

Nicholas Gutteridge

College Station, Texas, 77840 • nicholasgutteridge512@gmail.com • 956-332-8877 • [LinkedIn](#) • [Writing Portfolio](#)

Texas A&M University

Bachelor of Science in Political Science

College Station, Texas

May 2026

Texas Southmost College

Associate of Arts in General Studies (*Obtained Alongside High School Diploma*)

Brownsville, Texas

May 2022

The Texas Tribune

Reporting Fellow

College Station, Texas

August 2025 – December 2025

- One of three fellows selected to report on elections, the legislature, health, education, immigration, and criminal justice.

Mays Business School, Marketing & Communications Team

Content Student Coordinator

College Station, Texas

June 2025 – August 2025

- Assisting with a design and editorial overhaul of the *Benefactor*, Mays Business School's magazine.
- Enhancing the college's narrative capabilities by pursuing more human-focused stories.
- Helping manage Mays' social media accounts, engaging an audience of over 100,000 followers across major platforms.

Freelance Journalist

Writer, Photographer

College Station, Texas

May 2025 – August 2025

- Working with *The Houston Chronicle* on an investigative story set to publish in August 2025.
- Working with several state outlets on freelance stories.

The Battalion, Texas A&M Student Newspaper

Managing Editor → Editor-in-Chief

College Station, Texas

May 2024 – May 2025

- Led 20 editors, more than 120 staffers & edited every story before publication (~30 weekly) in strict AP Style.
- Designed 24+ weekly print editions with 8-18 pages each & decided which stories are printed and pursued.
- Rebuilt *The Battalion's* news department from scratch, ultimately producing the most news stories in the past 5 years.
- Helped facilitate online growth through Instagram (increased to 10,000 followers) & newsletter development.
- Implemented stricter editing standards, with increased quality leading to the most annual awards in at least 5 years.

U.S. Air Force Office of Public Affairs

Strategy & Assessments Intern (*Held Public Trust Clearance*)

The Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

January 2024 – May 2024

- Wrote reports on U.S. Air Force appearances in National media outlets distributed weekly to 10,000+ officials.
- Attended & analyzed House/Senate Armed Services Committees & tracked legislation that affected the U.S. Air Force.
- Assisted public affairs push that accompanied a restructuring of the U.S. Air Force for great power competition.

The Battalion, Texas A&M Student Newspaper

News Reporter → News Editor

College Station, Texas

January 2023 – December 2023

- Supervised, trained 15 news reporters in AP Style, edited stories & provided timely critiques.
- Implemented the first-ever pay scale for news reporters, reintroducing payment for student staffers at *The Battalion*.

Associated Collegiate Press Individual Awards (National)

- 2nd Place Reporter of the Year, November 2024
- 1st Place In-Depth Story, November 2024
- 4th Place Feature Story, November 2024

College Media Association Pinnacle Awards (National)

- 1st Place Feature Story, November 2024

Texas Intercollegiate Press Association Annual Contest (State)

- 1st Place Reporter of the Year, April 2025
- 2nd Place Reporter of the Year, April 2024

Nicholas Gutteridge

Reporter of the Year Application 2025

NEWS STORY (PG. 3)

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ADDITIONAL PIECE #1 (PG. 26)

- ['Eliminate the waste': How A&M cut 52 programs](#)

ADDITIONAL PIECE #2 (PG. 41)

- [Here's what to know as 15 A&M students lose legal status](#)

‘They rarely have all the facts’: Behind the scenes, conservative influence on Aggieland soars

Over 10,500 documents of emails, memos and messages obtained by The Battalion show right-wing website Texas Scorecard’s influence over A&M policy and personnel discussions

Nicholas Gutteridge, Editor-in-Chief

February 6, 2025



Then-interim president Mark A. Welsh III speaks to students and faculty during the State of the University address on Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023. The retired U.S. Air Force general shared the

university's new strategy and vision in Rudder Theatre half a year after stepping into the position.
(Chris Swann/The Battalion)

The notification was one of a million.

She let it sit for a moment before grabbing the phone and bringing it to her face, expecting nothing more than a question from her co-worker or a response from the student she was helping. But the email, sent from Texas A&M's Office of Open Records, was unusual: Under the state's Public Information Act, she was being asked for copies of her syllabi and all emails she had sent containing the words "DEI" and "transgender."

The professor's main confusion came from the requester, however. It was a name she had never seen before. Who would be interested in what was ultimately a few benign emails?

Her case isn't unique among faculty and staff. Representatives of Texas Scorecard, a right-wing website that publishes articles about state and local politics, submitted more than 100 open records requests to Texas A&M and the System from 2022 to 2024.

"Virtually every article they publish is not fully factual, sometimes not even close to factual," President Mark A. Welsh III told The Battalion in a sit-down interview in November 2024. "They have never printed a retraction when we provided them the facts."

Scorecard's posts, however, spread like wildfire.

"I do find it interesting in all the articles and things over the last couple of years, I think there have been maybe four or five courses that are taught here that they've called out, out of 4,600," Welsh said. "So even if you made the assumption that there was something wrong with those courses, this is clearly a very specifically targeted effort for some reason, with some long-range purpose in mind. But you'd have to ask them. I don't know what it is."

Originally the print and online publishing arm of Empower Texans, a now-defunct advocacy group that spent millions pushing Republican priorities in the state legislature, Scorecard spun off into an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2020 chaired by Tim Dunn, a West Texas oil billionaire — and one of the largest Republican donors in the state. His son-in-law Keith Uhles works as director, and the website’s top two roles are held by Aggies: publisher and president Michael Quinn Sullivan ‘92 and Chief Executive Officer Nathan Ofe ‘09.

Beyond online posts, podcasts and email lists, the website also hosts a directory of state politicians and ratings for each, where it derives its Scorecard branding from, created by the groups Young Conservatives of Texas and Texans For Fiscal Responsibility. The latter is a long-time affiliate of [the expansive political machine that Dunn funds and directs](#).

The authors of Scorecard’s posts — often hardline, conservative activists — submitted 94 open records requests to A&M and 23 to the A&M System from late 2022 to 2024, with a majority fueling the more than 100 stories the website has posted referencing the university since 2022. These requests target records of all types, including syllabi, funding numbers, communications containing specific keywords and various statistics, like a December 2023 request for the number of hormone replacement therapy treatments University Health Services offered.

The December request spurred a two-part Scorecard series titled “Den of Degeneracy” by senior Scorecard writer Robert Montoya.

Montoya emailed the Board of Regents’ official email address on Jan. 24, 2024, and, in almost 1,800 words, detailed the information he collected on on-campus gender-affirming care, Transcend and Aggie Roses, independent student organizations that champion transgender rights and feminist values, respectively. The 10-member, governor-appointed board oversees the A&M System and its 11 universities, including the College Station campus.

Montoya asked 10 times whether certain details helped “secure the core educational mission of Texas A&M.” If not, he asked, “what are you going to do to return the university to its core educational mission?”

The Board's executive director forwarded the inquiry to each regent's personal email on Jan. 26, 2024.

“When does our administration’s obsession with student sexual preferences and lifestyles finally stop?” Regent Mike Hernandez wrote when forwarding it to Welsh on Jan. 26, 2024. “Why is it any of their business and why do we allow the administration to continue to promote these liberal agendas that are clearly against the will of the Texas Legislature and of the vast majority of Texas taxpayers? This is the second time recently that this has come up and we were assured that this hold over [sic] nonsense from previous administrations is being eradicated.”



Michael “Mike” Hernandez III familiarizes himself with the docket for the Board of Regents meeting on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. The CEO of D&M Leasing, he graduated from Texas A&M with an industrial distribution degree in 1983 and was appointed to the Board by Gov. Greg Abbott in 2019. (Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

Hernandez then suggested having the Committee on Audit and Committee on Academic and Student Affairs, [two regent-staffed groups](#), “make a plan to identify

every misguided policy and practice like these and make sure they are eliminated ASAP.”

This isn’t the first time Scorecard’s work has been used by regents to advocate for policy and personnel changes. Messages and emails released as part of an internal investigation into the [failed hiring of Kathleen McElroy ‘81](#) as A&M journalism director in 2023 show that regent skepticism about her appointment was directly linked to a June 15, 2023, Scorecard article about her experience with diversity initiatives.

One regent, Sam Torn, emailed Regent Bill Mahomes the day after the article went live with a copy-pasted paragraph from the Scorecard story, saying, “This is a quote I would like explained prior to voting on [McElroy’s] tenure.”

“I thought the purpose of us starting a journalism department was to get high-quality Aggie journalist[s] with conservative values into the market,” Regent Jay Graham wrote in a June 16, 2023, text to then-President M. Katherine Banks, Chancellor John Sharp, Regent David Baggett and a fourth unidentified individual. “This won’t happen with someone like [McElroy] leading the department.”

The national scandal rocked the university, ousted a president and had a [million-dollar conclusion](#). It also fueled the growth of the influential conservative alumni organization [The Rudder Association](#), according to the group’s president, Matt Poling ‘90.

By August 2024, a TRA-hosted leadership dinner attended by approximately 60 students — including Yell Leaders and notable student government officials — was headlined by influential conservative figures, including State Rep. Brian Harrison ‘04 (R-10); former Texas governor Rick Perry ‘72; Senate Education Committee Chair Brandon Creighton (R-4); and Brooke Rollins ‘94, whom President Donald Trump would nominate as agriculture secretary just months later. Earlier that year, then-Commandant Patrick Michaelis and Sullivan, Scorecard’s publisher, headlined a separate meeting.

“I met former student Michael Sullivan last year, as one of our board members is a friend of his and invited him to speak at our annual meeting,” Poling said. “Super nice

guy who loves A&M. Often brings to light interesting issues on our campus that we did not even know about.”

By this point, TRA was using Scorecard’s content as a catalyst for its advocacy.

As [previously reported by The Battalion](#), an April 2024 email Poling sent to Sharp, Welsh and the regents cited Scorecard’s “Den of Degeneracy” series when listing over a dozen reasons why the university should end gender-affirming care on campus. A follow-up email from Clifford Hopewell, a TRA member and former president of the Texas Psychological Association, repeated the points and said it constituted “medical malpractice.”

New records obtained by The Battalion show that Welsh tasked Nancy Fahrenwald, the associate vice president for University Health Services, with leading a formal response to Hopewell on May 8, 2024.

“President may want us to refer students to the community for care,” Fahrenwald texted the next day to a group chat with Matt Hoffman and Tiffany Skaggs, two top UHS administrators. “How would we do that?”

Hoffman, an assistant dean at the nursing school, said Bryan-College Station was “GREATLY lacking in local providers” — especially after he closed his private practice several years ago, where he offered similar services.

“I hate to think of the financial burden, not to mention delay in care, that students would incur by having to go elsewhere,” Hoffman texted. “I know the both of you well enough that I feel comfortable sharing that the thought of having to send students away is heartbreaking to me.”

Skaggs concurred. But by May 17, 2024, records indicate UHS officials were drafting [the letter they used to announce the decision in July](#). The cut was in effect by August.

In communications about Welsh’s permanent appointment to the presidency, Scorecard’s influence is also evident. A retired four-star general who served as Joint Chief of Staff over the U.S. Air Force, which at the time had 650,000 employees, he was derided as an “Obama appointee” and criticized by the website for his past

comments supporting diversity initiatives. One former student emailed Welsh after reading a Scorecard story to say he was leading the university down a “WOKE path.”

“You clearly don’t know me at all,” Welsh fired back in an email response. “I have no idea what ‘WOKE path’ even means and I’m certainly not leading anyone down one.”

As Welsh’s permanent appointment in December 2023 neared, criticism ramped up. Regent John Bellinger emailed Regent Bob Albritton on Nov. 5, 2023, saying they “really need[ed] to vet this guy.”



Robert L. Albritton reads the docket at the Board of Regents meeting on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. The former student graduated from Texas A&M with a double major in economics and marketing in 1971 before eventually founding real estate company Mayfair Investments, LLC, where he still sits as chairman and CEO. Gov. Greg Abbott first appointed Albritton to the Board in 2015. (Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

“From what I have heard along with this and other articles, I have many questions,” Bellinger wrote after an alum emailed him a Scorecard post.

Baggett, having read a Scorecard story about Welsh's goal of increasing the percentage of women in the military, sent the post's link to the regents Torn, Bellinger and Brooks as well.

The opposition wouldn't work, however. The nine regents unanimously confirmed Welsh as the university's 27th president on Dec. 12, 2023. Yet over a year later, Scorecard remains a consistent presence on campus.

"It's not in my decision process at all," Welsh said. "As I said before, I do what's best for Texas A&M. I don't feel pressured, influenced by Texas Scorecard or anybody else who weighs in with an opinion. It's an opinion. They rarely have all the facts."

‘There’s only one John Sharp’: After 14 years, the Texas A&M System’s longest-serving chancellor nears retirement

Nicholas Gutteridge, Editor-in-Chief

May 4, 2025



Chancellor John Sharp sits at the end of a meeting table in the Texas A&M University System Moore-Connally Building on Thursday, May 1, 2025. (Ishika Samant/The Battalion)

There will never be another John Sharp.

It's a sentiment shared by both his supporters and critics. The 74-year-old Placedo native will retire on June 30 as the longest-serving chancellor in the Texas A&M System's history. To some, he's almost saintly: a steady-handed guide in an era of ever-increasing polarization. To others, he embodies everything wrong with higher education: a yes-man who puts those underneath him on the line to appease those in power.

What would his legacy be? He recalled being asked the question by Regent Sam Torn '70 last year. In response, Sharp began listing his accomplishments: The System purchased a law school that has since risen to No. 22 nationally; research funding across the 11 universities under him has topped \$1.5 billion; the College Station campus is home to almost 80,000 students.

“And he said, ‘No, that’s not your legacy,’” Sharp recounted. “And I said, ‘What is it?’ And he said, ‘We completely think — and the public completely thinks — different about A&M than they did 14 years ago.’ We’re no longer anybody’s little brother. We’re equal, and in some cases, much better.”

On Thursday, May 1, the outgoing chancellor sat down with The Battalion to discuss his legacy, tenure and next steps after 14 years in the position. A Blue Dog Democrat in a deep red state, Sharp has navigated a volatile era in higher education, serving as chancellor during President Donald Trump's rise to the Oval Office in 2016 and re-election in 2024. With institutions across the U.S. facing unprecedented political pressure from his administration, the chancellor has stayed the course.

All Sharp had to do was remain “out of the gun sights.”

“Don’t get between [Trump] and Harvard, [Trump] and the rest of it,” Sharp said with a laugh.

He praised Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins '94 and Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s goal of restructuring the food pyramid and explained how he turned the “piece of shit” plot of land near Bryan into the technology-focused RELLIS campus it is today. When asked about the firings he enacted after becoming chancellor, he said it resulted in a 4% pay raise that staff across the System received afterward.

To outsiders, Sharp's lectures are fluid, personal and original. But they're often old hat to those who know him.

He speaks in statistics, reciting praise of the System like prayer: The moment A&M makes a positive headline, the achievement joins his stump speech for the next six months. Of the numerous stories Sharp told The Battalion, he repeated several to a crowd of administrators and alumni who gathered to celebrate him later that same night, some nearly word for word, some with the dates a little off.

It's a Sharp classic, one honed throughout his more than 50 years in public life. Rising from state legislator to comptroller and barely losing a run for lieutenant governor in 1998 — followed by a stint in private practice and more than a decade in higher education — there are endless stories to be told by and about the Texan.

But, like many a fairy tale, it all started in Aggieland.

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After graduating from A&M in 1972, Sharp began work as an analyst in the Legislative Budget Board before becoming the chief campaign aide for Phil Gramm's U.S. Senate campaign in 1976. He was elected to the Texas House of Representatives after running unopposed two years later and began working his way up the political

ladder, rising to state senator, railroad commissioner and then comptroller of public accounts, the state's top accountant and tax collector, in 1990.

When assembling his staff after the 1990 win, Sharp phoned Billy Hamilton, a former associate who had previously worked in the comptroller's office for a decade. In Washington, D.C., at the time and craving a return home, Hamilton flew to Austin and met Sharp in his truck outside the Texas Railroad Commission building. The then-railroad commissioner outlined the restructuring of the agency he wanted to pursue, and Hamilton was interested.

"One of the things that was most attractive about the job was it was always sort of two things at once," Hamilton said. "First, he was really serious about making the organization, which was already very good, even better. And second, he was willing to take on any challenge that came along, and then trust the comptroller's office and our staff to pull it off. And I think we all felt challenged not to disappoint him."

That's how the performance review came into being, Hamilton said. Under Sharp, the comptroller's office conducted a review of the state government that ultimately found and slashed \$10 billion in waste, helping ensure Texas didn't have to enact a state income tax to balance the budget. Then-President Bill Clinton praised the initiative, launching a national version using Sharp's framework.

"He wanted recognition, and he wanted to do good work, but he wanted it done honestly and effectively," Hamilton said. "And you know that you can admire a person like that."

In 1998, rather than go for a third term as comptroller, Sharp ran for lieutenant governor. But after two decades of political success, this was where the ladder ended for the rising star. By just 2% of the state vote, he lost against the person who had, over several years, become one of his main rivals: his former college roommate.

Rick Perry '72 is enjoying life after public service.

On a Tuesday evening in late April, the former secretary of energy and governor of Texas had a surprise in store; he had accepted an invitation to speak to the students of HORT 416, a course that teaches every facet of wine. Perry spoke for an hour on central campus about topics that had the professors smiling nervously at each other, jumping from praise of Rollins to his latest appearance on Joe Rogan's podcast discussing new pharmaceutical treatments.

Surrounded by students asking for pictures, Perry agreed to take a few questions about his former adversary.

"You know, I suspected that he was kind of getting at the end of his tenure over here," Perry said. "I mean just, golly, longest-serving chancellor in Texas A&M history, so I wasn't necessarily surprised. I think he's the most consequential chancellor that we ever had."

Sharp and Perry were college roommates in the 1970s and political rivals in 1998, and Perry was in the governor's mansion when Sharp became chancellor in 2011.

The duo rose to the top together: When Sharp was elected student body president at A&M, Perry became Senior Yell Leader the same year. After graduating, Sharp pushed Perry to run for office. Today, it's a quote anyone will hear if they spend enough time near the chancellor: "My biggest regret is telling Perry to get into politics."

“If you think it was bad leading up to that [1998] election, you should have had to come to work the next day,” Hamilton said. “Because, you know, I think he was — he came so close. But he just ran into what turned out to be a sea change in Texas politics. I thought [Lt.] Governor Perry was a great, interactive governor. But I think Sharp could have been as good or better.”

Sharp’s political career never reached the same heights. Four years later, he would again attempt a run for lieutenant governor as the Democratic nominee, but the tide had turned. He lost by six points. The state hasn’t seen a Democrat in the role since. Rejected, Sharp stepped back from politics and joined a tax consulting firm.

But the rivals wouldn’t stay hostile forever. Sometime after Perry’s win, Perry said he noticed Sharp at an event. After praying, Perry believed it vital to go up to him and repair the relationship. It proved to be worthwhile. Perry appointed Sharp as chair of the Texas Tax Reform Commission in 2005, a group created to modernize the state’s aging tax code.

“I actually asked him to be chancellor before he took the job, but he couldn’t,” Perry said. “I want to say in 2010, I asked him to take it, and he said that he couldn’t because he needed to vest his stock.”

Eventually, Sharp would take the job, beginning officially in August 2011. The first thing on his mind?

The System needed a law school.

Rather than start from scratch, he purchased the stagnant Fort Worth-based Texas Wesleyan University School of Law for \$73 million in 2013, renaming it to the Texas A&M School of Law soon after. Then, Sharp poured millions of dollars into building it up.

The search for the new head of the school came next, and in 2018, it led the System to Dean Robert Ahdieh. The former professor recalled one visit to campus after being offered deanship; though Sharp wasn't on his schedule — Ahdieh would only report to the provost and president — he still wanted to meet the chancellor. Sharp agreed, scheduling him for half an hour.

They ended up spending triple that time discussing everything the law school needed to do to join the greats.

“And after an hour and a half, he said, ‘Oh, I’ve got to go, I’ve got to go give this talk, I’m late for it,’ and he went off,” Ahdieh said. “And I was with the then-chair of the Board of Regents, Charles Schwartz, as well. And I told him, I said, ‘I’m sold.’ I said, ‘If that’s the vision for what A&M wants to accomplish with the law school, I want to be the dean of the law school.’”

A decade ago, the school didn't even rank in the top 100 nationally. In April, U.S. News & World Report ranked it No. 22 in the country.

Next on the chancellor's list was Kyle Field. Sharp would pursue nearly \$500 million worth of additions to the stadium, even working with the City of College Station to implement a new hotel tax to finance the investment. By the end, it came out as the largest stadium in the state — 2,614 seats larger than that of the University of Texas at Austin.

The progress didn't stop there. Sharp helped secure a contract that allowed A&M to operate the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. The chancellor personally attended a College Station City Council meeting to advocate for a proposal that would allow Amazon to bring its drone technology to the city; he added multiple agencies to the A&M System, ensuring Texans knew that it was A&M doing the

legwork in the state. As of 2024, the System had a physical presence in 250 of Texas' 254 counties.

“The forest service used to be the Texas Forest Service,” said John Nichols, the mayor of College Station. “It’s now the Texas A&M Forest Service. And that was a branding effort on his part to say, here’s what Texas A&M is — not just Texas, Texas A&M.”

The chancellor often cites one of his largest achievements as the RELLIS campus, the research-focused behemoth outside of Bryan that was, only a few years ago, a worn-down plot of land. Now, “in the Pentagon, there’s almost no one that doesn’t know the word RELLIS,” Sharp claimed.

“Where he got the resources from to do all of this is way beyond me,” Nichols said. “One hundred and fifty million in the infrastructure alone at the RELLIS campus. But yet he went to Austin, and he got money for that infrastructure building out there, \$70 million. He went to Austin two years later, got money for the Bush Combat Development Center out there. I mean, he just had the ability quietly to leverage, find and leverage, political connections to gain resources that are needed.”



Army Futures Command Gen. Mike Murray visits with Chancellor John Sharp at the RELLIS campus in 2018. (FILE)

Sharp's prowess stood where his heart always did: politics.

He doesn't come from a background in higher education. But according to Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, that's why he's so successful in the role.

"He is the ultimate wheeler-dealer," Patrick said during a phone call in late April.

"And I say that in a positive way, not a negative way. He sets his sights on what he wants to accomplish, and he really doesn't quit until he reaches his goal. And he will smile. He will shake your hand, he'll pat you on the back. He'll say nice things.

Whatever it takes, whatever it takes, to accomplish his goals."

Sharp's success in the Texas Capitol is undeniable even to his biggest critics; it's how the System's budget has grown to \$7.3 billion in recent years, how the state avoided passing legislation that would have devastated universities across Texas. When he announced his retirement in July 2024, Sharp stayed on for another year, largely to navigate the System through the upcoming legislative session.

"You can say what you want, but being a member of the club is a big deal," Sharp said with a smile. "I mean, I was a senator, I was a house member, and so I have the ability to go on the House floor anytime I want, the ability to go on the Senate anytime I want. And I don't lie to them. I help them, I do things for them."

In recent months, Sharp has helped push a bill that would transfer the University of Houston-Victoria to the A&M System, a move that would increase the number of universities under the chancellor's watch to 12. When the Senate introduced a tenure bill in 2023 that experts worried would [cause a brain drain](#) in the state, Sharp and his expansive team of lobbyists worked to replace the legislation with a separate version — one that would instead enshrine the A&M System's tenure policy into state law.

"We went to the lieutenant governor in the leadership and said, 'I want to show you what the tenure policy is at Texas A&M,'" Sharp said. "And so he looked at it, [Sen. Brandon] Creighton looked at it, and those people looked at it and said, 'This is what we want.' And so I came back to the folks here. That's why you didn't see them, our folks, doing a lot of testifying and stuff on the bill. You saw a lot of UT people going, 'Oh, my God, the world's falling in.'"

The financial and political background is what makes Sharp a good chancellor, Patrick said — a major reason why he believes Comptroller Glenn Hegar, [his successor](#), will be able to step in successfully. But "there's only one John Sharp."

“There’s only one,” Patrick continued. “He’s a little P.T. Barnum, and he’s a little, he’s a little bit of everything.”

Still, sometimes the state government can’t be avoided entirely. One prospective piece of legislation currently worrying faculty is Senate Bill 37, which, if passed — as Sharp suspects it will be — would put control of the curricula in the hands of the governor-appointed regents at the top of each university system and transform faculty senates into advisory bodies, a large shift from their current role overseeing vital university functions.

“If it doesn’t pass, I think we don’t get \$300 million,” Sharp said. “I mean, the DEI bill was the same way. I mean, you know, everybody was kind of going, ‘What do we do?’ The votes are there to pass it, and if it doesn’t pass, a lot of universities, a lot of kids get punished because the appropriations ain’t gonna come. And then [SB] 37 is the same way.”

That “DEI bill” — SB 17 — remains a struggle for Texas universities even two years after its passing. But the System pushed forward, even if it meant [shuttering](#) the flagship campus’ pride center. A DEI-related state audit earlier this year found only one violation at the Kingsville campus, which was “fixed pretty quickly,” Sharp said.

Allegations of DEI persist, however. On the social media platform X in January, Gov. Greg Abbott [said he may fire](#) A&M President Mark A. Welsh III after posts spread online claiming the university was supporting a conference with DEI requirements, a threat that spurred a university statement it posted on its main account. Sharp said he had no clue where “that fire Welsh stuff came from.”

Still, not all was always well among Sharp’s 11 universities. In 2020, student demonstrations erupted on the College Station campus by protestors who wanted to remove the statue of Lawrence Sullivan “Sul” Ross, the university’s fourth president

— and a general in the Confederate Army. It wasn't until Sharp's intervention, claiming the statue couldn't be brought down, that the movement died out. But the System did add a statue of Matthew Gaines, a Black state senator who helped Texas establish A&M.

Then came the nationally-watched Kathleen McElroy '81 [scandal](#) in 2023, in which a Black journalist set to lead A&M's reestablished journalism program faced "DEI hysteria" from members of the Board of Regents and top administrators, who continuously watered down her job contracts until she ultimately turned down the position and returned to the University of Texas at Austin. The System [settled](#) with McElroy for \$1 million a few weeks later.

Just days after The Texas Tribune [reported](#) the McElroy news, the publication [revealed](#) another scandal: After A&M professor Joy Alonzo criticized the lieutenant governor during a talk, a student in the audience shared details with her mother, Texas Land Commissioner Dawn Buckingham.

Buckingham told Patrick, who then told Sharp. In a text message obtained by the Tribune between the two, the chancellor told Patrick that "Joy Alonzo has been placed on administrative leave pending investigation re firing her. shud [sic] be finished by end of week." Closing the message was his definitive "jsharp" signature.

When asked, Sharp said he used the word "firing" because "that's what I thought it was."

"I thought the investigations were about that," Sharp said. "Shouldn't have used the word fired, but ... most investigations are used to determine whether somebody gets fired or not, or suspended or whatever. Probably shouldn't have used that term. If I wouldn't have used that word, it probably wouldn't have been a story. But he did not

say, ‘Hey, I think you ought to fire this person.’ His question was, ‘What the hell is this about?’”

The McElroy and Alonzo cases forced former A&M president M. Katherine Banks to resign abruptly, a shakeup that saw Sharp guiding his flagship campus through the most controversy it’s faced in years. He quickly called Welsh, then the dean of the Bush School, to ask if he’d step in as interim president.

“I wasn’t ready for that,” Welsh recalled. “And I told him that, ‘Well, let me think about this. I need to talk to my wife, because we’re getting ready to retire.’ And he said, ‘OK, you can have 15 minutes to talk to her.’ I said, ‘Well, she’s in a board meeting. I can’t talk to her for a while.’ He said, ‘Well?’ And he just paused. Did the subtle pressure technique.”

Despite the seemingly endless number of controversies hitting the System over his tenure, Sharp stood steady at the top, remaining largely unscathed. He’s seen presidential administrations enter and leave, university administrators hired and fired, regents appointed and replaced.

But even for Sharp, the job has become more difficult over the years.

Hamilton, Sharp’s deputy when he was comptroller, joined the chancellor as his second-in-command at the System in 2013. He recalled wondering as a state worker whether Texas — dominated by rural Democrats at the time — would become more polarized.

“We try to make adjustments,” Hamilton said. “And in general, I think we’ve done alright. A&M and the A&M System are a great product, and the legislature recognizes that, and it has relied on the System for a lot of things it hadn’t relied on — Hurricane Harvey rebuilding and stuff like that, no one ever thought to hand over to a university system in the past. And he’s the reason, I think he’s built a lot of trust. So, you know,

I'm not saying it's easy, it's sometimes frustrating, it's often tense and things like that, but it's just the nature of the game, the full contact activity. So if you don't realize that, you are going to get hammered. And you may get hammered anyway."

A particular point of contention? The 10-member, governor-appointed Board of Regents. One member of the Board who spoke to The Battalion under the condition of anonymity to talk candidly described it as "two groups," the more moderate appointees and the newer, conservative activists who have caused several of the controversies Sharp has had to navigate in recent years.

But still: The regent was glad Sharp was departing. He believed the chancellor had become too powerful.

"Too powerful," Sharp repeated, flashing a grin. "If you have no power, you get nothing done."

His smile lingered.

It lasted only moments before he went back to listing numbers.

—

Sharp took the stage to the sound of cheers and a few dozen whoops.

Every major figure on campus stared up at him: deans, top administrators, influential alumni. He repeated his stump speech and was gifted a custom painting by the Association of Former Students' president, Porter S. Garner III '79.

It was a regular night for Sharp. Inside the association's alumni center, he was treated as a celebrity.

“We were here in school together,” said Regent Bill Mahomes ‘69, who has worked with Sharp since he became a regent in 2015. “And so I’ve known him, and I’ve watched him and, you know, I think we couldn’t have made a better decision at the time for a chancellor than John Sharp. He’s really changed the place.”

Onstage, Sharp pointed to his right at Perry, laughing with him. Welsh took the podium and recalled memories of the chancellor, alumni raised glasses in his honor and members of his family posed for photos.

It was a retirement celebration fit for someone of his stature. The chancellor will be off to start a company based on the communications firm [Public Strategies](#) in Austin alongside its former owner, the business executive Jack Martin.

When he sat down with The Battalion, Sharp was asked the question Regent Torn had posed a year earlier: What would his legacy be?

“I think that we ain’t nobody’s little brother anymore,” Sharp said.

He paused.

“We’re looking at our rear mirror for everybody else.”

‘Eliminate the waste’: How A&M cut 52 programs

Last year, an external inquiry into the LGBTQ studies minor led to a university-wide review of enrollment numbers. Now, Texas A&M is losing 14 minors and 38 certificates.

Nicholas Gutteridge, Managing Editor

December 2, 2024



Regent Michael J. Plank discusses the Board of Regents’ meeting agenda with President Mark A. Welsh III before the regents’ quarterly meeting on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. (Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

A [Nov. 15 memo](#) from the Office of the Provost has directed Texas A&M's colleges and schools to end 52 minors and certificates.

The order follows the Board of Regents' [resolution last month](#) mandating the closures despite opposition from faculty and administrators, including President Mark A. Welsh III. The document states that on Nov. 8, one day after the regents' resolution passed, Welsh instructed Provost Alan Sams to eliminate the 14 minors and 38 certificates by Jan. 1, 2025.

Sams tasked Timothy P. Scott, vice provost for academic affairs, with carrying it out. Six actions are to be implemented immediately:

1. Students enrolled in the minors and certificates as of Nov. 8 can complete the programs, but no new enrollments will be allowed after then. The Office of the Registrar will facilitate the transition.
2. The plans for teaching all currently enrolled students alongside other elements required for each cut must be submitted to, approved and finalized by Alicia Dorsey, A&M's associate vice president for academic effectiveness and planning, before Dec. 16.
3. Deans must notify students, staff and faculty of the impacted programs and provide documentation of the communication by Dec. 2.
4. The cut minors and certificates will be closed in all university systems by Jan. 1, 2025, and a note will be added to A&M's catalog indicating each closure.
5. The eliminations will be controlled and properly documented by [Curricular Services](#), the university office that assists with developing and implementing courses and programs.
6. Documentation must be provided to Scott by Dec. 16 stating all necessary actions have been taken to comply with the regents' directive.

Angie Hill Price, the senate's speaker and associate dean for undergraduate programs in the College of Engineering, forwarded the order to Faculty Senate members.

The 52 program cuts — all spurred by [June 2023 inquiries into the LGBTQ studies minor](#) — continue a months-long saga that has pitted faculty against administrators over concerns that the process degrades shared governance, the commonly accepted idea that faculty have a say in university decisions. Created with little input, most faculty heard of the new enrollment thresholds when ordered to end their programs in August and September.

The process being used to end the programs began development after inquiries into the LGBTQ studies minor in June of last year spurred a review of it by the provost's office. While the exact inquiry remains unknown, Sams said it was a post on the social media platform X.

“We looked at the program, and we looked at the enrollment of that and said, ‘We have a program — why did we create a program if there’s just one student that’s interested enough to declare it?’” Sams said two months ago during a Faculty Senate meeting.

According to an open records request from The Battalion, Sams's office began developing the process as early as June 20, 2023. That day, Dorsey emailed him spreadsheets listing enrollment numbers for various programs, including minors and certificates. Ten days later, he emailed Dorsey and Joseph Pettibon about the plan. Pettibon, the vice president for planning, assessment and strategy, is one of 19 senior leaders in [the president's cabinet](#).

“Confidentially, we are developing a set of thresholds for enrollment in all programs and if a program falls below that, they will have a year or two to improve before the program is closed,” Sams wrote in the June 30, 2023, email.

Several of the affected programs have zero student enrollments. Of the 53, an A&M spokesperson said there was an average of less than one student enrolled per certificate and roughly 1.2 students enrolled per minor.

[Infobox Explaining The Thresholds, [Found Here](#)]

By August 2023, Sams began collaborating with the Council of Deans, a group of A&M's 18 deans who each [lead a school or college](#). Timothy Powers, the provost's chief of staff, emailed Sams with enrollment spreadsheets ready for distribution to the deans on Aug. 23 last year. Powers noted the spreadsheets were "slightly off" because the numbers were pulled in July, a point he said shouldn't be shared with the deans.

The thresholds were created by a subcommittee on the council, and while the subcommittee's exact members remain unknown, a faculty source with firsthand knowledge confirmed it was led by Debbie Thomas, the chief academic officer of A&M at Galveston and dean of the College of Marine Sciences and Maritime Studies.

Sams discussed the inactivations with various deans throughout development, including in two memos sent to [Tim McLaughlin](#) and [Nate Sharp](#). With Sharp, the provost emphasized that the cuts were "agreed upon by the Council of Deans" and "discussed again" at a Sept. 4 Council of Deans meeting, of which both Sharp and McLaughlin are members.

Other statements noted that the initiative was discussed with various department heads and professors. Despite this, faculty were largely uninformed of the thresholds' implementation. During a sit-down interview with The Battalion, Welsh said the communication issues that led to the faculty's surprise are something he hopes to improve.

“So anywhere in the university where that is not happening, we have to strengthen it,” Welsh said. “That’s one focus area. And it’s not just from the provost’s office. It’s in the deans’ offices, the department heads’ offices. The Council of Deans was involved in this entire process. How were they communicating with the department heads and the faculty members and the directors of these programs that were actually on the chopping block or proposed for review to be put on the chopping block?”



Board of Regents Chairman Bill Mahomes speaks to President Mark Welsh III before the Board of Regents meeting on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. (Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

It’s unclear when the subcommittee finalized the thresholds. However, [one article](#), quoting an A&M spokesperson, wrote that the process was still under development as of Feb. 15. The same article quotes Rep. Brian Harrison, a Republican lawmaker and Class of 2004 graduate, who had begun a media blitz criticizing the LGBTQ studies minor in January. Harrison met with Sams over a Zoom call to discuss the program around that time.

“I asked them to discontinue this minor or provide to me in writing a justification for this minor to be continued,” Harrison said in the article earlier this year.

The lawmaker was joined by Rep. Chip Roy, who told the outlet that A&M needed to be “held accountable” for its “radical woke policies.” In a [Battalion article](#) published the following month, Harrison called the minor “liberal indoctrination” and a waste of taxpayer money, deriding Sams’ decision not to cut it.

When pushed about potential cost savings — the original argument for the eliminations — at one senate meeting, Sams said his office attempted but was unsuccessful in calculating a number due to the difficulty involved. Rather, the inactivations are “about focus” because the university aims to “do bigger and better things,” he said.

The cuts affected multiple colleges and disciplines, ranging from aerospace and chemical engineering to Asian studies.

In several appeals, programs made cases for why specific minors or certificates should have been excluded, such as corrosion science and engineering, which substitutes for professional certification in the industry, a necessity that saves students money.

The appeal for the environmental and engineering geology undergraduate certificate was denied despite seven fall 2024 enrollments, up from zero the year before. It became available for students in fall 2022 to accommodate the need for environmental geoscientists, one of the nation’s [fastest-growing job sectors](#).

By August and September, the cuts were largely finalized. The provost’s office set a final date of Sept. 20 for each to begin the inactivation process.

However, to the faculty unaware, the order was unprecedented. Historically, curriculum changes — including cuts and additions — originate exclusively at the faculty level. In the [Daily Caller's article](#) earlier this year, Sams told Harrison nothing could be done about the LGBTQ studies minor because no faculty had requested a change. Now, they were being ordered to cut it.

“The minor barely had a chance to establish itself,” said Sally Robinson, the graduate coordinator in the Women’s and Gender Studies program, or WGST. “We felt that if the argument was that our enrollment numbers were low, then we really weren’t given a chance to address that. Nobody in the provost’s office contacted any faculty members. Nobody contacted any students, as far as I know. This was something that was just presented to us as a done deal.”

A major faculty criticism revolves around the degradation of shared governance, the idea that faculty have a large say in university proceedings. Many programs facing elimination were new, and no opportunity was provided to increase enrollment. Others were still building foundations, such as the Asian studies minor, which was in the process of hiring faculty to teach classes that would hopefully revitalize the program.

The Battalion [first reported](#) the cuts on Sept. 26, spurring several articles from right-leaning outlets, including the [Texas Scorecard](#), [Campus Reform](#) and [the Daily Caller](#), all of which focused on the LGBTQ studies elimination and quoted Harrison, who had begun [falsely taking credit](#) for the inactivation.

That day, he posted on the social media platform X that he “was pleased to learn from Chancellor [John] Sharp they plan to end it” and that he was “proud to have helped deliver this victory for Texas taxpayers.” An A&M System spokesperson said Sharp relayed the inactivation to the lawmaker after he asked the chancellor about it following the initial story’s publication.

On the faculty side, opposition groups coalesced. When faced with the Sept. 20 deadline, WGST's director, Theresa Morris, refused to begin the elimination process in the online portal. Per A&M's Standard Administrative Procedures, the program director must approve the request for it to proceed.

So when an associate dean [entered the system and began the process despite her opposition](#), Morris gathered WGST's faculty to vote on it. Days later, 30 faculty members unanimously voted against inactivation. Morris subsequently left the LGBTQ studies minor pending in the portal, with its cut unable to move forward. Similar protests occurred in other departments. In the Department of Geology and Geophysics, documents reviewed by The Battalion showed 87.5% of faculty voted to keep the environmental and engineering certificate, and 62.5% voted to retain the petroleum geoscience certificate.

"The Department of Geology and Geophysics has bylaws for major changes to our curricula," a department representative wrote in the online portal for curriculum changes. "The process consists of discussion and vote of the Department Curriculum Committee, followed by discussion and vote of the full Faculty."

For the inactivations to succeed, they also must be approved by the Faculty Senate. But faced with the perceived threat to shared governance, senators began voicing their discontent with the process. Price, the senate's speaker, [called it](#) a "deeply flawed" process that "lacked meaningful input from many stakeholders."



Provost Alan Sams listens to questions from faculty during the Faculty Senate meeting in Rudder Tower on Monday, Oct. 14, 2024. (Jenna Isbell/The Battalion)

She requested that the current thresholds be “completely abandoned” in exchange for a revised process created with Faculty Senate involvement. At the senate meeting two weeks later, Sams, attending to gather feedback, [faced frustrated senators](#) who questioned him for almost two hours.

“You’ve been here for 37 years, and can you help me understand why faculty were explicitly left out of this curricular process?” one professor asked him. “You know that faculty are a part of that, sir. Why were we left out of this consultative process?” Others alleged political interference, connecting Harrison’s comments with the LGBTQ studies minor’s inactivation.

“How are we going to provide a counter-narrative to that and ensure other people who are not part of the shared governance are [not] taking credit for decisions?” another professor asked. “I’m also very concerned for our LGBTQ students and what message

this sends to them — that a state representative removed a minor that directly relates to their identity.”

Senators ended the meeting by voting to deny the analytics minor’s inactivation, the first provost-led cut to make it to the senate. Without the group’s approval, the eliminations — and the process — had essentially died.

Then the Board of Regents stepped in.

The 10-member board oversees the 11 universities under the A&M umbrella and directs the chancellor and university president. On Nov. 1, a draft resolution was uncovered and shared by faculty, and Price distributed it to senators with the message “alert your constituents as soon as possible.”

The resolution, if passed, directed Welsh to “take actions necessary to eliminate” the 52 minors and certificates that had been pending due to senate opposition.

Price and the Faculty Senate’s Executive Committee — its top leaders — decided to take emergency action days before the regents reviewed the resolution. Acting on behalf of the senate, they denied multiple provost-led cuts scheduled to be on the senate’s Nov. 11 agenda days in advance in case the regents attempted to “circumvent the Senate’s ability to vote on these items.”

“The [Executive Committee] is concerned that The Board of Regents may not be fully aware of the deeply flawed process and the ramifications of the Provost’s decisions,” Price wrote in a [Nov. 5 announcement](#) detailing the group’s actions. “We do not oppose the concept of a process, but we vehemently oppose the one that was implemented by the Provost with little consideration of the consequences.”

At the Nov. 7 meeting, dozens of students, staff and faculty attended to protest the resolution, with eight faculty members criticizing it during a public forum.

Allegations of political interference swirled, with one professor, Leonard Bright, stating that allowing “one political ideology group to tilt the educational scales will destroy this great institution of higher education.”

“The provost plan ignored long-standing institutional shared governance norms and bypassed existing curricular committees tasked with such matters in its development,” Andrew Klein, professor and senate speaker elect, said. “... Most importantly, it seems impossible to escape the conclusion that the entire scheme was engineered to target a specific, controversial minor with many of other programs simply caught as bycatch.”



Regent Robert L. Albritton sits during the Board of Regents meeting on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024.
(Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

The resolution also states that Welsh recommended the process be halted and overhauled with senate involvement, a note that drew applause when mentioned during the meeting.

“Is [thresholds for low-producing programs] under [Sams’s] authority as the chief academic officer of the university?” Welsh said during his interview with The Battalion. “Absolutely. Does he need somebody’s permission to build it? No. But I think he should have incorporated more people into the discussion of that because there’s a lot of detail that should go into it that the faculty needs to understand. And the Faculty Senate is the collective voice and representative body of the faculty. And that was the mistake.”

But the board disagreed. Regent Bob Albritton, the board’s vice chairman, said the group had a fiduciary responsibility to the A&M System and the state. However, his remarks included incorrect statements that drew jeers from the attending faculty.

“So you can sit and tell us that you’re going to fill these classes up, but all we have to do is look at data, which is the last five years of these classes,” Albritton said.

Minors and certificates — not classes — were impacted by the resolution, and the provost’s proposal used data from the last three years, not five.

Regent Michael Plank said that despite a “failure along the way to carry this fully through the Faculty Senate,” the board nonetheless believed sufficient faculty involvement had occurred.

“At the end of the day, we truly feel obligated to eliminate the waste,” Plank said. The board then unanimously approved the resolution.



Regent Michael J. Plank contemplates before the Board of Regents meeting in the Memorial Student Center on Thursday, Nov. 7, 2024. (Jackson Stanley/The Battalion)

The regents' involvement in the university's curriculum is largely unprecedented. Price told The Battalion she had seen nothing like it in her roughly 30 years at A&M. After the meeting, Morris, WGST's director, said the regents "ultimately decided not to listen to faculty concerns."

During his sit-down interview, Welsh emphasized the hierarchy at the university and the A&M System. He said his job is to be "clear and straightforward in [his] recommendations to them," but ultimately, the regents remain his superiors.

"We're executing the decision of the Board of Regents," Welsh said. "Their decision was very clear. Whether any individuals — me or anyone else here — agrees or disagrees with it, their decision is pretty clear. They absolutely have the authority to

make that decision if they choose to insert themselves into that discussion. And you would have to ask them why.”

On social media, the board’s action drew praise from Republican lawmakers statewide. Abbot [called it](#) “very good news,” and State Sen. Brandon Creighton, the chair of the Texas Senate’s higher education subcommittee, [said](#) “more bold reforms” are coming for universities.

State Sen. Paul Bettencourt [said in a now-deleted post](#) that the regents’ order was the correct move, and now that Texas’s anti-DEI bill is in effect, A&M has no basis for maintaining the programs, “much less a LGBTQ one.”

Days later, the Faculty Senate meeting saw senators facing a new reality.

“If the Board of Regents is now in charge of curricular instruction in the university, then what is the purpose of the faculty?” one professor asked.

Others shared similar complaints, such as Price, who emphasized that the process was “poorly planned” and “poorly developed.”

“We serve as a sounding board for the president on any initiatives for the university,” Price said at the meeting. “That is shared governance. ... The university’s foundation is its faculty. Therein lies the knowledge, the commitment to learning and the source of constructive progress in which the university rests.”

According to A&M’s curriculum change portal, dozens of programs have entered the final stages of inactivation. Usually, minors and certificates must undergo roughly 13 checks and approvals from various groups before the official elimination. After the memo was distributed, those checks, including Faculty Senate and provost approval,

were removed, down to two in some instances: review and approval from curricular services.

Harrison soon began criticizing various courses at A&M, such as WGST 333: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Literatures. On X, he claimed ending the minor was “just the start” and proposed reducing the budget of any university president’s office to zero if they allow “taxpayer-funded leftist propaganda on their campus.”

Yet at A&M, the costs saved remain unknown. In one senate meeting, one faculty member suggested that the time creating a minor — a few hours of work — amounted to a one-time cost of a few hundred dollars with no upkeep. Officially, the Board of Regents’ resolution was to save taxpayer funds. But some faculty said they doubt that. One well-known faculty member who requested anonymity to speak freely alleged the resolution was “politically motivated.”

After months of discord, the 52 minors and cuts have been eliminated at A&M. From Welsh’s perspective, the situation is over. But he said people who claim they’re losing trust because his administration isn’t listening to faculty are “not looking at facts, very clear facts.”

“I have made literally hundreds of decisions on various things that affect the campus, even on this one,” Welsh said. “In every single one of them, I believe I favored the faculty position. So people telling me that they lose trust because we’re not listening to the faculty don’t know what they’re talking about.”

Here's what to know as 15 A&M students lose legal status

The university noticed the first change on March 28

Nicholas Gutteridge, Editor-in-Chief
April 9, 2025



The seal of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is seen in Del Rio, Texas, U.S., September 19, 2021.
REUTERS/Marco Bello

The legal status of 15 Texas A&M international students has been changed in a government database as of Wednesday afternoon, [putting their ability to stay in the U.S.](#)

[into question](#). The number is increasing and stood at nine on Monday morning and 11 by Tuesday, with the university noticing the first change on March 28.

Of the 11 A&M students impacted as of Tuesday, eight are currently enrolled, and three have graduated and remained on a visa using one of several post-grad options available. Ten are graduate students, one is from the Galveston campus and the nine graduate students from College Station are split equally between the Colleges of Engineering, Arts & Sciences and Agriculture & Life Sciences.

In an email to faculty, staff and students sent Wednesday afternoon, Provost Alan Sams said A&M officials “do not have clarity on why these records are being terminated.”

Here’s what to know.

The federal government seems to be targeting international students with any semblance of a criminal record, no matter how small

In an email obtained by The Battalion, director of A&M’s International Student and Scholar Services, or ISSS, Samantha Clement said the government’s listed reason for the status changes was that the student was “identified in criminal records check and/or has had their VISA revoked.”

The Associated Press [also reported](#) that after three Aggies had their visas terminated, university officials who looked into the cases found that each “had long-resolved offenses on their records, including one with a speeding ticket.” A university official said the students had not committed any dangerous offenses known to the university.

In a State Department press conference Tuesday morning, spokesperson Tammy Bruce declined to share the criteria being used to target students but said it was being “applied appropriately.”

“We don’t discuss individual visas because of the privacy issues involved,” Bruce said. “We don’t go into statistics or numbers. We don’t go into the rationale for what happens with individual visas. What we can tell you is that the department revokes visas every day in order to secure our borders and to keep our community safe, and we’ll continue to do so.”

Other international students at multiple U.S. universities who have had their visas revoked have been involved in campus activism, largely pro-Palestine advocacy.

However, it remains unclear whether those affected at A&M had similar affiliations. [Axios reported](#) that more than 300 international students nationwide have had their visas revoked in recent weeks.

The federal government is not communicating or working with the university

Clement said the federal government was changing students’ legal status without notifying A&M or those impacted, forcing A&M to monitor students’ statuses throughout the day. When the university notices a discrepancy, officials get in contact with the student as quickly as possible to inform them of their options.

“This is an unprecedented situation being faced by nearly all U.S. institutions at the same time, so we are essentially figuring it out as we go along,” Clement wrote in the email.

If a student’s status is changed, they have options available

If a student is notified that their legal status was terminated, they are no longer allowed to work in the U.S. or re-enter if they leave the country. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents may also investigate to confirm that the student has departed, [according to the Department of Homeland Security](#).

Students and their dependents must either leave the U.S. upon notification or reapply for legal status, which would allow them to stay enrolled at A&M until a decision is made. In the email obtained by The Battalion, Clement said that one A&M international student had left the country as of Monday morning.

“Multiple students and attorneys are filing lawsuits,” Clement wrote. “Others are recommending students file reinstatement applications with [United States Citizenship and Immigration Services]. ISSS will support students with their preferred option.”

A&M has noted an increase in scam attempts toward international students

Clement noted that her department is seeing an increase in “scam attempts” targeting international students alongside an increase in “anonymous individuals submitting reports to ISSS about the allegedly unlawful activities of others who happen to be international students or scholars.”

ISSS has also been notified that several international students have received an email from the U.S. Consulate that issued their visa “indicating that it has been revoked, and they may be subject to deportation proceedings.” However, as of Tuesday afternoon, those students’ legal statuses haven’t been changed. ISSS is reaching out to support those students as well.

ISSS is monitoring changes that may impact students sponsored through the Fulbright Program

Beyond the legal status reversals, ISSS is also monitoring policy changes affecting international students sponsored through the Fulbright Program, a government exchange program for graduates seeking a master’s or doctoral degree in the U.S.

Because the Institute for International Education, or IIE, which helps manage Fulbright students, is no longer processing post-graduation academic training, it has raised concern

among those close to graduating and already working about their next steps, as IIE won't process work authorization extensions. IIE is posting the latest updates [here](#).

Here's what the university is doing in response

Last week, ISSS [launched a new webpage for immigration policy updates](#), and the department is developing an internal process for adding and maintaining its content. ISSS is also emailing important information to those who may be impacted, including updates about maintaining legal status and scam attempt warnings.

Clement noted that ISSS is also coordinating with other campus units to schedule and promote Q&A and support sessions for international students and scholars. They're also coordinating with the Office of General Counsel and the University Police Department to "develop a policy for agency inquiries, such as what to do if ICE visits campus."

ISSS is also developing internal procedures for managing the increasing number of ICE-initiated legal status terminations.