

tyca

southwest

NEWSLETTER OF THE TWO-YEAR COLLEGE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION - SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

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***Back by popular demand!
Because the TYCA-SW
Conference in Galveston was
so successful last year--
we've decided to return
there again in October.
See details on pg. 4.***



AN ENGLISH TEACHER'S REFLECTIONS

BY JOAN MATHIS

Initially thinking about serving as the TYCA-SW Chair made me very nervous; nervous or not I am now in the position! One thing I have learned, however, is that I needn't have worried; thanks to the TYCA Board members and previous Chairs, I am enjoying this position because of their generous support. For example, several months ago Michael Gos emailed me the duties of the Chair and a list of instructions and deadlines. And, when I was asked to write this article for the TYCA-SW newsletter I was assured that all I had to do was introduce myself and reflect on being an English teacher. What a relief; I could do that in my sleep!

As a veteran teacher, my basic philosophy has always been to create within students a desire to discover their individual talents and academic strengths. Likewise, I have attempted to discover the most effective teaching strategies. Such an attempt has resulted in this belief: my students have taught me more than I could have ever taught them.

One valuable lesson my students have taught me is never to predict a



student's future. A seventh grader in the first class I taught sat in the back of the classroom, rarely contributing to the class discussions. Remembering his shyness and reluctance to read aloud or express his opinion about a literary work, I was surprised when I learned fifteen years later that he had been selected as the senior pastor of Hamilton United Methodist Church in Dallas, Texas.

Another valuable lesson I have learned in the classroom is that teachers can powerfully impact the lives of their students. I was attending a summer league baseball game when a young lady, a former student whose name I could not remember,

Cont. pg. 2

thanked me for encouraging her to continue her education: "I would not have completed my college degree if you had not encouraged me. When I was on the verge of giving up, I stopped by your office, and you said, 'Hang in there and don't quit.'" Honestly, I could not remember this conversation, but her words caused me to reflect on the significant impact (positive or negative!) I may have on my students.

The longer I teach the more I espouse Marvin Collins' philosophy of teaching. She was convinced that teachers' high academic expectations of their students definitely enhance their academic performance. She did not allow a student's upbringing to influence her expectation of them. She purposely avoided knowing whether they lived in two-parent homes or whether their parents were incarcerated or leading citizens. She wanted students without labels. I, too, desire

to encourage all students enrolled in my class to discover and reach their highest potential through studying and analyzing literature. For example, I like to think that Eudora Welty's "A

Worn Path" encourages my students to set goals and become "bound and determined" to reach them, as Aunt Phenix was bound and determined to complete her annual trip to Natchez, Mississippi, to receive the bottle of charity medicine for her bedridden grandson. The long distance, the risk of attacks by ferocious dogs,

and the tedious crossing of the creek did not dampen her spirit or her resolve to bring life to her grandson. "Bringing life" to my students is my utmost goal for what I have loved — teaching.

Do you want to "bring to life" your students? Then plan to attend the 2006 TYCA conference in Galveston, Texas. We will celebrate again this year at the same place, Galveston. Please plan early to attend.



TYCA-SW CONFERENCE 2005





CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Proposal Deadline: June 15, 2006

**Please send proposals to:
Dr. David Lydic,
Austin Community College
Rio Grande Campus,
1212 Rio Grande, Austin, TX, 78701.**

The Two-Year College English Association—Southwest (TYCA-SW) is now accepting proposals for presentations at its annual conference October 26-28, 2006 on Galveston Island. We are interested in topics on teaching composition, literature, and Humanities and topics on English Department administration. The conference also has a creative writing strand and welcomes submissions of original poetry, fiction, and creative non-fiction.

TYCA-SW strongly encourages submissions from young scholars and graduate students.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- Presenters must be members of TYCA-SW
- Proposals should not exceed 250 words
- Please include a 50-word abstract to be published in the conference program.
- Please indicate the amount of time you will need.
- Presentations should take from 20 minutes to one hour. Sessions will be one hour, 15 minutes and will include from 1 – 3 presenters.
- Please indicate whether you need any of the following equipment:
 overhead projector
 microphone
 flipchart/markers
 Internet connection

(Our apologies. TYCA cannot provide computers and projectors)

- Send **three** copies of your proposal.
- Please have your last name on each page of the submission.
- Staple together all pages of submission.
- For discussion groups, panels, and workshops, provide a detailed outline of activities planned.
- For creative writing, submit completed selections for juried sessions.
- Please include contact information on the cover page of each copy of your submission.



SUBMISSION FORM:

NAME: _____

EMAIL: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

COLLEGE: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

TEACHING AREA(S): _____

TITLE OF PRESENTATION: _____

CO-PRESENTER(S) IF ANY: _____

2006 TYCA - SOUTHWEST ANNUAL CONFERENCE

CONFERENCE THEME

*“Message in a Bottle—or Berry or Palm or Pod:
Composition in the New Millennium.”*



THE TYCA 2006 CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Print out and mail registration form to address listed below

NAME _____
COLLEGE _____
COLLEGE ADDRESS _____
COLLEGE PHONE _____
HOME ADDRESS _____
HOME PHONE _____
E-MAIL _____

Make checks payable to TYCA-SW

- c \$95 Registration Fee
- c \$45 Saturday Only Registration Fee

***NOTE:** Registration fee includes meals but does not include TYCA membership. All presenters must be TYCA-SW members & register for the conference. TYCA Membership Registration form is on page 10.*

Please check if you are

- c Running for a TYCA-SW office
- c Interested in presiding at a session

Please check the appropriate items above and send registration to:

Michael Gos at Lee College, P O Box 818, Baytown, TX 77522; Contact Info.: 281-425-6809; mgos@lee.edu

DON'T AVOID TEMPTATION, GET BACK HERE NEXT FALL

Who was it?—Mae West, I believe—that said, “too much of a good thing can be wonderful!” With that thought in mind, at the TYCA-Southwest mid-year meeting the Leadership Roster voted to return the annual conference to Galveston for an encore performance this coming October 26-28. Plans are underway to surpass last year’s conference registered attendance of 142.

This year’s theme will be “Message in a Bottle—or Berry or Palm or Pod: Composition in the New Millennium.” The ways our students compose—and in some cases now the ways they grew up composing text—are varied and numerous. Teachers of writing have barely had time to consider the implications of these ways our students compose and write. (“Pen? What’s a pen? I think I saw one at my grandma’s once.”) Or to note just one difference, I’m not even “that old,” yet when I was a teen the thought of my words reaching a million readers was inconceivable. The only way to reach a million readers was to get published in an outlet controlled by some form of mass media such as a newspaper, magazine, or book publishing company. It took time. And there were editors and proofreaders to help along the way.

Now anyone’s words or images can be forwarded and spammed to a million readers. Or posted on MySpace.com and get a million hits. Or just float around the net for years. In the song “Message in a Bottle” by the Police, a marooned-on-an-island (not Galveston) pre-Blackberry Sting sings, “I’ll send an s.o.s. to the world.” And by the last verse he sings, “Walked out this morning / don’t believe what I saw/ a hundred billion bottles / washed up on the shore / seems I’m not alone at being alone/hundred billion castaways looking for

a home.” A hundred billion—you know, it might not be that far fetched!

So what does any of this mean for the teaching of writing? I don’t know. In fact, I don’t have the slightest idea.

Which strikes me as a pretty darned good reason for having a conference, wouldn’t you say? So please come to Galveston Island this fall for the annual TYCA-Southwest Conference to share your thoughts.

The Victorian Condo-Hotel and Resort, benefiting from its new affiliation with Hawthorn Suites, is thrilled to again play host. We are thrilled to again have their affordable \$99 per night rate. Their staff was possibly the most accommodating staff we have ever had at a conference. The grounds were lovely. And with the seawall right across the street, we hope you’ll have the chance to stroll so as to work off the calories you’ll take in feasting on fresh seafood or Texas bar-b-que.

If you’re anxious to visit Galveston online before then, there are live camera shots at <http://www.galveston.com/webcams/>. And remember those other words of Mae West, “I generally avoid temptation unless I can’t resist it.” We’ll see you in Galveston this fall. We can’t resist hoping to see you.

Michael Berberich,
Co-Chair for 2006 TYCA-SW Conference



The Victorian Condo-Hotel and Conference Center

Conference hotel rate is \$99 if booked by 9/21/2006

<http://www.galveston.com/victorian/>



The Courtyard at the Victorian in October 2005

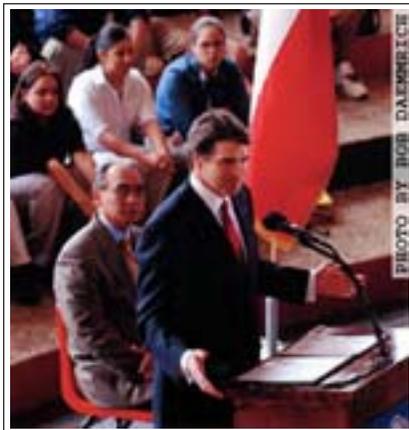
ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

By David Lydic

This is the first of a series of occasional articles regarding important political issues in higher education. I invite TYCA-SW members from other states to contribute similar articles over issues in their states.

As always, state legislatures give us plenty to worry about. Texas is no exception. During the 2005 legislative session our state organizations successfully defended higher education against attempts to weaken the core curriculum and to institute “proportionality,” wherein schools would be asked to pay 35% of the cost of their health care premiums because the state pays 35% of their operating costs. No doubt these and other proposals will be returning in 2007 for the next legislative session. One of the more insidious and far-reaching issues, however, has already begun its march forward, and that issue is accountability.

In 2005 the Texas governor issued an executive order requiring accountability measures to be applied to all Texas higher education institutions. The measures will be derived from existing reports provided by institutions to the Texas Higher Education



Governor Rick Perry

Coordinating Board (THECB) and will include measures of “participation, success, and excellence.” According to the Texas Community College Teachers Association (TCCTA), the governor is requiring that the THECB and each institution provide “the information necessary to determine the effectiveness and quality of the education

students receive at individual institutions . . . and the basis to evaluate the institutions’ use of state resources” (quoted in “Minutes of TCCTA Legislative Committee,” October 7, 2005).



TCCTA Lobbyist, Beaman Floyd

TCCTA lobbyist Beaman Floyd states succinctly that the legislative view is “if I can’t control you from [the capitol], there is no accountability.” The trend across the country, of course, is for accountability. This is seen with the increasing number of tests required in public schools. Tests are easy measures of “success” and therefore easy ways to hold schools accountable. Public education seems to have given up the fight against accountability. I would not like to see higher education succumb so completely.

As a member of the TCCTA Legislative Committee, I agree with the committee and TCCTA that we in community colleges are already accountable on many fronts. Below I offer accountability measures that currently exist for all of us.

Our Institution

All schools conduct their own internal (1) **program reviews** on regular cycles to measure the effectiveness of programs. Many institutions require some amount of annual (2) **professional development**, which might consist of institutional workshops and other activities or participation in one’s professional organizations. Through the traditional chain of command, each faculty member might be accountable to (3) **a department head, a dean, a vice president or two, the president, the board of trustees, and eventually to the public.** At least the **immediate supervisor regularly conducts evaluations** on each of us.

Our Students

We are accountable to our students to be expert in our discipline and conscientious in our teaching. This is clearly reflected in creating a fair (4) **syllabus** and in adhering to its guidelines. Such professional care might also be demonstrated by using varying instructional methods. Our students provide their feedback through (5) **regular student evaluations** of us.

Our Profession

We are accountable to our professions through (6) **professional organizations** at the local, state, regional, and national levels for continued learning in our disciplines. This accountability might be measured through subscribing to journals, attending and presenting at conferences, holding office or otherwise participating in the governance of the organization, or publishing scholarly articles and books.

Our Local Community

We are accountable to the (7) **taxpayers** who help fund our colleges. We are accountable to (8) **area school districts** with whom we participate in 2 + 2, dual credit, early college start, and other programs directly involving their students. We are accountable to (9) **area employers** for whom we provide so many workers. Many colleges and departments conduct regular surveys to measure the satisfaction of local employers with our students.

The State Government

The (10) **state government** provides reimbursement based on our enrollment and other financial support. The primary way the state measures our effectiveness is through the **Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**. The THECB requires that a number of reports be submitted, assessments be conducted, and reviews be completed each year.

The Federal Government

Any institution receiving federal financial aid money is accountable to the (11) **federal government**, which requires a great deal of reporting about our students in order to track the money.

Other Accrediting Agencies

All public institutions must be accredited by

regional accrediting agencies such as the (12) **Southern Association of Colleges and Schools**. SACS maintains strict standards for all areas of a college and requires regular assessments and reports as well as SACS team visits in order to measure the effectiveness of the college and its faculty. In addition, many disciplines such as nursing, other health sciences, real estate, and other workforce areas must answer to separate (13) **discipline-specific accrediting organizations**.

Other Institutions

We are accountable to (14) **other institutions to which our students transfer**. Each school as well as the state conducts regular research to measure the rate and effectiveness of transfer students from each two-year college.

No one objects to being accountable for the job we do. The effectiveness of community colleges is indisputable. The danger lies in using statistics as a convenient way to determine “success” without an understanding of the special mission of community colleges and the unique characteristics of our students. For example, I would hate to see funding based on graduation rates, retention, the time it takes to earn a degree, or semester course loads. I suspect the University of Texas at Austin would fare well; Austin Community College would not. Perhaps college presidents have resigned themselves to the inevitability of such accountability measures and only hope to control them. I would hope that faculty members will not accept an uninformed legislative definition of accountability and would educate their legislators about the true ways in which we are already account

David Lydic, Chair, Political Information Committee, TYCA-SW



GENERATION GAP: UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES



This article is reprinted with permission from the Mayo Clinic Medical Services. July 6, 2005

Does the old geezer you work with stubbornly refuse to accept change? Does the inexperienced, fresh-out-of-college know-it-all have you tearing your hair out? Workplace tensions can arise when people of different generations — working side by side — don't understand each other. You can diffuse tension at work by learning about the differences among your colleagues, appreciating those differences and making an effort to interact with members of each generation in a way that suits their work ethic and communication style.

The generations in today's workplace: Who they are

People of today's workplace generations possess characteristics that derive, in large part, from the political, social and economic climate of their youth.

Traditionalists — Born 1900 to 1945

Sometimes referred to as the World War II generation, traditionalists have worked longer than any of the other generations. Experiencing two world wars and the Great Depression taught most members of this generation how to live within limited means. Traditionalists are loyal, hardworking, financially conservative and faithful to institutions. Many are approaching retirement or are retired and now working part-time jobs.

Baby boomers — Born 1946 to 1964

When the baby boomers entered the work force, they felt compelled to challenge the status quo, and they're responsible for many of the rights and opportunities now taken for granted. Their boundless optimism led many to fight for change. Because of their large numbers, they faced competition from each other for jobs. Baby boomers all but invented the 60-hour workweek, figuring that demonstrated hard work and loyalty to employers was one way to get ahead. Their sense of who they are is deeply connected to their career achievements. As a whole, this

The Professional Development and Evaluation Programs Department at Austin Community College has produced a three minute video called **"Homework Circa 2005"** which comedically captures the habits and traits of the millennial generation; this group of individuals was born between 1982 and 2000.

Click this box or go to <http://irt.austincc.edu/profdev/millguyWM640.wmv> to see video.

generation is politically adept when it comes to navigating political minefields in the workplace.

Generation Xers — Born 1965 to 1980

Generation Xers are technologically savvy, having ushered in the era of video games and personal computers during their formative years. But witnessing skyrocketing divorce rates, their parents being laid off after years of dedicated service and challenges to the presidency, organized religion and big corporations instilled a sense of skepticism and distrust of institutions. Because they don't expect employer loyalty, they see no problem changing jobs to advance professionally. In contrast to the baby boomers' overtime work ethic, generation Xers believe that work isn't the most important thing in their lives. They're resourceful and hardworking, but once 5 o'clock hits, they'd rather pursue other interests.

Millennials — Born 1981 to 1999

Many in this generation are still in school, but the oldest millennials are recent college graduates just now entering the work force. These are kids who've had access to cell phones, pagers and personal computers all their lives. Millennials are eager to learn and enjoy questioning things. They're confident and have high self-esteem. They're collaborators and favor teamwork, having functioned in groups in school, organized sports and extracurricular activities from a very young age. They reject the notion that they have to stay within the rigid confines of a job description. Expect them to keep their career options open. As opposed to generation Xers who change jobs, millennials are more likely to make entire career changes or to build parallel careers.

How to bridge the generation gap: Steps to success

Now that you understand more about each generation, you're on your way to bridging the generation gaps in your own work environment. The formula for success involves three steps:

- **Be aware of the differences.**
- **Appreciate the strengths.**
- **Manage the differences effectively.**

Baby boomers vs. generation Xers: Biggest potential for misunderstanding

Of the four generations, baby boomers and generation Xers comprise the majority of the work force today. An interesting dynamic is developing between these two groups as generation Xers move into management positions — and supervise baby boomer colleagues.

Fortunately, baby boomers and generation Xers can employ certain strategies to build better working relationships with each other.

Workplace strategies for generation Xers to use with baby boomers

If you're a generation Xer, you may be able to win favor with your baby boomer co-workers if you:

- **Show respect.**
- **Choose face-to-face conversations.**
- **Give them your full attention.**
- **Play the game.**
- **Learn the corporate history.**

Workplace strategies for baby boomers to use with generation Xers

If you're a baby boomer, rely on these tips to smooth interactions with your generation X co-workers:

- **Get to the point.**
- **Use e-mail.**
- **Give them space.**
- **Get over the notion of dues paying.**
- **Lighten up.**

Traditionalists and millennials: Tips for working with these generations

Although most of your co-workers are probably baby boomers or generation Xers, you can benefit from learning strategies for working with traditionalists and millennials, too.

Working with traditionalists

Whether you're their manager or their peer, these tips may ease your working relationship with traditionalists:

- **Honor the chain of command.** Traditionalists have respect for authority and they expect it in return.
- **Offer them job security.** Traditionalists value the legacy they've built with your company.
- **Value their experience.** Use them as a resource to learn what has — and hasn't — gone right at the company in the past. Respect the insights they've gained from years of experience.
- **Appreciate their dedication.** Unlike the other generations, traditionalists are most likely to have taken a job and stayed with one company for their entire careers.

Working with millennials

Enhance your working relationship with millennials with these tactics:

- **Challenge them.** Millennials want to work on things that really matter. Offer more responsibility as a reward for their accomplishments.

- **Ask them their opinion.**

Millennials love to collaborate and be team players. They respond less enthusiastically to a dictatorial chain-of-command style of management.

- **Find them a mentor.**

Millennials have an affinity and great respect for traditionalists. Establish mentor-mentee relationships between these two groups, and both parties will benefit.

- **Provide timely feedback.**

Millennials are used to getting feedback instantaneously — at

the touch of a button. In the workplace, they expect frequent, worthwhile feedback.



A little understanding, a lot more harmony

Respect for generations goes both ways. Younger employees can learn to value the experience of their older co-workers. Likewise, older workers may benefit by embracing the fresh perspectives of their younger counterparts.

The next time you find yourself scratching your head in disbelief over the work habits of a colleague or a student, stop and consider whether generational factors are at play. It may just provide you with the enlightenment you need to successfully manage the situation.

The complete article can be viewed at <http://irt.austinctc.edu/profdev/infostream/2006/may06/genGap.htm>

Join Now



Membership

The traditional TYCA-SW membership, still and always a real bargain at \$20 for the academic year, entitles members to receive a copy of this newsletter and present at the annual conference. For an annual institutional membership fee of \$200, all of the English faculty at your campus would have the membership privileges described above. Finally, the Lifetime membership, for \$200, might be a way that you could contribute to TYCA-SW coffers in appreciation for its importance in your professional life, or it might be a way to recognize and reward excellence in teaching in your English department. Annual dues may be paid to Toni McMillen, Paris Junior College, 2400 Clarkville Street, Paris, TX 75460.

NAME _____

COLLEGE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ FAX _____

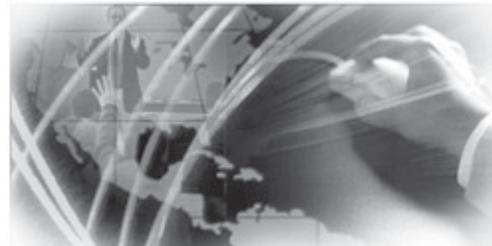
EMAIL ADDRESS _____

ONLINE RESOURCES

101 THINGS YOU CAN DO IN THE FIRST THREE WEEKS OF CLASS

Students will decide very early - some say the first day of class - whether they will like the course, its contents, the teacher, and their fellow students. Not just the first day, but the first three weeks of a course are especially important, studies say, in retaining capable students.

The list of "101 Things You Can Do..." is a catalog of suggestions for college teachers who are looking for a fresh way of creating the best possible environment for learning. These suggestions have been gathered from UNL professors and from college teachers elsewhere. Even if the syllabus is printed and lecture notes are ready to go in August, most college teachers can usually make adjustments in teaching methods as the course unfolds and the characteristics of their students become known. Go to <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/101thing.htm> to see the article.



GETTING RESULTS: A FREE ONLINE RESOURCE FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Real teachers and students in real classroom settings populate a set of six multimedia professional development modules — available online at no charge — for community college faculty. Read about this new, National Science Foundation-funded faculty development resource, produced by WGBH-TV Boston in association with the League for Innovation, in the April *Learning Abstracts*. Check it out at <http://www.league.org/publication/learning/edition.cfm>

TYCA SOUTHWEST 2006 LEADERSHIP ROSTER

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Joan Mathis (2005-2007)
Paris Junior College
2400 Clarksville St.
Paris, TX 75460-6298
O: 903-782-0315
jmathis@parisjc.edu

Associate Chair

Irma Luna (2003-2006)
San Antonio College
1300 San Pedro
San Antonio, TX 78212
O: 210-733-2595
iluna@accd.edu

Membership Recruitment Chair

Susan Faulkner
Cedar Valley College
Division of Liberal Arts
Lancaster, TX 75134
O: 972-860-8126
SLF3422@dccd.edu

NTCC-TYCA Representative and

Archivist

Gwen Gresham
North Arkansas Community
College/Technical College
1515 Pioneer Drive Harrison,
AR 72601
O: 870-391-3316
gweng@northark.net

Treasurer

Toni McMillen (2006-2008)
Paris Junior College
2400 Clarksville Street
Paris, TX 75460
Phone: 903-782-0450
tmcmillen@parisjc.edu

Newsletter Editor

Terry Stewart Mouchayleh
Austin Community College
5930 Middle Fiskville Rd.
Austin, TX 78752
O: 512-223-7748
tstewart@austincc.edu

Secretary

Jim McInturff (2006-2008)
East Arkansas Community
College
1700 Newcastle Road
Forrest City AR 72335
O: (870) 633-4480 EXT 234
E-mail: jmcinturff@eacc.edu

OTHER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

2006 Conference Co-Chairs

Michael Berberich and Michael
Gos
(Berberich) Galveston College
4015 Avenue Q
Galveston, TX 77550
O: 409-763-6551
mberberich@gc.edu
(Gos) 281-425-6809
mgos@lee.edu

2003-2006

Maryjane Giesler
University of New Mexico-
Los Alamos
4000 University Dr.
Los Alamos, NM 87544
O: 505-662-5919 x606

ADVISORY BOARD

ARKANSAS

Amy Baldwin
Distance Education
Coordinator
Pulaski Technical College
3000 W. Scenic Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118
O: 501-812-2262
501-812-2340 (fax)
abaldwin@pulaskitech.edu.

Joseph Cole
Dean, Fine Arts and
Humanities
Pulaski Technical College
3000 W. Scenic Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118
O: 501-812-2243
FAX: 501-812-2340
jcole@pulaskitech.edu.

LOUISIANA

Lillian Wooley
Louisiana State University at
Alexandria
8100 Hwy 71 South,
Alexandria, LA 71302
O: 318-427-4473,
lwooley@pobox.lsua.edu

NEW MEXICO

Mary H. Snaden
University of New Mexico-
Gallup
200 College Road
Gallup, New Mexico 87301
O: 505-863-7535
msnaden@gallup.unm.edu

OKLAHOMA

Dave Charlson
3E5 Arts and Hum. Bldg.
Oklahoma City Community
College
7777 South May
Oklahoma City, OK 73159
O: 405-682-1611 x7638
djcharlson@okccc.edu

Berta Wise
Oklahoma City Community
College
Arts and Humanities
Division
7777 S. May Avenue
Oklahoma City, OK 73159
O: 405-682-1611 x7658
bwise@okccc.edu

TEXAS

Dale Adams
Lee College
P O Box 818
Baytown, TX 77522
O: 281-425-6426
dadams@lee.edu

Beth Shelton
Paris Junior College
2400 Clarksville St.
Paris, TX 75460-6298
O: 903-782-0315
bshelton@parisjc.edu

Toni McMillen
(see info in first column)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Nominations Committee
Beth Shelton
(see info in third column)

Publications Committee
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(see info in third column)

Political Information Committee
David Lydic
Austin Community College
5930 Middle Fiskville Rd.
Austin, TX 78752
O: 512-223-3386
tstewart@austincc.edu

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