Lone Star College 20/20 cultural beliefs because they will be made up of representatives from every stakeholder group within the Lone Star College-System, including students, staff, faculty and administrators. We also believe that by formalizing structures of collaborative governance into our Board Policy, as other Systems in Texas and across the U.S. have done, we will continue to be seen as an educational institution that truly acts on its values.

We look forward to more collaboration among our fellow faculty and staff, administrators, and you, the members of the Board of Trustees, to move us into a future where we truly can be Better Together.

Chris Partida
Professor of Developmental Studies/English,
LSC-North Harris

Tales from the Unionside

The November Lone Star College Board election is over, and three new trustees will be replacing David Holsey, Ron Trowbridge, and Kyle Scott. The outgoing trustees are the last three members elected under the old at-large system that was found in violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The incumbents were ineligible to run for another term as none resided in the new Districts One, Two, or Eight.

With the nine-district system in place, who are the political losers and winners under this new arrangement? The losers are easy to identify, as they are White conservatives living in the Woodlands who in the past occupied three or more of the board seats. With few exceptions, these trustees were administration apparatchiks dedicated to system expansion and construction projects. The winners are residents throughout the LSC system who have an elected representative closer to home and more like themselves. Elections do matter, because they have both personnel and policy consequences. Under the new district system, the Board makeup finds African-Americans, Hispanics, and women in power when these positions used to go to Anglo businessmen backed by local Chambers of Commerce and incumbent trustees.

After years of service, what legacy do the departing members David Holsey, Ron Trowbridge, and Kyle Scott leave behind? First elected in 2006 as a Tea Party insurgent, Holsey defeated an establishment incumbent backed by other board members, administrators, and the AFT. The conservative Republican dentist would in time bond with Randy Bates, a moderate Democrat, to become the strongest supporters of then-Chancellor Richard Carpenter. His admiration for Carpenter was boundless. Holsey once said that before he got to know the Chancellor, he knew of only one person in history who could walk on water.

My personal contact with David Holsey consisted of one meeting at Starbucks also attended by another trustee and John Burghdoff. The purpose of the informal coffee was to discuss how to improve LSC employee-employer relations. Holsey and I had some pleasant exchanges as we learned about our similar backgrounds as military officers in the 1970s. Once the war stories were over, however, the



meeting became unpleasant as Trustee Holsey held tight to his “Carpenter can do no wrong” philosophy. Opposed to everything he heard from the three of us, he stopped playing with his cell phone long enough to go on the attack against employees and their rights. After insulting his fellow board member, Holsey saved his strongest criticism for my Cy Fair College union colleague. Turning to Burghduff, he said, “John, your little monthly Board speeches are worthless because nobody is listening.” As the meeting concluded, the other trustee apologized to John and said that “David was just being David,” proving that there were Trumps in public office before Trump.

While Holsey was a Carpenter loyalist, Ron Trowbridge would turn out to be the Chancellor’s worst nightmare. I first found out about “Grampa Ron” from union members at Montgomery College. Trowbridge, a 70-year-old adjunct English professor at the time, had just resigned his teaching position in protest over MC President Austin Lane’s firing of the faculty senate president over a dispute with a dean.

Hearing that Trowbridge, a retired university professor living in the Woodlands, was considering a run for the Board of Trustees, I contacted Ron and we quickly became political allies. It was Trowbridge who introduced me to the leaders of the Texas Patriot, a conservative Republican Party group, who hated Richard Carpenter’s “spending like a drunken sailor” and personal empire building.

Once Ron Trowbridge decided to run for trustee, I encouraged him to meet with Democratic Party groups and labor unions. It was at a meeting of Montgomery County Democrats that Trowbridge announced publicly, “If elected, I will work to fire Chancellor Richard Carpenter.” Hearing this in public for the first time, I asked Ron to run against LSC Board President Randy Bates. Bates, once an AFT ally, had turned into a union basher and a big Carpenter backer.

As a political strategist, I wanted Ron to file against Bates in the nonpartisan race where Tea Party, labor union, and Democratic Party members could unite to bring Randy Bates down. Before the election, I felt that a Trowbridge win would signal the beginning of the end for the Chancellor. If he won, the chances of Carpenter sticking around to face a future board

“firing” squad were slim. Following Bates’s defeat, the Chancellor would resign and enter the world of educational consulting.

I wish that my Trowbridge story had a happy ending, but in real life the good guys sometimes become bad guys, as “Gramps Ron,” the candidate, would turn into “Grumpy Gramps,” the trustee. What I will never forget about Ron Trowbridge was his willingness to be a dragon slayer in 2010. This was a big deal, even if his board service would tarnish his campaign image of being a faculty and staff advocate and a critic of administration heavy handedness.

The last of the departing trio of trustees is Kyle Scott, and what a great surprise he was. I first met Lyle at a Texas Patriots meeting where Republican Party activist Fred Blanton, an old political foe, introduced us. What a small political world it is, as I had worked hard to reelect Randy Bates in his 2006 race against Blanton. I can laugh today over Bates’s anger over a campaign piece showing pictures of both and their “supposed” issue positions. The African-American Aldine attorney was mad at his opponent, not over the distortion of his record, but that the “Crackers” in Montgomery County would find out he was black and vote him out of office, which turned out not to be the case.

Having ended his Board runs, Fred Blanton considered Kyle Scott to be his protégé and a rising Republican star in local politics. Kyle did win his Lone Star race over an AFT-endorsed moderate Republican, so the union was preparing for the worst. Over the years, our fears would turn into cheers as Scott showed his independence, intelligence, and principle on many questions related to educational issues and employee rights. His trustee service will be missed by all but a few empty suits in the upper administration. It is my hope that in 2018 community voters will elect some future Kyle Scotts to our Board of Trustees. Kyle, the AFT thanks you for your service.

Bob Locander
Professor of Political Science, LSC-North Harris

Editor’s Note: Locander is a regular political columnist for The Advocate.



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The union encourages employees to join because they believe that college employees should have a voice in their professional lives. We don't encourage employees to join because they anticipate conflict or are already engaged in a conflict. In fact, if they are already embroiled in a situation, we are unable to help them. It is all too common for someone to approach the AFT and say something like, "I've been an employee for the district for several years, and I've just recognized the importance of joining." Typically, following that comment is, "I'm in trouble and need help." I finally lost track of how many times in the last year I've had to say, "I'm sorry, but member benefits don't cover anything that pre-dates membership." The individuals to whom I had to give this message were invited to join and provided some advice on how to proceed with their situation, but assistance

ended there. Were they members, a host of benefits would have been available.

The AFT provides its members with advice and guidance as well as representation in conflict resolution and grievances. We have our own local attorney and can seek legal advice and counsel for members. We maintain a local legal defense fund. In addition, membership dues include, at no extra charge, \$8 million in professional liability insurance for claims arising out of professional activities.

Most of our members don't join because they believe that they may need the AFT's help in a conflict. They join because they believe in the values of the AFT— that employees should be treated with dignity and respect, that employees should help each other, that employees should have a voice

in their professional lives, that employees deserve fair pay and good working conditions, and that the district needs a system providing checks and balances. They join because they want to support an organization that helps others in so many ways. A nice benefit is that, if they do need help, AFT is there for them.

If you believe in these values and are not a member, now is the perfect time to join. If you believe in our values, take action now and join the AFT.

—Alan Hall

