

Complete and submit this form, along with any supplemental documentation, to the Office of the President by 5:00pm on the seventh day prior to the Board meeting.

Date of Board Meeting: June 18, 2024

Subject:

Recommend approval of a RESOLUTION in response to the "Executive Order By The Governor Of The State Of Texas: Executive Order GA 44".

Recommendation:

Recommend approval of a RESOLUTION in response to the "Executive Order By The Governor Of The State Of Texas: Executive Order GA 44".

Background and Rationale:

Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued an Executive Order on March 27, 2024 directing *"all Texas higher education institutions to do the following:*

- 1. Review and update free speech policies to address the sharp rise in antisemitic speech and acts on university campuses and establish appropriate punishments, including expulsion from the institution.*
- 2. Ensure that these policies are being enforced on campuses and that groups such as the Palestine Solidarity Committee and Students for Justice in Palestine are disciplined for violating these policies.*
- 3. Include the definition of antisemitism, adopted by the State of Texas in Section 448.001 of the Texas Government Code, in university free speech policies to guide university personnel and students on what constitutes antisemitic speech.*

Within 90 days of this executive order, the chair of the board of regents for each Texas public university system shall report to the Office of the Governor, Budget and Policy Division, that the above actions were taken by each institution of higher education overseen by that board of regents."

Initial information from both the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) and from Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) indicated that this executive order excluded Texas' community colleges due to the use of the word "university" throughout the Executive Order. The Governor's Office ultimately reached out to The Higher Education Coordinating Board to inform that office that the Governor did consider Texas' community colleges to be included in this executive order.

In order to comply with the Executive Order, college administration conducted reviews of this institution's policies and administrative procedures and crafted a new administrative procedure to address the concerns raised in the Executive Order.



This RESOLUTION seeks to address the reporting requirement stipulated in GA 44 to the Governor’s Office. The RESOLUTION was drafted by college administration in conjunction with the college’s attorney.

Cost and Budgetary Support:

Any legal fees generated for the review of this initiative by the college’s attorney, Melissa Mihalick.

Strategic Priority Alignment:

- Student Success
- Resource Optimization
- Community Impact
- Institutional Excellence

Resource Person(s):

Betty McCrohan, President
Kay Shoppa, Legislative Assistant to the President

Signatures:

Kay Shoppa
Originator

6-10-24
Date

Betty McCrohan
Cabinet-Level Supervisor

6-10-24
Date

President’s Approval:

Betty McCrohan
President

6-10-24
Date

RESOLUTION

- Whereas, on March 27, 2024 the Governor of the State of Texas, Greg Abbott, issued Executive Order GA 44 relating to addressing acts of antisemitism in institutions of higher education; and
- Whereas, this Executive Order directed all Texas higher education institutions to review and update free speech policies; and
- Whereas, this Executive Order directed all Texas higher education institutions to ensure that these policies are being enforced on campuses; and
- Whereas, this Executive Order directed all Texas higher education institutions to include the definition of antisemitism, adopted by the State of Texas in Section 448.001 of the Texas Government Code, in university free speech policies to guide university personnel and students on what constitutes anti-Semitic speech; and
- Whereas, this Executive Order directed all Texas higher education institutions to report to the Office of the Governor, Budget and Policy Division, that the above actions were taken; now
- Therefore, be it known to all present, that the Board of the Wharton County Junior College on the 18th day of June, 2024 certifies that college administration has reviewed the college's policies on free speech, will continue to enforce these policies consistent with applicable state and federal law, and has incorporated the definition of antisemitism into appropriate policies of the college and hereby adopts this RESOLUTION.

EXECUTED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Board Chair