

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Impeached, acquitted

A timeline of Student Government leaders' impeachment process and consequent protests



THOMASON CLAYTON

March 23

Thomason Clayton, Student Body vice president, publicly called Caitlyn Burge-Surles, former Student Body President, and Alyssa Spencer, former Chief of Staff, racists at a Student Government Candidate Forum.



CAITLYN BURGE-SURLES

March 24

Articles of Impeachment were sent out to Burge-Surles and the seven-day countdown to her hearing began. Spencer's original articles were sent out.



ALYSSA SPENCER

March 26



An Instagram video surfaced demonstrating how Clayton conducted himself during a meeting with Student Government senators in spring 2021. The video was shown during Clayton's hearing April 6.

March 28



Student organizations held a protest on campus calling for impeachment, resignations and investigations for each individual accused.

March 29

Articles of Impeachment were sent out to Clayton, and the seven-day countdown to his hearing began. Spencer's updated articles were also sent out, which were used in the trial.

**Note: A two-thirds majority vote of attending senators is necessary for impeachment. The number needed for removal depends on attendance.*

Student Senate approved the impeachment proceedings.

April 4

Burge-Surles' hearing



(Unanimous: 25-0)

Burge-Surles is impeached for failing to fulfill her duties as president by not attending office hours and alleged racist remarks.

April 5

Spencer's hearing



(Unanimous: 21-0)

Spencer is impeached for alleged failure to post the organization outreach sign-up, offensive remarks and talks about Clayton's impeachment.

April 6

Clayton's hearing



(14 voted yes, eight no and one abstention out of 23)

Clayton avoids impeachment. Jacqueline Avila, Liberal Arts senator and impeachment manager, sends an appeal to re-try Clayton's impeachment.

April 4-5

Campus elections take place, and Clayton was not elected as Student Body president for the next academic year.



Student organizations held a second protest calling for Clayton's immediate resignation.

April 11



UNIVERSITY

Campus reacts to spring 2022 referenda results

With the University Center referendum losing by three votes and the Student Green Fund winning by a landslide, students and faculty discuss the outcomes and what it means for the campus.

BY FRANCESKA 'WOLF' ISALY
The Shorthorn staff

The two referendums on the spring 2022 ballot generated divisive discussion across the student body. The passing of one and the rejection of the other mixed excitement and disappointment for potential changes on campus.

The Student Life and Community Initiative referendum proposed increasing the student union fee to renovate the University Center, according to previous *Shorthorn* reporting. The Student Green Fund referendum asked to establish a fee to enable new campus sustainability initiatives.

The student body voted 730 in favor of the UC renovations, and 733 opposed. The Student Green Fund had 1,103 in favor, and 358 opposed.

The Student Life and Community Initiative

If the referendum passed, the student union fee would increase from \$39 to \$150 for the spring and fall and \$75 per summer semester, according to previous *Shorthorn* reporting. However, the fee increase wouldn't take effect until construction completes in fall 2026.

The Student Life and Community Initiative project will be shelved, as it requires student approval to proceed, UC director David Albart said. There is a possibility it could be reintroduced at a later date, but those discussions haven't taken place.

Albart said he was disappointed for students who supported the project and wished the renovations could proceed.

"We anticipated that there would be a little bit more support for it," he said. "I never anticipated it to be a complete landslide, by any means and imagination, but I was hopeful that we would have a fairly comfortable margin of support amongst the students."

Nibi Khadka, public health junior and College of Nursing and Health Innovation student senator,

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TRANSPORTATION

RAPID receives financial support to run until 2024

The city wants residents to be comfortable with automated technology, according to a city of Arlington representative.

BY HANNAH EZELL
The Shorthorn staff

Arlington Rideshare, Automation and Payment Integration Demonstration — the city's autonomous rideshare pilot program — has seen success and received funding to continue services for at least two more years.

The North Texas Central Council of Governments recently approved a funding request that would finance RAPID through at least 2024, according to the city's press release. The program's initial funding ended on March 18.

The service was unveiled by the city in March 2021, according to previous *Shorthorn* reporting. Arlington, UTA, Via Rideshare and May Mobility partnered for this program, which was meant to last for one year.

The service was introduced because a community stakeholder group, tasked with studying Arlington's transportation needs recommended an on-demand rideshare service

during 2016-2017, said Ann Foss, principal planner in the office of strategic initiatives for the city of Arlington.

The city wants residents to gain comfort with automated technology as it grows in popularity, Foss said. RAPID is the third autonomous vehicle service in Arlington.

The first project was an autonomous rideshare pilot program in the entertainment district named Milo, according to previous *Shorthorn* reporting. It opened to the public in August 2017.

Milo only lasted a year before the city replaced it with a partnership with Drive.ai to launch a self-driving artificial intelligence vehicle in October 2018. Drive.ai also lasted one year.

"I think most of the feedback is really positive. People enjoy the [RAPID] service," Foss said. "They want to see it continue, they want to see it expand."

While the RAPID vehicles are autonomous, a human operator remains behind the wheel during rides in case they need to intervene, Foss said. The service operates in a complex environment with high amounts of pedestrian activity, cyclists and unprotected turns.

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BY MANDY HUYNH AND ANGELICA PEREZ
The Shorthorn news editor and editor in chief

ONLINE

Read more about Student Government leaders' impeachment process at theshorthorn.com/news/student_governance/impeachment/

