



The Advocate

**We Care.
We Show Up.
We Advocate Together.
AFT-Lone Star College.**



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!

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.

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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**AFT-Lone Star invites you to our
FALL 2018 Celebration at
Pappasito's Cantina**

Friday, October 12th from 4:00-7:00 pm

Come celebrate cooler weather, enjoy your union colleagues, meet some new friends, relax, and catch up. Legendary Tex-Mex food and beverage will be provided. Please bring a colleague with you!

Pappasito's Cantina
15280 I-45 North
(on the east feeder road between Richey and Airtex)
281.821.4500

Join Today! <https://join.aft.org>

WWW

We're on theWeb!
www.aftlonestar.org
E-mail:
aftlonestar@yahoo.com

**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.



LSC 20/20

LSC 20/20 is a program promoted by Dr. Head that is in its second year of development with two years to go until completion. The program promotes a number of worthy cultural beliefs. They include students matter, inspire excellence, act intentionally, better together, no fear, trust, and transparency.

The college culture did nudge forward this past year. For instance, the administration took significant steps to help employees who were victims of Hurricane Harvey, as did the AFT by assisting our affected members. Initially, the college offered no assistance to adjuncts, but did open a link for them after the union inquired about such a link to help adjuncts. When the link went live, the AFT immediately put in \$1,000 to help adjuncts.

The Board of Trustees improved last year because they began to question administrative actions. For instance, last year the Chancellor and the general counsel supported new grievance policies that would harm faculty and staff. One proposal was to prevent faculty from taking a grievance to the Board of Trustees, leaving a grievance to end with the Chancellor. Another proposal limited staff from appealing a grievance more than one level above the supervisor with whom the grievance was filed with no right to appeal to the Board. The Board stood up for employees by voting 5 to 4 to reject these administrative proposals.

Another positive step is that the general counsel has created a website and invites people to comment on proposed policy changes, but we have not seen those comments making their way into policy change. When general counsel offers a response at all, from what we have seen, it has been to tell the commenters that they are wrong. Additionally, the union is concerned about the consolidation of power of the general counsel, who not only serves in that position but also as Head of Human Resources and Chief Operational Officer.

The AFT believes in and supports LSC 20/20 values, but I do have some concerns. First, I know that cultural change takes time, but four years seems longer than one would expect. Second, I am not sure that the culture is actually shifting much, beyond the situations I have described.

Let's start with "Better Together: I share knowledge and encourage collaboration to reach common goals." AFT believes that we are better together and would like a more open relationship with the upper administration. However, that desire is not reciprocated. AFT routinely assists members who find themselves in a conflict. One would think that the union and the upper administration could work together to solve problems, but the union has routinely been confronted with pushback, so much so that we regularly rely upon our attorney to solve issues at that level. Instead of working together, we are seeing just the opposite.

"No Fear: I am empowered to effect positive change." I can think of a number of instances where fear of an administrator caused great anguish to a member. As a case in point, a group of facilities employees routinely have conflicts with a supervisor. In one instance, custodians were taking their two breaks per day by sitting on benches inside the building they were working in rather than walking over to their area for the breaks. The break area is in a building that takes about five minutes to walk to and five minutes to return. The supervisor told them that they could no longer sit on the benches in the buildings and had to take their breaks in the breakroom. When the custodians inquired as to why, they were told that their sitting on benches in the hallway "doesn't look good." When I inquired as to how that could be, there was no clear answer. I was able to contact someone above this supervisor, and a day later the custodians were told that they could sit on the benches in the building in which they were working. The point here is that the behavior of the supervisor was completely inappropriate. This same supervisor has a reputation of riding employees, writing them up, and making them so uncomfortable that a number of them quit working for the college. I offered to assist them in grievances, but they were so tired, and in some cases afraid, that they just quit. This is still going on as we arrive halfway to LSC 20/20.

Trust and transparency are also values that appear to be lacking. For instance, at the August meeting of the Board of Trustees, John Burghdoff addressed the Board on several topics, including the 2% raise for employees. In that meeting, the Chancellor said that employees would receive a 2% raise. When he spoke about the raise, John noted that the Board of Trustees had likely negotiated the Chancellor's con-



tract, and he trusted that the Chancellor's raise would be in line with the 2% other employees would receive. The Chancellor's salary was not disclosed, thereby not promoting trust or transparency. The information had to be gathered through an open records request (see John Burghduff's article in this issue for details).

The following points reflect the AFT's efforts last year that include LSC 20/20 values: assisting students, acting intentionally, no fear, and transparency about the values:

- ☑ supported transgender student rights
- ☑ challenged the Six Signature Rule to non-renew faculty contracts and staff terminations
- ☑ supported grievance rights for employees to be able to appeal to the Board of Trustees
- ☑ took a stand for staff to have appeal rights equal to those of faculty
- ☑ supported DACA
- ☑ offered financial assistance to members affected by Hurricane Harvey
- ☑ surveyed our members to learn about how they feel about their work life
- ☑ supported and achieved an improved grievance policy

We did not wait four years to work on these values.

Alan Hall

Better Together

AFT and LSC Core Beliefs

In the last issue of The Advocate, LSC-North Harris professor Katie Hurter wrote about how, in the past, she had had an aversion to unions because of politics and corruption of power, and that AFT President Alan Hall, who has the office next to hers, agreed that it does happen in some places.

Fortunately, there is not much room for such corruption at our AFT, since it has little decision-making power or voice (except for The Advocate and a regular spot on the Board's agenda when it hears from the community). The college tolerates the union's presence but the AFT's leadership is not allowed to participate in most policy discussions. The voice of the union is not a baked-in element of "shared governance" in college committees, Board meetings, or faculty senates.

And yet, the AFT's work deeply endorses LSC's six cultural beliefs ("20/20") such as supporting students (**Students Matter**) and creating meaningful goals and decisions (**Act Intentionally**). Katie's piece, explicitly or implicitly, featured the following four beliefs in particular:

Trust. Over time, she saw a number of people, many of them non-professional staff (in other words, those without much authority), go into Alan's office upset but walk out feeling better. She discovered that our AFT chapter has its own brand of integrity and ethical purpose, but she also noted how many personnel issues were being resolved at a granular level by not digging in one's heels, but simply talking the problem through, looking at what could have been different, perhaps even the employee's own role in the conflict, and how he or she could have acted differently. Many times this awareness led the employee to change his or her behavior and the crisis was resolved then and there. In a few cases, the conversation led to a meeting with a supervisor with an AFT member present to observe.

Better Together. Alan's experience as LSC's single most senior employee (forty-five years) makes him a rich resource. He is highly skilled at listening and suggesting lines of discussion that people have not



considered. Because these sessions are confidential, they cannot be cited here. But there are scores of personnel issues that he (and other AFT leaders like CyFair Faculty VP John Burghduff) have managed to defuse. Wherever people work with each other, there will inevitably be problems, since that is human nature—however, examining the nature of the problem in a true conversation is ennobling, and in these cases the benefit to the college is incalculable.

Inspire Excellence. System-wide, Alan and John field the majority of these employee inquiries, with campus Faculty and Staff VPs handling additional ones. All told, they average about eighteen (18) per week, counting hallway conversations, in-person office visits, emails, and, when necessary, attorney questions. That works out to 250-300 contacts per semester regarding employee issues and/or concerns, the majority of which are resolved by the AFT without escalating to formal grievances.

No Fear. Ultimately, in some cases, if no solution could be reached, legal action was unavoidable. In these cases, Katie writes, “I have seen Alan Hall straighten his tie, pick up his sword, and fight for people who don’t have any power at all. He didn’t always win, but almost always made the situation better for the person who felt threatened” (Hurter).

And all these contacts come on top of Alan’s teaching workload of five composition classes with stacks of essays to grade every weekend and more than one hundred students to conference with on a regular basis. The course release for his work with employees (for which the college had been reimbursed by AFT) was discontinued last year. Still, he is an “iron man” who completes all of his work with courage, while reminding us frequently that the AFT is never about him—but about fair treatment of its members and all LSC employees. This message echoes throughout the AFT’s leadership from Alan all the way through to the rest of AFT’s campus officers and members.

“Everyone has value.”

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner made this statement, and it was later presented as the final slide of Chancellor Steve Head’s talk at the Fall 2018 LSC Convocation. “Everyone has value” is the core of all

six cultural beliefs and it drives our actions with students as well as with each other. Conflicts in the workplace will always be there to challenge us. And even though much of the time, they operate along parallel lines that do not intersect, how fortunate it is that the college and the AFT do share this bedrock belief and can, therefore, work as effective forces for the good of everyone in the System.

--Michael McFarland, LSC-North Harris
Professor of English (Retired)

Money Matters- Analyzing the Salary Increase

The 2018-2019 school year was arguably the most challenging year Lone Star College has faced in its 45-year history. The physical damage caused by Hurricane Harvey, especially at Kingwood, together with a small drop in enrollments as students were faced with dealing with their own losses, was a powerful one-two punch on every aspect of the life of the College. In particular, these losses had an impact on the Lone Star budget for 2018-2019 (formally designated for budget purposes as Fiscal Year 2019 or FY 2019). The FY 2019 budget was written over the last several months and approved at the August 2, 2018 meeting of the Board of Trustees.¹ The AFT acknowledges that this had to have been one of the most challenging budgets for College Administration to put together in many years.

In the face of many obstacles, the union is very glad to see the college’s commitment to hire 30 additional full-time faculty. We are also glad to see money set aside to resolve lingering discrepancies in classification and compensation among our staff that have been hurtful to employee morale.

In addition, AFT-Lone Star College acknowledges the 2% pay increase for most college employees. 2% matches the cost of living adjustment the Social Security administration has selected for its beneficiaries for 2018.²

Although these rates of increase are consistent with one another, as a labor union we need to point out some concerns. According to the Bureau of Labor



Statistics, the consumer price index has risen 2.9% in the 12 months ending in June.³ Also, according to the human resources professional group World at Work, as reported by the Society for Human Resource Management, the projected median increase in salary across all sectors and job types in 2018 is expected to be 3%.⁴ So, while we recognize the challenges our current budget situation poses, we must attest that Lone Star employee pay for the coming year will fall behind both inflation and median salaries across the economy. The shortfall is especially painful for the many employees who suffered serious losses in the storm.

As we take a closer look at the new budget, it becomes clear that not all employees are affected equally in regards to salary. There are losers and there are winners. We're going to talk about both and possible measures that could have made the salary situation better for everyone.

The Losers

The AFT is deeply concerned that, for the second year in a row, salaries for adjunct instructors will not be increased at all.

Adjunct faculty continue to account for well over half of all classes taught at Lone Star College and yet many of them have to work multiple jobs to eke out a minimal living with no benefits. In light of the contribution made by our adjuncts and the fragility of their financial situations, we have to ask why they were left out of the salary adjustment.

Adjunct pay at Lone Star has now fallen below our largest neighboring community college systems. An adjunct teaching a standard three-hour lecture class with us earns \$2004 over a semester. The same adjunct teaching the same class would earn \$2010 at Houston Community College⁵ and \$2016 at San Jacinto College.⁶ Although the differences are small, being behind at all is out of place in a system that, by all accounts, is in much better overall financial health than almost all other colleges and that is considered one of the Chronicle of Higher Education's Great Colleges to Work For.

We have written about salary issues for adjuncts in these pages before, particularly in the article "The

Fight for Nineteen" published in the September/October, 2016 edition of The Advocate.⁷ The current pay rate for most adjunct faculty is \$41.75 per hour. However, that rate is paid for actual contact hours in the classroom and does not calculate time for class preparation, grading, and communicating with students. In a completely different setting, the IRS has issued a guideline for adjunct instructors that states that 1 hour of contact time equates to 2.25 hours of total work.⁸ I think most of us would agree that that ratio is rather low. Nevertheless, if we use it as a standard to calculate the actual hourly wage of an adjunct instructor, we'd need to divide \$41.75 by 2.25.

The resulting actual hourly wage for an adjunct instructor at Lone Star College, by this calculation, is \$18.56 per hour.

Here is an interesting contrast. The iconic convenience store chain

Buc-ee's publicly posts its minimum wage structure at all of its locations.

Over Labor Day weekend, I stopped

at the Buc-ee's on Interstate 10 in Baytown and snapped this picture. I suspect that a worker starting at \$12 per hour who has had experience managing a classroom of students with all of their papers and assessment scores could advance to a leadership position rather quickly and would be making close to adjunct salary at Buc-ee's. In addition, Buc-ee's is willing to negotiate a full 40-hour work week, while adjunct faculty must paste together several teaching jobs to get that many hours. The biggest contrast, however, is that Buc-ee's offers healthcare benefits, while adjunct faculty at Lone Star are ineligible for healthcare benefits.



There is no doubt that those of us who have worked hard to earn Masters and Doctorate degrees and who have devoted our lives to our disciplines and our students want to teach and should teach. However, this information begs the question: Where does a highly motivated and highly educated worker with excellent people skills have the best financial prospects, Lone Star College or Buc-ee's?



The adjunct crisis is nationwide and reflective of persistent structural issues in modern American Capitalism that cannot be completely solved by the decisions of one employer. However, it is distressing that Lone Star College has singled out this one group of employees for a second year in a row not to not get a salary increase of any kind.

The Winners

Besides the overall budget, another item on the agenda for the August, 2018 meeting of the Board of Trustees was the renewal of the Chancellor’s contract. The agenda did not list the salary offer for the Chancellor and it was not announced in the meeting. I filed a public information request in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act requesting the total compensation for Dr. Steve Head for both FY 2018 and FY 2019. The College sent us copies of his Executive Employment Agreements for those two years.

Dr. Head’s total compensation package includes more than base salary. The College contributes funds to a Supplemental Retirement Account above and beyond the retirement plans available to all employees. Additional funds may be invested in Deferred Compensation Plans. He also receives an annual automobile allowance and, for FY 2019, an additional business allowance. The following chart shows his total compensation as it is reported on these contracts.

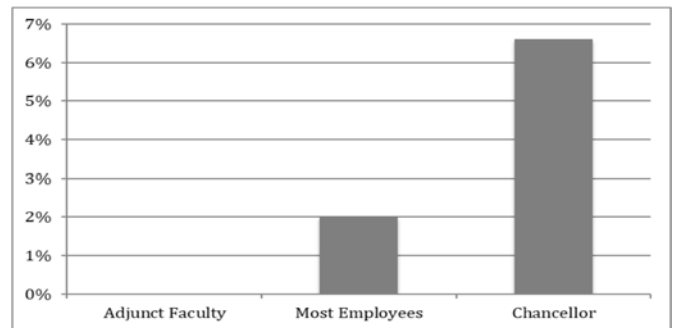
Total Compensation for Dr. Steve Head, FY 2018 and FY 2019:

Compensation Category	FY 2018	FY 2019
Base Salary	\$370,000	\$385,000
Supplemental Retirement Program and Deferred Compensation	\$96,200	\$100,000
Automobile Allowance	\$17,000	\$20,000
Business Allowance		\$10,000
Total Reported Compensation	\$483,200	\$515,000

Other benefits the Chancellor receives include travel expenses for his wife, Dr. Linda Head, when she is travelling with him on trips related to the Chancellor’s business and six extra personal days per year beyond what other employees receive.

Based strictly on the dollar amounts reported in these contracts, Dr. Head has received a 6.6% increase in total compensation for FY 2019. The following bar graph compares the salary increases for adjunct faculty, most employees, and the Chancellor.

Comparative Salary Increases for FY 2019 by Job Category



The union believes that all employees deserve to be fairly compensated for the work they do and that includes the Chancellor. The other benefits he receives beyond base pay have become part and parcel of American corporate culture that assumes CEOs need to be highly compensated in order for the corporation to be successful. What we would have hoped for, especially in a challenging year like this one for many employees, is that Dr. Head’s salary increase would have been kept in line with what other employees received.

Another agenda item approved at the August Board meeting was a promotion for Dr. Linda Head. She was promoted from Associate Vice Chancellor, Workforce and Corporate Partnerships to Senior Associate Vice Chancellor, External and Employer Partnerships. Presumably this change in title reflects a change in duties, but it certainly represents a promotion to a new pay band. Under current Human Resources practice, when an employee is promoted into a new pay band, his or her salary is limited to either 2% over the minimum salary for that band or 8% over his or her former salary. We don’t have the records of Dr. Linda Head’s salary for FY 2018 but, according to the August Board agenda, her new salary of \$160,868 dollars is 12% over the minimum salary for that band. An exception to the usual rule was authorized by Mario Castillo, Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel who serves as direct supervisor to Dr. Linda Head and whose direct supervisor is Dr. Steve Head.



In conclusion, while adjunct faculty were the losers in this year's salary adjustments receiving no increase in pay, there were others who were winners receiving pay increases well above what most employees received.

What Could Have Been Done Differently

Budgets must be balanced. Any institution's expenditures are limited by the revenue it brings in. According to Lone Star College CFO Jennifer Mott speaking at the August, 2018 Board of Trustees meeting, each 1% increase in employee salaries costs the College about \$2,000,000. The total budget for FY 2019 is \$381,966,088, so the cost of a 3% raise that would have matched the national average and kept us just ahead of inflation would have been about 0.5% of the total budget. A corresponding raise for adjunct faculty would probably cost less.

Could those increases have been offset by cuts in other areas of the budget? That is a question that would take serious consideration. If not, what were the prospects for bringing in more revenue to the College?

In a presentation to the Board of Trustees at their September 6 meeting, Jennifer Mott reported that approximately 21% of the College's revenue comes from the State of Texas. The percentage of the College's budget covered by the State has been dropping steadily for about four decades. This is true for all public colleges and universities in Texas. It is unlikely that we will get any relief from the State until and unless Texas has elected officials who put a higher value on higher education.

The remainder of our revenues comes from student tuition and fees (32%), local taxes (42%), and miscellaneous sources (5%). Raising tuition takes us in the opposite direction from the growing national movement to make college more affordable to students or even free. Raising taxes is never popular, but what are our options there?

According to the Texas Association of Community Colleges, Lone Star College's FY 2018 property tax rate of 10.78 cents per \$100 of property valuation placed us 44th among the 50 reporting community college systems.⁹ For years, we have taken our

low tax rate as something to boast about and we have systematically lowered that tax rate many times.

Across the state, the average tax rate was about 18.17 cents per \$100 valuation. This is approximately what our neighbors at San Jacinto College levy. If Lone Star charged the state average tax rate, our property tax revenues would increase by over \$125 million dollars. What would the impact on a typical taxpayer be? For a house valued at \$200,000, property taxes would increase by just over \$12 per month. In terms my freshmen students could relate to better, that's three grande lattes per month at Starbucks.

\$125 million dollars is vastly more money than we need. What if we only raised the tax rate to the "roll back" rate? In Texas, if a taxing authority (like a community college district) charges a tax rate that would increase the authority's revenue by more than 8%, citizens can petition for a tax roll back election. The tricky thing is that the authority has to figure in how rising property values will increase revenues even without a rate increase or they will stumble into a roll back scenario accidentally.

According to the Lone Star College website, the roll back rate for FY 2018 would have been 11.37 cents per \$100 valuation.¹⁰ This increase would cost the home owner described previously only about \$1 extra per month and would bring the college an extra \$11 million dollars per year. This would be well above what would have been needed to cover a 3% salary increase. This rate would also still put us substantially below the rates levied by our friends in the Dallas, Alamo, Tarrant County, and El Paso community college systems.

We live in a time when, for some political demographics, the reaction to any hint of a tax increase is a knee-jerk no. Yet most of the citizens of our district recognize the incredible value Lone Star College brings to their families and their communities. We believe that they can be convinced that it would be worth \$1 a month.

Going forward, the AFT makes four simple recommendations to the College Administration and Board for future planning.



1) Set the consumer price index as the floor to what the annual pay increase should be. The consumer price index (which was 2.9% for the twelve months ending in June) is recalculated frequently and is a good measure of cost of living increases. Setting the CPI as the starting point for salary increases will, at the very least, keep employee salaries ahead of inflation. The World at Work projected increase in salaries (3% for 2018) is a good secondary goal. As employees, we'd like to move ahead and not just keep up. The College should strive to be as generous as possible beyond this measure.

2) Once the salary increase rate has been set for a given fiscal year, apply that rate to ALL employees. Adjuncts should not get less. Top level administrators should not get more.

3) Rededicate Lone Star College to the goal of having 50% of all classes covered by full-time faculty. This goal was set by Dr. Head when he became Chancellor. Harvey knocked us back on our heels. We are falling a little behind on the pace and that is understandable in the short run. This should be a high priority for FY 2020.

4) Reevaluate our method of calculating "market rate" for adjunct faculty. For years, this has essentially meant that if we pay about the same as Houston Community College and San Jacinto College we think we are OK. Lone Star competes for adjuncts with a number of universities in the area that pay more – often in the neighborhood of \$3000 or more per 48 hour course. We need to widen our perspective to make sure we are competitive in that market as well and set a five year goal to bring adjunct pay in line. Adjuncts should not have to consider whether they would be better off at Buc-ee's.

At the September meeting of the Board of Trustees, Jennifer Mott unveiled a long term plan to increase Lone Star College revenue so that the College's budget relative to number of students served will come up to the state average over several years. We will write about that plan in the future after we analyze it a bit further. This is an important step that will help make the recommendations we are proposing possible.

This has been a tough year and most of this coming school year will be focused on getting completely

back on our feet. Going forward, we ask Lone Star College to commit to a pay structure that befits a Great College to Work For.

John Burghduff, LSC-Cy-Fair

Professor of Math

References:

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7. An archive of back issues of The Advocate can be found at www.aftlonestar.org. Select the tab for "News" and select "Archives of The Advocate"
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"Poverty exists, not because we cannot feed the poor, but because we cannot satisfy the rich."

Author unknown



Go to Jail: Community College Students and the Broken Bail System

At our college, we don't discuss the intersection of student lives with criminal court practices in Houston. Yet, students often disappear during the semester, only to return and report that they had been arrested. Students miss class for court appearances. Those who are not physically in jail but out on bail have to show up to court for roll call, a lengthy process that takes hours out of a person's day, and those who have already served time have to report to parole officers, even as they strive to get degrees and rebuild their lives. Students are also affected when a family member is enmeshed in the jail system, leaving them additionally burdened with childcare, paying new bills, and increased anxiety.

Why does the criminal court system affect our students in particular? Because the harsh and discriminatory courts in Harris County can haul a poor person in *for a minor offense* and, if they fail to pay bail, hold that person in pre-trial detention without sight of a trial.

It's a system that goes after the poor, letting those who can pay bail go and locking up those who can't, without trial, before they are even proven guilty in court. When we consider the disproportionate policing of poor communities, leading in turn to the disproportionate arrests of the poor for minor crimes, then the irregularities and inconsistencies of the court system become important factors indeed in the lives of our students, making success in the classroom an impossible challenge.

Regardless of the often-ignored "mission" to enrich the lives of our students, the Lone Star College System can no longer afford to remain silent on the realities of students involved in Harris and Montgomery county jail systems because of the ugly realities of the bail system. The bail reform movement, as documented by the Marshall Project,¹ has become a major issue in many states, including Texas.

Our Mission



Lone Star College

System provides comprehensive educational opportunities and programs to enrich lives."

A federal judge ruled that the New Orleans criminal court cannot jail anyone for minor offenses, such as failing to pay fines, without a fair hearing inquiring into their financial circumstances.² More recently, California became the first state to eliminate bail for people awaiting trial.³ The November election might change Harris County policies that affect our community, our students, and their families.

The Harris County Jail on San Jacinto Street stands on Buffalo bayou, just across from another local college, UH-Downtown. On a typical day, starting at 4 PM, visitors walk up to the red brick building to see their loved ones, one of the 8900-plus inmates of the complex. They come in from the road in groups of two or three, whole families, mothers with small children. A volunteer walks up with a clipboard:

"Do you want to end cash bail?"

The visitors stop. Eyes light up. "What's this? Tell me more."

AFT members in this field work together to discuss issues of mutual concern and to offer solutions to common problems in our criminal justice system. Workers in the criminal justice profession understand the system and can be strong advocates to support their colleagues in addressing the challenges they face. We come together to talk about these challenges to strengthen our union and to ensure fair and equal treatment for all in the criminal justice system.

Figure 1 AFT Position on Criminal Justice and Public Safety

The American Federation of Teachers issued a statement on criminal justice and public safety, resolving that the AFT and its affiliates will support and encourage policies aimed at reforming monetary bail requirements that lead to the unjust imprisonment of underprivileged offenders who can't afford payment; and that the AFT will work with all constituencies to reclaim the promise of racial equity and justice in all our communities.⁴ So it's an important aspect of our commitment to our communities, and an issue that we cannot ignore as being a part of our students' lives.

Franklin Bynum, a former public defender running for judge in Harris County Criminal Court 8, sees



the issue simply: he wants to stop jailing people before trial who can't afford to pay to get out. Bynum is calling for due process regardless of income. Harris County is especially egregious in its discriminatory court practices. In 2017, a federal judge ordered the courts to let people go if they cannot hold trial immediately. Republican judges in Harris County are suing to continue the practice of jailing the poor.⁵

Jail visitors have a lot to say. They tell the volunteers with clipboards that reporting to roll call means standing in crowded hallways for hours waiting for a trial date. Not showing up exactly on time (being fifteen minutes late) means being arrested on the spot. One mother with small children reports she had posted bail for her husband, but he was hauled back in after failing to show up for roll call once. Another visitor reports that one hallway in the women's jail is swarming with gnats. They didn't have water for five days, so they closed down visiting, lest people find out the conditions inside the jail. If we asked our students and gave them the power to speak on our campuses, we might hear similar stories.

A fair court means that every person is assumed innocent before she/he is found guilty in a court by a judge or a jury of peers. Bynum wants to release people pending their trial and give them a fair chance to fight their case. A twisted consequence of holding people before trial is that desperate people routinely plead guilty simply to get out and get on with their lives. Public defenders encourage them to do so. Effectively, this makes the police officer making the arrest the de facto decision maker on whether someone is guilty or not, rather than the court and the jury. Plea bargains are treated like a foregone conclusion, and the court becomes extremely hostile when someone refuses to plead guilty. There is no presumption of innocence, at least for the poor.

Bynum also calls for more diversion programs, like the one that District Attorney Kim Ogg has started in Harris County (although new reports indicate that Kim Ogg is now pushing for high bail on minor offenses).⁶ Diversion programs would also ease the

burden on our students and their families: people will no longer be forced to enter into plea bargains for minor offenses.



Progressive leaders all over the country are calling out the problem of the bail system, yet the college is silent on the issue. Whereas faculty see firsthand how the bail system affects student lives, the college is quiet. If our college administration were to discuss and address this issue, they would proactively enrich the lives of our students and their families.

The message for union, faculty, and administrators: speak out and demand to make the courts fair again. We urge the college

administration to support calls for bail reform and bring the unfairness of pretrial detention and cash bail more into public focus so that students can talk about their own experiences on our campuses and be empowered to effect change. We ask candidates for the upcoming board election to put this issue on their platform.

Gemini Wahhaj and Bruce Martin

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³California Becomes First State to End Cash Bail. <https://abc7news.com/politics/ca-becomes-first-state-to-eliminate-bail-for-suspects-awaiting-trial/4079752/>

⁴American Federation of Teachers, "Criminal Justice and Public Safety." AFT Resolution. SUPPORTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AFT RACIAL EQUITY TASK FORCE AND THE WORK PERFORMED BY THE CONSTITUENT MEMBERS OF THE AFT CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY TASK FORCE <https://www.aft.org/resolution/supporting-recommendations-aft-racial-equity-task-force-and-work-performed>

⁵Houston Chronicle, "Harris County bail system unconstitutional, federal judge rules" 14 February 2018. < <https://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Harris-County-bail-system-unconstitutional-11108210.php>>

⁶HARRIS COUNTY DA RAN AS A REFORMER. SO WHY IS SHE PUSHING HIGH BAIL FOR MINOR OFFENSES? <https://theappeal.org/harris-county-kim-ogg-bail-reform-jail/>



AFT Endorses Two in Board Election

Lone Star College will have a Board of Trustees election on the November 2018 ballot. The college has a nine-member Board. Members are elected by citizens in the Lone Star College in-district service area in November of even-numbered years and serve terms of six years each. Board positions are elected as representatives of nine single-member districts. Up for election this year are Districts 1, 2, and 8.

AFT – Lone Star C.O.P. E (Committee on Political Education) has endorsed Michael Stoma for District 1 and Ernestine Pierce for District 2.

AFT did not endorse in District 8. Neither candidate completed the union's questionnaire by the deadline.

The following is a list of all candidates as they will appear on the ballot.

District 1

Michael (Mike) Stoma
George Edwards, Jr.

District 2

Ernestine M. Pierce
Matthew Wheeler

District 8

Michael Sullivan
Guillermo Puente

Register

★ ★ ★ **to** ★ ★ ★

VOTE

Tales from the Unionside

On July 16, Chancellor Steve Head sent out an email announcing that for the second year in a row the *Chronicle of Higher Education* had named Lone Star College one of its “Great Colleges to Work For.” The chancellor offered his congratulations and thanks to all employees for contributing to the “Greatness” of LSC. Each of us at Lone Star can judge how great we are, but my skepticism stems from an examination of statistical “facts” related to raw numbers, salary figures, and faculty ratios.

What these numbers, figures, and ratios tell is a story that Lone Star College will not put on an I-45 billboard, air on a Houston radio station, or have pop up on social media ad. These “facts” do not make us look good because they represent the low priority administrators place on classroom teaching. Over my 40 years at North Harris, but especially during the Carpenter-Head years, chancellors and presidents have been masters of doublespeak as they have praised teaching on the one hand and undermined it with the other.

Since the late 1980s, an educational employee erosion has occurred as fewer and fewer Lone Star employees have been involved in teaching, as opposed to other system functions. It is my rough estimate that over half of the full-time workforce in the 1980s were teachers, with the other half employed in administrative and support activities. Out of 2,798 full-time employees in 2017–2018, there were just 937 working as professors. Where have all the teachers gone? If you look at the overall employee breakdown, the answer will be clear—into non-teaching positions. Officially, LSC divides its employee workforce into four separate categories: administrators, professional staff, support staff, and professors. Here are the numbers for each category: 305 administrators, 656 professional staff, 900 support staff, and 937 professors. The professoriate makes up only thirty percent of all permanent positions.¹

The raw number 937 means that Lone Star employs 1,861 people in nonteaching positions. It may be that every one of these 1,861 jobs is vital and important to achieving the College's mission, but the 937-to-1,861 divide presents a situation in which these numbers are completely out of balance to what a teaching institution should be.



While the raw employee numbers do not paint a pretty picture, the 2017-2018 salary figures show too many underpaid people and some overpaid personnel. Unlike the private sector, where it is all about the money, most public or government employees realize that their salaries will not be competitive with the private or corporate sector. We accept this because that is who we are. At LSC, who are the fat cats, and what are they paid? I classify the fat cats as those earning over \$100,000 in annual salary. The 100k club consists of 165 employees, just about six percent of the labor force. The Chancellor had the highest 2017-2018 salary at \$370,000 with the chief operating officer/general council coming in next highest at \$230,000 plus. The six college presidents pulled down between \$185,000 and \$204,000 in salary last year. I found my salary of \$122,796 placed me as the seventh highest paid faculty member in the system. The highest salary paid to any one professor is \$137,000.

While we 165 fat cats are doing well by government pay standards, many of our colleagues are not well off. There are 1,306 full-time employees being paid between \$25,000 and \$55,000 per year. Another 414 employees are making between \$55,000 and \$65,000, which means that 1,720 LSC employees are living paycheck-to-paycheck if they have student loans to pay off or are trying to raise children. If you look only at faculty salaries, the 2017 Texas Community College Teachers Association's (TCCTA) survey ranks Lone Star salaries at 10th out of 50 two-year schools. Looking at the average LSC faculty salary, the amount of \$62,743 puts our professors far behind the average pay of Austin Community College teachers making \$71,741.

Why are today's salaries so low compared to the salaries of many of us who have been at the college for years? It is not longevity alone that explains this situation, but also past inflation waves resulting in four-to-eight percent annual pay raises, and the reconfiguration of faculty salaries from a 9-month contract to

a 10½ -month standard under Chancellor John Pickelman. This Pickelman change meant big faculty raises of \$8,000 to \$12,000 per year as the guaranteed contract was extended from two semesters to two semesters and one summer term. Prior to this time, full timers were not guaranteed summer teaching, plus the summer salary was factored at a lower rate than the regular pay standard.

Without inflation or another Pickelman initiative, today's employees are caught in a flat line situation of the two percent blues. This two percent bump for 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 has been too little at a time when the Chancellor and the trustees need to do better by employees at the median and below pay level. If improving employee salaries is a high budget

priority, the money can be found through a variety of liberal and conservative actions, which might include tax increases, service cuts, insourcing more work, trimming travel pay, limiting sabbatical leaves, salary freezes for the 100k club, and targeting larger pay hikes for low pay employees.

Given the small number of teachers vis-a-vis the total LSC workforce and the low pay for so many

full-time employees, this situation is enough to shame even the shameless Donald Trump. When these two circumstances are combined with the full-time to part-time faculty ratio and the third-world wages paid to adjunct professors, one has to question the judgment and humanity of the College powers that be. Years ago, Dr. Joe Airola, the first Chancellor, established a 70-30 system for full-time to part-time classroom instruction. This 70-30 ratio became institutionalized for a while and became known as the Airola rule. It was Dr. Airola's belief that he did not want to go higher than 70 % full time as a way of insuring no faculty layoffs should student enrollment go down.

So what happened to the Airola rule? It has been long forgotten at LSC. Now we have the worst full-time-part-time faculty mix among the 50 Texas





two-year colleges. To be exact, Lone Star College is tied for 49th place with Central Texas College for having the highest percentage of classes taught by adjunct professors.

The 2017-2018 TCCTA survey numbers have us at 40 percent full time and 60 percent part time. Here are the reported full-time class percentages for other institutions that are comparable to LSC: Alamo is at 55 percent, Dallas is at 65 percent, Tarrant County is at 54 percent, and Houston is at 55 percent. Our colleagues at Houston Community College should appreciate how far HCC has risen while Lone Star has fallen since the 1980s. It is the classic story of the HCC tortoise and the LSC hare; HCC has gone from 15 to 55 percent full-time classroom coverage while we have dropped from 70 to 40 percent. Indeed, Lone Star's little brother to the south has grown up to become a big brother to North Harris and the other LSC colleges.

While our 40–60 full time to part time ratio is disgraceful, the amount LSC pays its adjunct faculty is downright sinful. Lone Star has joined much of the higher education world in its exploitation of adjunct professors by offering advanced degree professionals low pay, no benefits, and zero job security. In 2017-2018, there was no excuse for paying \$2,004 to teachers with graduate degrees for a three-hour class. The \$2,004 amount puts LSC at a salary rank of 18th out of the 50 Texas community colleges. Austin Community College offered the highest pay in the state at \$3,153 with Cisco Junior College paying the lowest at \$1,344.

Among other urban colleges, the three-hour teaching salary at Alamo last year was \$2,491, Dallas at \$2,324, Tarrant County at \$2,558, and Houston at \$2,010. Since LSC pays only \$2,004, there is much to be done at Lone Star to stop the short-changing of our adjunct faculty. When asked about the low adjunct pay, the higher ups and fat cats say that the college system is paying the market rate, as if this will absolve their sins. At the August 2018 Board meeting, the Chancellor recommended to the trustees that there should be no change in adjunct professor pay for 2018-2019.

Looking at the Lone Star College triple fault of low full-time employee salaries for the many, a dire shortage of permanent professors, and the overuse and underpaying of part-time faculty, it might appear that the situation is hopeless and beyond repair. I believe that this is not the case. We did not become this bad overnight; it took years of neglecting employees by those in charge to put us where we are today. Our employee problems can be addressed by the Board of Trustees in the next three budget cycles. If the Chancellor and his cabinet will not lead the way back, then the trustees can guide the hands of administrators in righting the wrongs of the past.

After the November board election, three new trustees will take their positions in 2019. The 2018 election will complete the third and last cycle of LSC elections as a result of a federal district court agreement in which Lone Star agreed to stop its violation of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 through the use of at-large elections that discriminated against minority citizens. All trustees in 2019 will represent the new single-member districts that were agreed upon by all parties to settle the League of United Latin American Citizens



(LULAC) lawsuit filed against the college system. Of the nine 2019 trustees, only David Vogt and Linda Good had any part in the hiring of Dr. Head as Chancellor in 2014. While Vogt and Good may or may not feel invested in Head, the other seven trustees played no role in the Chancellor's hiring. Should the 2019 Board feel that Steve Head's vision is blurred on the issues of raw numbers, salary figures, and faculty ratios, it has the authority to provide corrective lenses to put LSC where it should be rather than where it is today.

Bob Locander
Professor of Political Science, LSC-North Harris
Editor's Note: Locander is a regular political columnist for The Advocate.

References:

¹Numbers reported were obtained from the LSC system office.



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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

