

TACRAO NEWS

FALL 2025

**From Value to Venue: Why
El Paso Is the Place to Be!**

**Autumn Updates:
Scholarships,
Committees, & Connections**

**Find Your People, Share
Your Voice**

**Behind the Numbers:
Audit Prep & Address
Reminder**

**Conference Countdown:
Prep, Profiles, & the App
You'll Love**

**Ready to Learn:
Sessions That
Shape Our
Future**

**El Paso Review:
Inside the Records &
Registration Lineup**

**Connection is Key:
TCCNS, Listserv, & El
Paso Fun**

**Regional
News**



TACRAO NEWS is a publication of the Texas Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers.

©2025. All rights reserved.

Message from the President

Reed's Ramblings

Howdy All,

As we find ourselves neck-deep in the fall semester, I hope things on your campuses are running smoothly and that you're able to grab breaths of air here and there!

If you haven't already, it is time to register for the TACRAO Annual Conference in El Paso! One of the important conversations we have as an Executive Committee in each of our meetings is how we can continue to provide a conference of our scope while maintaining the value proposition. We are truly fortunate that due to the size of our organization, we are able to put on a conference that rivals most national conferences in both size and scope while remaining affordable.

In addition to our commitment to identifying financially accessible locations, our annual conference registration fee is half the cost of NACAC, roughly a third of what you could expect to pay at the AACRAO Annual Meeting, and a quarter of the cost to attend AACRAO SEM. These are all great options, but we provide a similarly broad slate of sections, many covered meals, and "extra-curricular" experiences (seriously, the ballpark is going to be epic!) that are top notch while maintaining the budget friendly price tag of a regional meeting! In today's budget conscious higher education space, there really isn't a better value out there.

We've got three conference hotel options available to you at varying price points that will all fill soon so be sure to get your trip booked ASAP! Every one of these is within a few moments' walk to the Convention Center so there will be no need for rental cars or shuttles!

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in November and seeing all of us take part in the privileges of being a TACRAO member!

Chris Reed

TACRAO President



Chris Reed
President

Texas A&M University





As we gear up for TACRAO 2025, we want to make sure you're in the loop for all the exciting updates and events we have planned. To stay connected and informed, be sure to follow us on social media!



Instagram ([tacrao_tx1916](https://www.instagram.com/tacrao_tx1916)) and
Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/TACRAO>)

By following us, you'll get real-time updates on all the fun

and informative activities we have lined up, including:

- 🎤 🎸 **TACRAO 2025: Monday Night at La Nube:** Get ready for a night of fun, friendly competition, and unforgettable vibes at La Nube! We're bringing the heat with **Battle of the Regions** and turning up the volume with karaoke. Network, sing your heart out, and rep your region with pride.
- 😊 **Conference Justification:** Struggling to convince your boss to let you go to TACRAO? We've got your back! Head to our website and grab a ready-to-use template that makes the case for you. Easy, quick, and super convincing. Click [here](#) to get it!
- 🏨 **Stay Close to the Action at TACRAO 2025:** We've got you covered with top hotel options just steps from the El Paso Convention Center. Book your room!!
- 🏃 🧑 🏃 🏃 **Ready to do the FUN RUN?** Join us for the TACRAO Fun Run at Southwest University Park—home of the El Paso Chihuahuas and Locomotive FC! You'll loop the ballpark 12.5 times to complete a 5K, surrounded by skyline views, stadium lights, and cheering colleagues.
- 🌟 **Giving Back at TACRAO 2025:** We're proud to support the El Paso Center for Children—serving youth and families since 1919. Join us in Expanding Our Horizons through compassion and community impact. Click [here](#) to start donating. Don't forget to include your region in the comments to be included as part of **the Battle of the Regions!**
- 🚀 **TACRAO 2025 President's Dinner Keynote Speaker Announcement!** We're honored to welcome Ginger Kerrick—a trailblazer in space exploration and STEM advocacy. Don't miss her powerful story at the President's Dinner.
- 🎓 **Strategic Enrollment Management Workshop at TACRAO 2025:** Join us in El Paso for an exclusive professional development opportunity led by Dr. Luisa Havens Gerardo, VP for Enrollment Management at UT Arlington.

We can't wait to see you in El Paso for TACRAO 2025. Sign up now for the conference [here](#)

Cassandra and Georgina LAC 2025

Lori's Launchpad



Lori Zerr
President-Elect
University of Texas Health Science
Center at Houston

Happy Fall from Houston, y'all!

Technically it's Fall—but it sure doesn't feel like it yet! I hope this message finds you well, settled into the semester and in the rhythm of the recruiting cycle.

General Scholarship winners

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I'm thrilled to congratulate the recipients of the 2025 TACRAO General Scholarship!

Jordan Baylor, The University of Texas at San Antonio

Hector Cerda Dyer, South Texas College

Ashley Mason, University of North Texas

Hannah McDonald, Texas A&M University-Central Texas

Colleen Moore, Vernon College

Each award, valued at up to \$1,000, is designed to support conference-related expenses. It encourages professional growth through active participation in TACRAO and attendance at the Annual Conference in El Paso. Give them a fist bump when you see them at the Conference – they've earned it!

Committee members

Over the past few months, I've been busy filling 2025–2026 committee positions, both [Standing and Session Planning](#). I'm truly grateful to those of you who answered with a resounding yes when I asked you to serve—thank you!! While most committees are now complete, a few opportunities remain. If you're interested, if you'd like to recommend a colleague, or if you're not sure and would like to discuss, please email me at president.elect@tacrao.org.

Standing

Resolutions

Summer Meeting (four-year school rep)

Technology

TCCNS (1 two-year school rep and 1 four-year public school rep)

Session Planning

Student Access and Opportunity (2 members)

I'm excited to see you all in El Paso!

Lori Zerr

TACRAO President-Elect

Lori' Launchpad (Part II): New Name, Same Mission—Student Access & Opportunity



As a reminder, the TACRAO Executive Committee voted to change the name of the Access and Equity Session Planning Committee to the Student Access and Opportunity Committee. This change comes after careful consideration of the complexities our institutions face in today's rapidly changing higher education landscape. Following consultation with legal experts, we determined this update ensures our organization remains in compliance with evolving state and federal guidance, while keeping our commitment to delivering meaningful, student-focused programming at the heart of our work.

*The **Student Access and Opportunity Committee** will continue to develop sessions that explore how individuals and institutions create and expand pathways to growth, development, and success in education, careers, and leadership.*

Examples of sessions might include:

- ⇒ *Building Pathways from High School to College*
- ⇒ *Increasing First-Generation Student Enrollment*
- ⇒ *Expanding Opportunities for Rural Communities*
- ⇒ *Supporting Students with Disabilities through Resources and Advocacy*
- ⇒ *Implementing Early Intervention Strategies to Improve Student Outcomes*

Lori Zerr

President-Elect

*University of Texas Health Science
Center at Houston*

Congratulations

Newly elected Executive Committee Officers and Nominations & Elections Committee Members

TACRAO is proud to announce the election of our newest leaders who will guide the Association in the coming year. These individuals have demonstrated outstanding commitment to TACRAO and the higher education community in Texas. We're excited to welcome them into their new roles and look forward to the fresh perspectives and energy they will bring!



Andi Scott—Buncik
Vice President for Admissions
University of Texas Rio Grande Valley



Scott Branum
President-Elect
Galveston College



Tiffany Lipscomb
Secretary
University of North Texas

We'd also like to announce the election of the Nominations Committee members for the 2025-2026 year:

Chair: Rene Zamora, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Chair-Elect: Cyndi Klausmeyer, Blinn College

Casey Martinez, Texas State University

Ashley Fleeks, North Central Texas College

Alejandra Holt, Texas A&M University-San Antonio

Alternate A: Noah Murray, The University of Texas at San Antonio

Alternate B: Ashley Mason, University of North Texas

Thank you to all TACRAO members who participated in this year's elections—your engagement truly makes a difference! We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to the 2024–2025 Nominations Committee for their outstanding work in presenting a strong slate of candidates and ensuring a smooth election process: Chair Samantha Taylor, Chair-Elect Rene Zamora, Anne Delgado, Hannah McDonald, and Latoya Whitaker.

Past President Post



Bobbie Brown
Past President
Texas Tech University

We will be attending TACRAO 2025 in El Paso before we know it!

I want to take this opportunity to invite you to attend important member meetings at this year's conference. Please mark your schedule to attend the following:

Town Hall: Monday, November 10th from 3:50 – 5:00PM. This is your opportunity to hear updates from the TACRAO executive committee. Also discussed is proposed changes to the constitution, bylaws, and/or procedures.

Business Meeting: Tuesday, November 11th from 3:45-4:35PM. The business meeting asks members to vote on important items discussed during Town Hall (any change to the constitution and/or bylaws – procedure changes are for information only).

Please join us as TACRAO members are the life blood of our organization. We want to hear from you, and these two meetings are an excellent way to voice your thoughts and ideas.

In closing, it has been an exemplary honor to serve TACRAO the past three years as President-Elect, President, and now Past-President. TACRAO and its members have been near and dear to my heart for more than 25 years. If you see me in El Paso, stop and talk! If you're new, that's okay. I can help you find your people. And I just like to talk!

After all, that is what TACRAO is all about... finding your people, sharing ideas, and leading our great organization on to bigger and better!

Jason's Jottings

Jason Hale
Vice President for Admissions
Texas Tech University



As the higher education landscape continues to evolve, this year's conference sessions provide timely insights and practical strategies for admissions and enrollment leaders. Below are several standout sessions that directly address the most pressing issues we face today.

Sessions to Watch

- **Hot Topics: AI Implementation in the Admissions Process** Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming admissions—from transcript evaluation to personalized communication. This session will provide practical applications and ethical considerations as institutions balance efficiency with equity.
- **Dollars In, Barriers Down: Reshaping Advising and Student Support Services amidst a New Funding Landscape** With shifting state funding models, institutions are rethinking advising and student support. This session will explore innovative ways to remove barriers while aligning with new accountability expectations.
- **Dual Credit Programs: At the Intersection of Innovation & Opportunity** Dual credit programs continue to expand pathways for students while posing challenges in consistency and rigor. This session highlights best practices to maximize access and ensure smooth transitions from high school to college.
- **One Stop Shop to Student Re-Engagement** Re-engaging students who pause or delay their education is critical to enrollment recovery. This session will examine holistic approaches institutions are using to reconnect students and guide them back to degree completion.
- **Cultivating Belonging, Expanding Our Success** Today's students want more than admission—they want to feel seen and supported. This session will focus on strategies to cultivate belonging on campus, a key factor in both recruitment and retention.
- **Beyond the Visit: How Strategic Relationships Fuel Recruitment Success** Campus visits are essential, but strategic partnerships with schools, communities, and organizations can have an even greater impact. This session will share models that extend recruitment beyond campus boundaries.

Don't Miss This Year's Conference

With sessions that address funding shifts, AI, belonging, and student success, paired with Ginger Kerrick Davis's powerful keynote, this year's program is one you will not want to miss. Be sure to [REGISTER TODAY](#) and secure your place at what promises to be one of our most impactful conferences yet.

Jason Hale
Vice President for Admissions

Keynote Highlight:

Ginger Kerrick Davis



We are honored to welcome **Ginger Kerrick Davis** as our keynote speaker. Currently, the Chief Strategy Officer for Barrios Technology, Ginger's career includes over 30 years of groundbreaking service at NASA's Johnson Space Center. She made history as the **first female Hispanic Flight Director** and has held leadership roles including Deputy Director of Exploration Integration and Science and JSC Assistant Center Director for Vision and Strategy.

A proud Texas Tech alumna, Ginger has been recognized in the **Texas Women's Hall of Fame** and served as Vice Chair of the **Texas Tech University System Board of Regents**. Her inspiring story of resilience, innovation, and leadership will set the tone for our conference and energize us as we face the future of higher education together. Ginger is also excited to be in El Paso, where she grew up and still has family who live there.



Kristin's Korner



*Kristin McDonald-Willey
Vice President for Records
& Retention
Amarillo College*

TACRAO El Paso Conference Update: Records and Registration Sessions Are Shaping Up!

As we finalize the session lineup for this year's TACRAO El Paso Conference, I'm thrilled to see such a strong slate of timely, relevant topics led by a great group of passionate and knowledgeable professionals from across our community.

Records & Registration Tracks – Session Highlights

Here's just a glimpse of what you can expect:

TACRAO Partner Sessions

We're excited to welcome back our colleagues from AACRAO and the THECB, who will present on critical updates and best practices covering topics such as FERPA, FAST, TSI, and more!

Sample Topics from our TACRAO Members

Compliance-Focused

- VA Audits/Compliance
- FAST Compliance
- Supporting Undocumented Students
- Title IX

Completion-Focused

- Creative approaches (e.g. using graduation fairs to boost completion)

Technical-Focused

- User Group sessions
- How Tos on Tools such as SharePoint
- Training staff in technical writing; tips on creating effective procedure manuals

Growth-Focused

- Sessions focused on **growing your staff—and yourself**

Interactive Opportunities: Roundtables, Panels, & Hot Topics

- The Spring Executive Order
- Supporting Pregnant & Parenting Students
- And much more!

Where Are We in the Session Confirmation Process?

If you submitted a session proposal—**thank you!** By **September 15**, all submitters should have received an email update indicating if their session was: **Selected, Approved as an Alternate, or Not Selected.**

If you submitted a session **before 9/15** and have not received a status update, please email me at **vp.records@tacrao.org**, and I'll investigate.

Still have a great session idea? While the official proposal window is closed for this year, we're happy to keep strong ideas at an **alternate status** for this year (i.e. could be considered in the case of cancellations)—or ensure we consider them for **next year's Houston conference**. Reach out!

Thank you again for the part you play in this incredible community. I look forward to seeing many of you in El Paso!

Kristin McDonald-Willey

Vice President for Records and Registration



Jodie Rexroat

Vice President of Technology
Southern Methodist University

Rexroat's Rhetoric



It's that time of year again, cooler temperatures (notice I didn't say cool or cold-just cooler), pumpkin spice *everything* **and** time to make sure your TCCNS contacts are up to date. Why is this so important? In just its first year, our re-vamped TCCNS website has seen **160,997 unique visitors** with over **45,000** of them visiting more than once. Folks are using it! Make sure they know how to reach out to your institution. If you aren't certain who your school contacts are you can go to <https://tcns.org/contacts/> and select your school. If you have any access issues or questions, please email tcns@tacrao.org.

If you are new to higher education or just new to TACRAO, don't forget to subscribe to the TACRAO listserv! It is an essential lifeline to your colleagues around the state for those questions or issues that you need assistance with or a different perspective on, before you tackle it. I promise you it is a safe whether your conundrum is big or small. **Everyone repeat with me, "We listen, and we don't judge"** because at one time or another we have all been there! Want to see what it is all about? Just head over to the TACRAO website at tacrao.org. Click on the Membership header and then select TACRAO Listserv from the dropdown menu. You will find the link to the listserv subscription page.

Make sure you register for the Annual Conference in El Paso- so many unique experiences are waiting to be had! Our Battle of the Regions will take place at La Nube an interactive museum whose name is the Spanish word for "cloud" which reflects its theme of limitless possibilities and imagination. Who else can boast a giant, 20-foot-tall flushable toilet that guests can flush, which sends water and play balls into a water table below? And don't forget our Big Event at Southwest University Ballpark, home of the El Paso Chihuahuas - pack your favorite ballpark attire and dance the night away with Fungi Mungle.

Register now for the early bird rate!

Jodie Rexroat

Vice President of Technology



Kate's Currency



Greetings, TACRAO!

I trust that the Fall 2025 semester is off to a great start for everyone. The LAC for 2025 is hard at work finalizing details for our up-coming conference in El Paso, so make sure you've made plans to attend!

When you register, you'll have the option to pay online during the registration process or log into your TACRAO account later to complete payment. If you prefer to mail a check, please note our new mailing address:

TACRAO
4400 State Hwy 121 Suite 300 #1225
Lewisville, TX 75056

Behind the scenes, I've been busy organizing and preparing materials for the upcoming annual audit. This process ensures that TACRAO continues to operate with transparency and fiscal responsibility – thank you for your continued trust and support as we maintain strong financial practices for our organization.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at tacrao.treasurer@tacrao.org regarding the organization's finances or with any questions you may have.

I am looking forward to seeing you all in El Paso – and I hope to catch up with many of you at the Big Event at the Ballpark! It's always great to connect outside of sessions and enjoy some TACRAO fun together.

Safe travels!

Kate Richardson
Treasurer

Kate Richardson
Treasurer

North Central Texas College

Beal's Blabber

Hello TACRAO Members,

The countdown to the TACRAO Annual Conference is on, and we can't wait to see you in El Paso! As you start prepping for an energizing week of professional development and collaboration, we've got just a couple of things to help you hit the ground running:

Update Your TACRAO Profile

Take a few moments to log in to your TACRAO account at www.TACRAO.org and make sure your profile is up to date. This helps us:

- Make sure you receive the right communications,
 - Ensure you have access to systems like Day/Night Schedule registration (if needed), and
- Keep your contact info current for all those networking moments during the conference!

Download the Conference App (Coming Soon!)

This year's conference app will be hosted on **Guidebook** and will include the full schedule, session descriptions, maps, speaker bios, and more! We'll be announcing when the app is ready for download soon, so keep an eye on your inbox and TACRAO social channels.

Using the app will make navigating the conference easy-peasy, and it's a great way to customize your experience ahead of time. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me directly at secretary@tacrao.org.

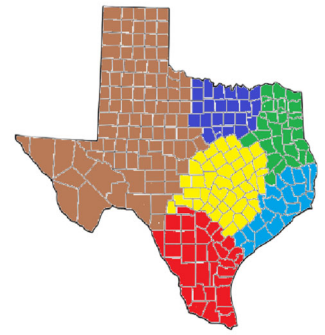
See you soon in El Paso!

Jennifer Beal
Secretary



Jennifer Beal
Secretary
North Central Texas College

REGIONAL NEWS



WEST TEXAS

West Texas A&M University Updates

Expands Educators Excellence Initiative

West Texas A&M University (WT) is proud to announce the expansion of the WT Educators Excellence Initiative (WT EEI), which offers a 50-percent tuition and mandatory fee reduction for eligible educators in the Texas Panhandle Region 16 Education Service Center area. Starting with the spring 2026 courses, WT is extending the EEI to include Region 17 and Region 18 Education Service Center Areas, as well as all A and AA school districts across the State of Texas. This initiative represents an extraordinary investment in the future of the region's schools, demonstrating WT's commitment to serving the Panhandle and Texas. By empowering educators to bring innovation, leadership, and fresh perspectives back to their classrooms and districts, WT is redefining and shaping educational excellence for the entire region.



Odessa College Updates

- **Pearl Jimenez** started as the Registrar on August 1st, 2024.
- **Mikayla Condra** is the Assistant Registrar for Odessa College, having started on March 3, 2025.
- **Mireya Jacuinde** is the Associate Vice President of Student Services & Enrollment Management, having started on October 1st, 2024.

NORTH TEXAS



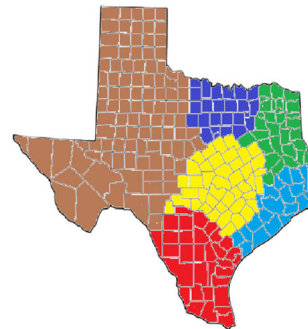
UNT Health Science Center:

The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth will now use [UNT Health Fort Worth](#) for its brand name and logo, a change that reflects the strength of the UNT System and the institution's mission to create solutions for a healthier community.

The change highlights the institution's Fort Worth roots while showing its continued commitment to educating the next generation of health leaders, delivering hands-on care through health clinics and advancing world-class health research that extends far beyond Texas.

We are excited to also share that **Dr. Kirk A. Calhoun** is the new, official president of UNT Health Fort Worth, appointed by the UNT System Board of Regents on August 14, 2025. Calhoun had been serving as interim president of the institution since February 2025.

REGIONAL NEWS



EAST TEXAS



Stephen F. Austin State University

- The Registrar's Office is launching a new degree audit system, Degree Works, which is set to go live this semester.
- SFA recently honored Donna Burkett, Associate Registrar, who retired after 30 years of valued service at SFA.



Panola College

- Panola College is implementing a new SIS (Jenzabar One) and should be live by April 1.
- Our Admissions and Records Office went through a split this summer. Jody Harris now serves as Registrar and Jamie Reed has been hired as Director of Admissions.



SOUTHEAST TEXAS



Texas Southern University

Mrs. Kellynn Wilson-Langley, Associate Dean of Student Records and Compliance, has successfully defended her dissertation with the University of Houston.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Wilson-Langley on this outstanding achievement.

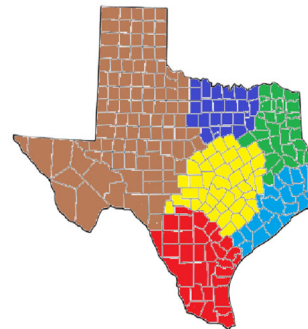
Alvin Community College

- Julyssa Marroquin has recently been hired as an Articulation Specialist.



REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTH TEXAS



Texas A&M University-Victoria

I wanted to share an important update regarding our institution. Effective September 1, 2025, our governance transitioned from the University of Houston System to the Texas A&M University System. With this change, our institution's name also changed from the **University of Houston-Victoria** to **Texas A&M University-Victoria**.

For more details, here are links to official announcements on our website:

<https://news.tamus.edu/texas-amvictoria-officially-joins-the-texas-am-university-system/>

<https://www.tamuv.edu/tamuv-questions/>.



University of Texas—San Antonio

- Clarisa De La Fuente promoted to Assistant Director for Transfer Recruitment.
- Jason Galvan promoted to Admissions Counselor II



UTSA and UT Health San Antonio have merged to become The University of Texas at San Antonio (UT San Antonio) and now ranks as the third-largest public research university in Texas (more info can be found here: <https://news.utsa.edu/2025/09/utsa-and-ut-health-san-antonio-complete-merger-to-become-the-university-of-texas-at-san-antonio/>)



Texas A&M University—Kingsville

- Dr. Cheri Shipman has been appointed Registrar for Texas A&M-Kingsville. Congratulations Dr. Shipman on your new position!
- Raul Cavazos was promoted to Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Financial Aid. Congratulations!

2024-2025 Communications Committee

**Chair, Newsletter, &
Southeast Texas Editor**

Madelyne Tolliver Victoria College

**madelyne.tolliver@
victoriacollege.edu**

Central Texas Editor

**Eric Poch The University of
Texas at Austin**

eric.pouch@austin.utexas.edu

East Texas Editor

**Mickey Diez Stephen F. Austin
University**

mickey.diez@sfasu.edu

North Texas Editor

**Anam Iqbal Southern Methodist Uni-
versity**

ajiqbal@smu.edu

South Texas Editor

**Maggie Cano Texas A&M University –
Kingsville**

maggie.cano@tamuk.edu

West Texas Editor

**Georgina Antillon The University of
Texas at El Paso**

gantillon@utep.edu

