

Faculty Senate Response Committee Survey Results

Executive Summary

In late 2025, Chancellors Tedd Mitchell and Brandon Creighton released memos to Texas Tech University containing new guidelines and restrictions on course content, along with a course content review process. Course content for the spring 2026 semester was reviewed by the university in early 2026 and some courses were submitted to the Board of Regents. Many faculty raised concerns about the guidelines, restrictions, and implementation.

The Faculty Senate formed an *ad hoc* Response Committee in fall 2025 to evaluate faculty responses to these memos and their implementation, including the course content review process. As part of its remit, the Response Committee developed a survey that Faculty Senate voted to send to Texas Tech faculty. The survey ran from May 8, 2026 through May 19, 2026.

The survey received 367 responses, which is 1.5x greater than responses to the 2025 annual IT evaluation survey. Faculty perceptions of the Chancellors' Memos were negative. About 10% of faculty thought the Chancellors' Memos had a positive impact on their teaching, research, and student mentoring, while an additional 10-20% were neutral on the impact. Approximately 50% of faculty reported choosing to alter their own teaching content in response to the Chancellors' Memos, with ~25% being asked by administrators to alter their teaching content. Despite the Memos not imposing restrictions on research or service, faculty also reported alterations in these areas. About 18% of faculty chose to alter their research, with another 7% asked to alter their research by administrators. Approximately 30% of university service was altered in response to the Chancellors' Memos. The Chancellors' Memos had a negative impact on faculty retention, with 46% concerned about their tenure and/or promotion, and 52% considering jobs at other universities. When asked about implementation of the Chancellors' Memos, only 30% of faculty thought expectations from upper administrators were clear, while only 34% felt supported by upper administrators. Chairs were more clear and more supportive. About 60% of faculty indicated that the memos were implemented in an inconsistent manner between departments and faculty members. The Edward E. Whitacre Jr College of Engineering was least affected by the memos, while the College of Education and J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts were most impacted by these changes.

Overall, faculty were dissatisfied with the Chancellors' Memos, with satisfaction scoring 1.88 out of 5 on the Likert scale. Satisfaction varied by college, with the most satisfied college (Edward E. Whitacre Jr College of Engineering) scoring it 3.4, and the least satisfied college (J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts) scoring it 1.35. Qualitative comments aligned with the quantitative questions. The few positive comments (7% of comments) indicated support for the memos and end of DEI. Neutral comments indicated no personal impact of the Memos. Negative comments (85% of comments) indicated reasons for dissatisfaction that included the loss of reputation, effects on student/faculty recruitment, negative impacts on faculty retention, damage to academic freedom, and the creation of a climate of fear.

Introduction

On 10/22/26, the Faculty Senate formed an *ad hoc* Response Committee. The Faculty Senate President appointed five interested faculty senators to serve on this committee. The committee's charge was:

This ad hoc committee is responsible for collecting responses, concerns, and ideas from faculty regarding issues related to academic freedom and the instruction of students. The committee should consider the Chancellor's Letter of September 25, 2025 and the Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education when speaking with faculty and considering possible recommendations for response by the Faculty Senate.

This committee shall make regular updates to Faculty Senate leadership and at Faculty Senate meetings, as necessary.

This committee shall make full effort to consider issues from a faculty body that is representative across discipline and academic rank. Consultation with administration is encouraged and has the full support of Faculty Senate leadership.

Once this committee has presented a report with a recommended plan of action, the charge shall be considered fulfilled.

Operation

The committee shall elect its own chair and determine appropriate operating policies.

Since the subsequent Chancellor's Memos also impacted academic freedom and instruction of students, they were included in this committee's charge. The Compact was dropped from university discourse, so it was not the focus of the committee.

In the course of its activities, the Response Committee created a survey to help it accomplish its charge. At the March 11, 2026 meeting, the Faculty Senate voted to send out this survey to the faculty to assess the impact of the Chancellors' Memos and their implementation (final version: Appendix A). Due to several logistical challenges, the survey was not sent out to faculty until May 8, 2026. The survey ran until 8:40 am on May 19, 2026. Reminders to complete the survey were sent by individuals within respective colleges. Follow-up was decentralized due to the aforementioned logistical challenges.

The survey requested feedback on the September and December memos and their implementation (e.g., the course content review process). The April 9, 2026 Memo (sometimes called the April 10, 2026 Memo) was excluded from this survey. The reasons for excluding this later memo were: 1) we wanted to assess the impact of the initial memos, 2) the April Memo made much larger changes, and 3) we expect it will take more than a month before the impacts of the April 9 memo can be best quantified. Due to the release of the April Memo, the survey was edited to clarify the focus on the earlier memos. Links to the memos were also added to the initial page.

The survey was run using SurveyMonkey. Three weblink collectors were created. The first was a test that was closed prior to any responses. The second collector was provided for initial attempts to implement the survey. This collector received two responses despite the link never going out to all faculty. These responses were quality control and link-testing. These two responses were excluded from all analyses. The third collector was the link placed on the Faculty Senate website behind an eraider login. This setup was intended to prevent people from outside the university from accessing the survey, while allowing the SurveyMonkey survey to be collected anonymously. No questions were required.

Results

The survey collected 367 total responses. To interpret this response rate, we benchmarked it to the faculty responses to IT's annual NPS/satisfaction survey. The NPS survey asks faculty about an issue impacting all faculty (IT services), the results are used to improve IT services, and the survey is sent to all faculty. The NPS survey had 237 responses, so the Response Committee's survey had 1.5 times the response rate. For each question, the number of responses ranged from 330-360 responses, except there were 173 responses to the conditional question ("If you answered yes to prior questions"), and 193 responses to the final, open-ended question soliciting comment. We received 10-35 responses from each college, with the exceptions of Arts & Sciences (137 responses), Honors College (3 responses), TTU Online (5 responses), Graduate school (1 response), Veterinary Medicine (9 responses), and TTU Costa Rica (0 responses). Of the respondents, 78% were tenure-track or tenured, 19% continuing appointment eligible, and 3% did not fit either of these categories.

We surveyed faculty to determine if they were asked to alter their course content in response to the memos by various groups. Close to 50% of faculty (answering yes or no vs skipping or preferring not to answer) responded that they chose to alter their content in response to the memos (Fig 1). Roughly one quarter to one fifth were asked by either administrators or other university personnel to alter their course content (Fig 1). A subset of faculty (18%) with content subject to review were asked to change their responses submitted during the course content review process (Fig 1). Overall, 10 faculty (3%) reported classes cancelled (Fig 1). These responses measured the number of faculty with one or more courses affected, but did not consider the total number of courses impacted. When asked about the number of courses impacted, 150 faculty reported 277 courses impacted.

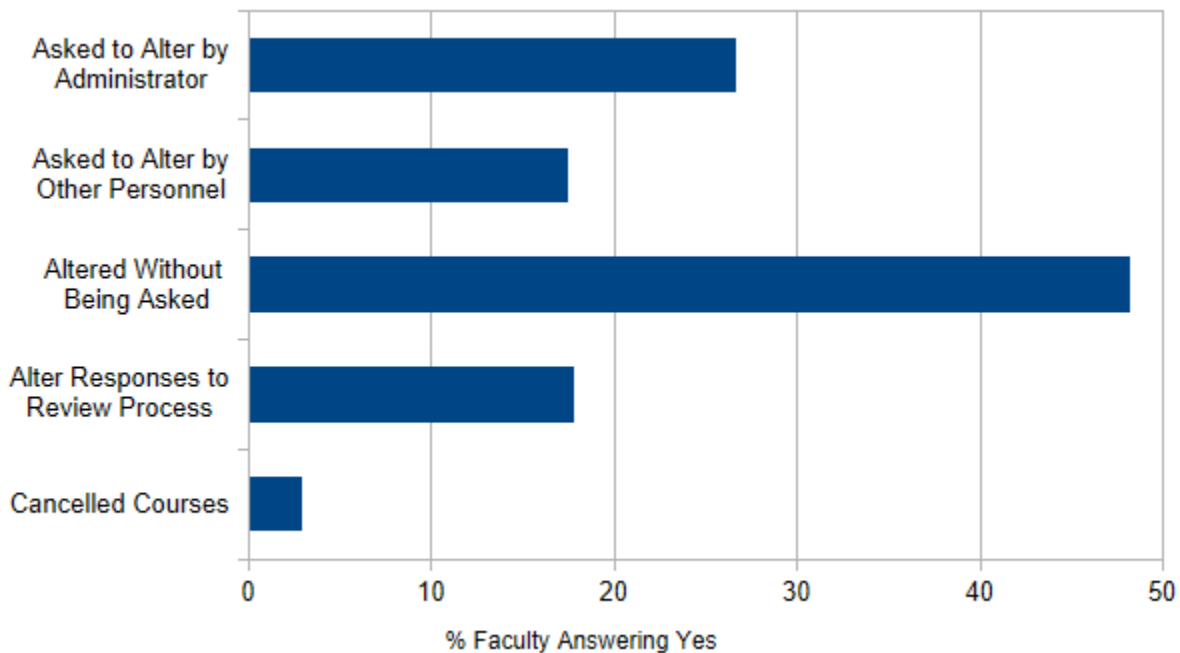


Figure 1. Faculty altered their course content in response to the Chancellors' Memos. The percentage of faculty who answered yes (out of those who answered yes or no) to the survey questions is shown for each question. This represents 87, 57, 160, 52, and 10 faculty responses, respectively.

While the September and December memos did not require limits on research or service, we next asked if faculty reported any impacts on these other areas. Surprisingly, these answers were non-zero. We found administrators or other personnel asked 7% or 4% of faculty, respectively, to alter their research, while about 18% altered their research without being asked

by university personnel (Fig 2). The Memos had a large impact on service. We found 30% of faculty altered their service to the university based on the Memos (Fig 2). These data indicate that the Chancellors' Memos, while focused on teaching, impacted service and research.

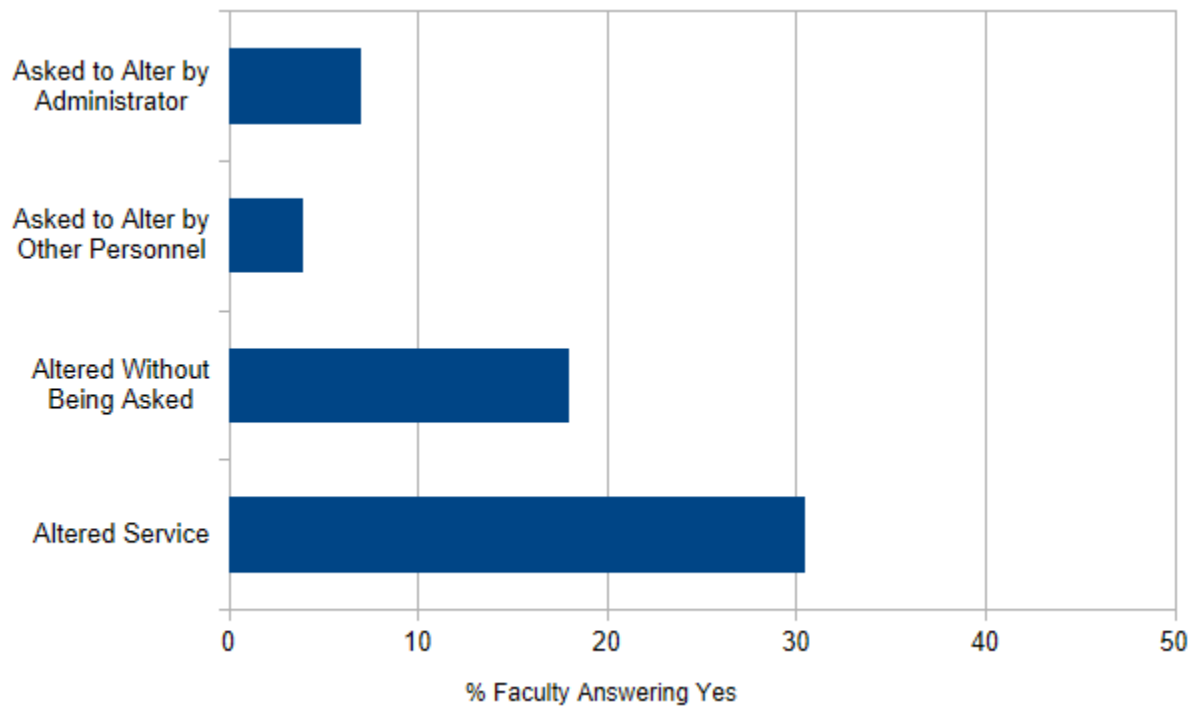


Figure 2. The Chancellors' Memos altered faculty service. The percentage of faculty who answered yes (out of those who answered yes or no) to the survey questions is shown for each question. This represents 23, 13, 59, and 100 faculty responses, respectively.

We broke down the impacts on teaching, research and service by college. We used self-alterations for both teaching and research because the largest share of faculty reported these impacts. Faculty responding from the colleges of Education, Media and Communications, and Visual and Performing Arts had higher levels of altered material without being asked by university personnel compared to the total (Fig 3). By contrast, Engineering had the least number of alterations, with Veterinary Medicine, Law and Business also reporting lower than average levels of altering without being asked by university personnel (Fig 3). Thus, the Chancellors' Memos have affected different colleges to different degrees.

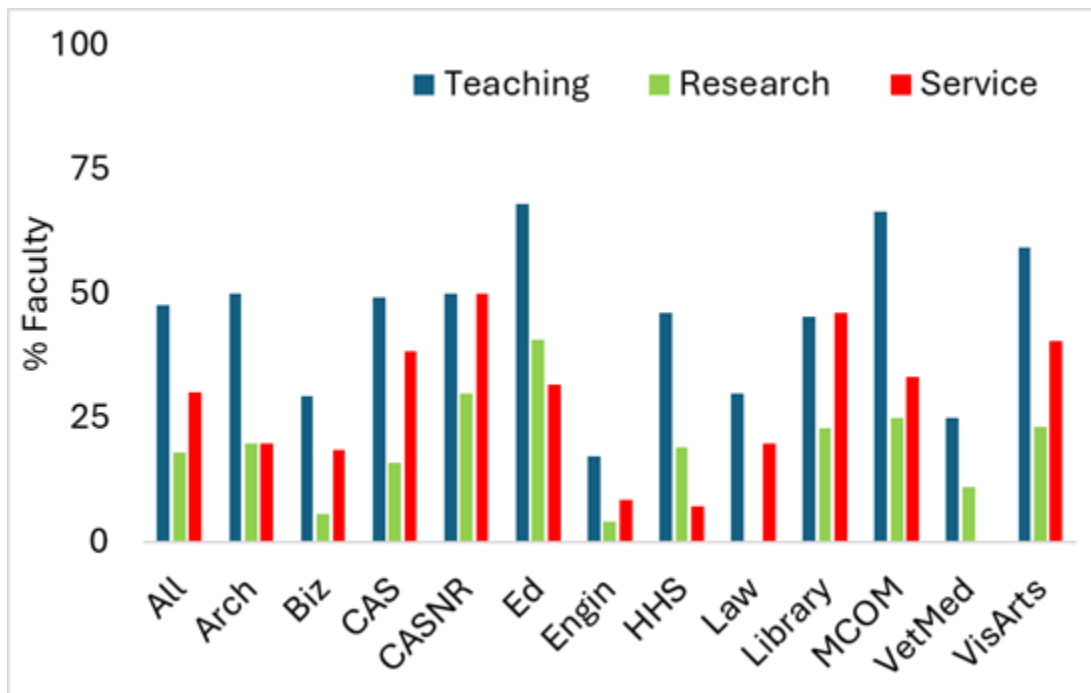


Figure 3. Impacts of the Chancellors' Memos on self-alterations of teaching, research and service differed by college. The percentage of faculty who answered yes (out of those who answered yes or no) to self-altering teaching, research or had service altered is shown by college. Colleges with at least 7 responses are shown. The number of respondents were at least: All (314), Huckabee College of Architecture (10), Jerry S. Rawls College of Business (16), College of Arts & Sciences (124), Davis College of Agricultural Science & Natural Resource (8), College of education (22), Edward E. Whitacre Jr College of Engineering (23), College of Health and Human Sciences (26), School of Law (10), University Libraries (11), College of Media and Communication (20), School of Veterinary Medicine (8), and J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts (30).

These responses provide insight into the magnitude of the changes caused by the Chancellors' Memos, but could represent positive or negative alterations. We used Likert scale questions to quantify the positive impact that the Chancellors' Memos had on teaching, research, and student mentoring. Impacts were similar across each of these domains. The proportion of faculty agreeing or strongly agreeing with positive impacts on teaching was 9%, on research was 7.5%, on students 10.2%, and on grants 8.5% (Fig 4). Neutral responses were ~10% for impacts on teaching and students, and 15-18% for impacts on research and grants (Fig 4). Overall, 79% disagreed or strongly disagreed that the Chancellors' Memos had a positive impact on teaching or on students (Fig 4). Similarly, 73-77% disagreed or strongly disagreed that there were positive impacts on research and grants (Fig 4). Overall, faculty strongly disagreed that teaching, research and student mentoring was positively impacted.

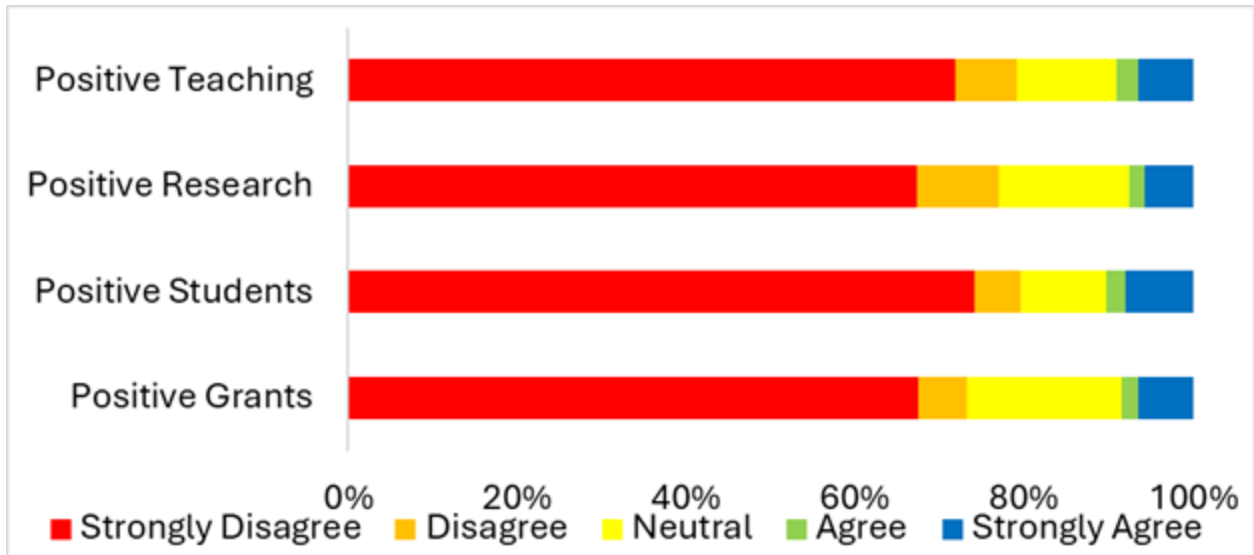


Figure 4. Faculty disagree that the Chancellors' Memos had a positive impact on teaching, research and students. The proportion of faculty indicating their degree of agreement with the positive impacts the Chancellors' Memos had on teaching, research, students they teach or mentor, and ability to attract/maintain external funding is shown. The number of faculty responses were 306, 278, 312, and 258 respectively.

We assessed the impact of the Chancellors' Memos on faculty retention and success. We used two metrics: concern that the Chancellors' Memos had a negative impact on prospects for tenure and promotion, and if faculty were actively seeking positions at other institutions due to the Chancellors' Memos. Overall, 46% of faculty were concerned the Memos had a negative impact on their tenure and promotion (Fig 5). The Chancellors' Memos had a negative impact on faculty retention because 52% of faculty indicated they were seeking other positions due to the Chancellors' Memos.

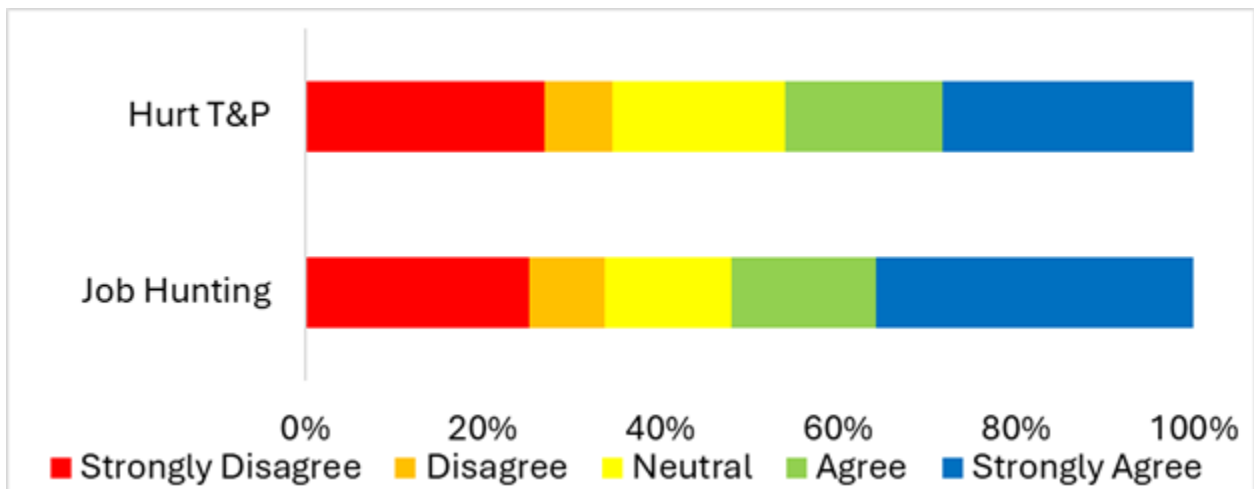


Figure 5. The Chancellors' Memos had a negative impact on faculty success. The proportion of faculty indicating their degree of agreement with concern that the Chancellors' Memos hurt their prospects for tenure and promotion, and that they were seeking other jobs due to the Chancellors' Memos. The number of faculty responses were 237 and 294, respectively.

We also assessed the implementation of the Chancellors' Memos at Texas Tech University. We surveyed faculty about the clarity of rules and expectations coming from their department chair and coming from upper administrators (Dean and Provost). We further surveyed them about the degree of support they felt from their chairs and upper administrators, and the perceived fairness of the Memos' implementation. There was significant confusion over the rules governing the Memos, as only 30% thought rules from the upper administrators were clear. Chairs provided more clarity; 40% thought chairs were clear (Fig 6). Levels of support followed this pattern, with 34% and 57% feeling supported by upper administrators and chairs, respectively (Fig 6). Notably almost half of faculty felt unsupported by upper administrators (Fig 6). Furthermore, faculty indicated that the Chancellors' Memos were implemented in an unfair and inconsistent manner, with 62% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that implementation and enforcement of the Chancellors' Memos were consistent between faculty and departments (Fig 6). Thus, faculty surveyed indicated widespread confusion and perceived inconsistencies in the implementation of the Chancellors' Memos.

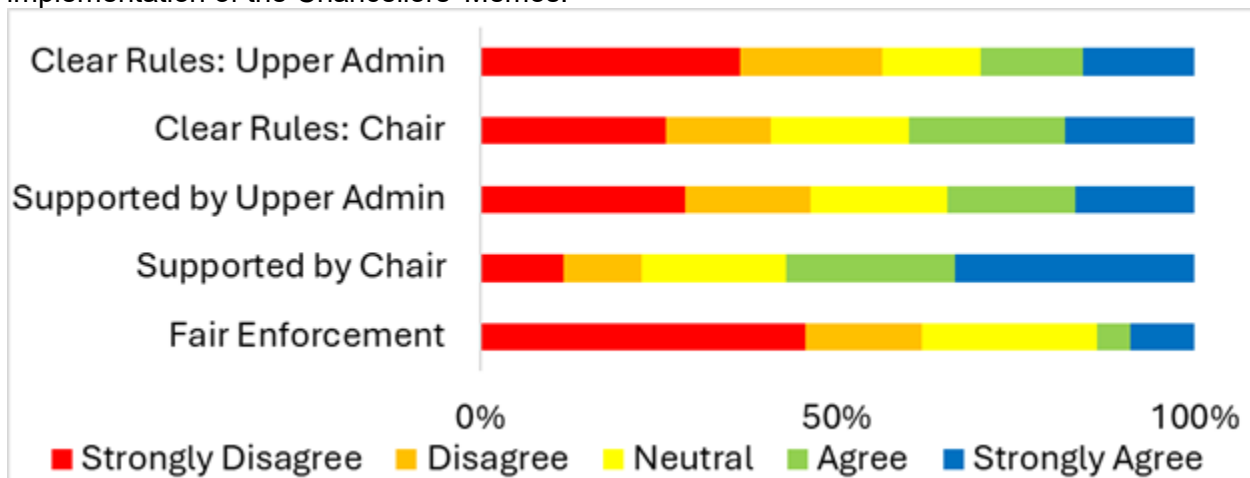


Figure 6. Implementation of the Chancellors' Memos was widely perceived as confusing and inconsistent. The proportion of faculty indicating their degree of agreement with concern that the Chancellors' Memos hurt their prospects for tenure and promotion, and that they were seeking other jobs due to the Chancellors' Memos. The number of faculty responses were 313, 293, 301, 283, and 299, respectively.

Finally, we assessed overall satisfaction with the Chancellors' Memos. We used the Likert scale scoring to provide a value from 1 (strong disagree) to 5 (strong agree) for faculty responses. To assess college-specific differences, we also compared the overall response to each college providing at least 7 responses. Satisfaction with the Chancellors' Memos varied by college (Fig 7). The overall score was 1.88 (Fig 7). Respondents from the J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts were most dissatisfied with the Chancellors' Memos (score 1.35), with Colleges of Arts & Sciences (1.56) and Education (1.65) second and third most dissatisfied (Fig 7). By contrast, respondents from the Edward E. Whitacre Jr College of Engineering were the most satisfied (3.4), with Jerry S. Rawls College of Business (3.07) and School of Law (2.63) second and third most satisfied. We note that 3 is neutral on this scale. For comparison with other satisfaction surveys, in the Administrator Evaluation Survey, the Provost scored a 3.7 across all faculty in FY2025 (i.e. prior to Chancellors' Memos). Student evaluations of faculty averaged ~4.4 in fall 2025.

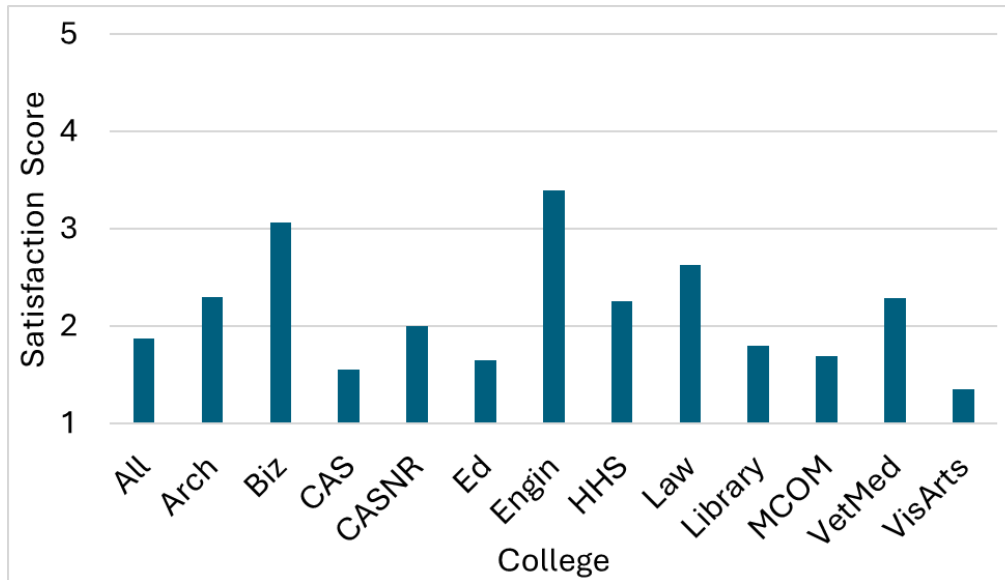


Figure 7. Faculty are dissatisfied with the Chancellors' Memos. Faculty were asked if they agreed they were satisfied overall with the Chancellors' Memos. Weighted Likert scores were calculated for all respondents and for each college with at least 9 respondents. A 1 indicates 'strong disagreement', while a 5 indicates 'strong agreement'. The number of respondents were All (309), Huckabee College of Architecture (10), Jerry S. Rawls College of Business (14), College of Arts & Sciences (124), Davis College of Agricultural Science & Natural Resource (10), College of education (20), Edward E. Whitacre Jr College of Engineering (20), College of Health and Human Sciences (23), School of Law (8), University Libraries (10), College of Media and Communication (20), School of Veterinary Medicine (7), and J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts (31).

The final question of our survey was an open response to capture any comments or concerns faculty wished to share. We received 193 comments, which is 52.6% of respondents. Overall, 13 comments (6.7%) were positive comments about the Chancellors' Memos, 16 were neutral comments, 8 of which were some variant of "no comment" or discussed material unrelated to the Memos. The remaining 164 comments (85%) were negative comments about the Chancellors' Memos and/or the implementation process. We categorized the comments based on their content. The positive comments included statements of general support for the Memos and sentiments that they were necessary to comply with state law, they would improve the campus climate by ending DEI and/or discrimination against white men, and help undergraduate student recruitment. The neutral comments indicated no impact on the respondents. All positive and most neutral comments were concise.

The negative comments covered a wide range of responses. The comments ranged from concise to multi-paragraph statements. Most comments indicated the belief that the Chancellors' Memos and their implementation caused immediate and extensive harm and loss of reputation to TTU. In many cases, supporting evidence for this assertion included statements of reduced faculty recruitment, reduced retention, reduced graduate student recruitment, and reduced collaborations with other institutions. Several respondents indicated that Memos are why they have pursued and accepted jobs at other universities. Some respondents stated the belief the Memos unduly infringed on academic freedom, censored faculty, were unethical, or otherwise illegal. Some comments were concerned that the scope of the Memos would expand to unrelated controversial subjects (e.g., evolution). There were many negative comments about the process used for implementing the Chancellors' Memos. Some faculty believed the additional paperwork wasted time that could be better spent serving students and conducting

research. Others found the process demoralizing, inconsistent, overbroad, and full of errors. For example, performances of operas by Handel and Mozart were curtailed due to the need for women to perform certain male roles in them. Faculty expressed concern about politicization of the process and the lack of subject matter expertise held by the key decision makers. While a few responses critical of the Memos were supportive of the upper administration's efforts, most respondents mentioning upper administrators criticized them for their lack of pushback on the Chancellors' Memos, and their implementation of them. Many negative comments reflected anger, and indicated the Chancellors' Memos had instilled a climate of fear among faculty and students. Many comments indicated that current teaching was negatively impacted, and some expressed concern that the Memos' implementation left students unprepared for success.

We conclude our report by including a few examples of the comments. Positive, neutral, and negative comments are included approximately in percentages representative of the whole:

“Regardless of individual political perspectives, the increasing insertion of partisan politics into higher education—particularly in forms that may be perceived as restricting academic expression or limiting open discourse—represents a serious challenge to the foundational principles of the modern university. Institutions of higher learning have historically served as environments dedicated to the free exchange of ideas, intellectual inquiry, critical thinking, and creative exploration. These principles are essential not only to scholarship itself, but also to preparing students to engage thoughtfully and productively with individuals from diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives throughout their professional and civic lives.”

“While my own teaching, research, and service has only been unaffected, or only minimally so, by the Chancellor's Memo, I cannot state in more emphatic terms how damaging this new mandate has been to the university, both in terms of morale ... which, among faculty is as low as I've seen in 20 years ... and AAU aspirations. I do not think the Chancellor appreciates the fact that this policy has destroyed the university's reputation and, therefore, it's prospects for inclusion in the AAU. Beyond that, the policy outlined in the memo remains akin to using a chainsaw to remove a splinter. It is reasonable to ask faculty to avoid forcing their students to adhere to specific beliefs. But that rarely happens. It is unreasonable to muzzle an entire university on issues of gender and sexuality, and to define those terms so vaguely, as to render any discussion of sex a potential liability to one's career. This is not how freedom works.”

“The memos and the overall lack of support from administrators are hurting the reputation of the school, which is already reflected on the faculty's reputation. This situation is not only affecting us internally but externally. Few external colleagues are willing to collaborate with TTU faculty, especially in grant funded projects, because they see us as an extension of TTU. This is causing many of us to consider opportunities elsewhere.”

“Because of the memo, we saw a stark reduction in graduate applicants to our program, we were down by 50% in applicants. As a licensure seeking program, our coursework is not widely impacted, yet. We are under no illusion that this authoritarian takeover of academic freedom is done. It's negatively impacting morale and reducing productivity. Faculty are looking for different jobs. This will absolutely impact our pursuit to AAU status and may even make it impossible. It will also likely reduce enrollment rates and student

tuition income for the university. We had a positive national reputation before the state of Texas laws and Chancellor efforts at eliminating academic freedom.”

“Too much to communicate here. Main thoughts: it is very disheartening and depressing to teach under these conditions; my students (over 300) almost to a person, are pissed and think the Chancellor has so disrespected them and their own capacity to think independently, critically, and analytically; it is so incredibly damaging to education at TTU to pit the students against their teachers (to report them if they feel violated) and make we teachers suspect of our students in the classroom - the whole thing can create a toxic and anti-learning atmosphere. The TTU System needs to trust its employees to do right by our students - the distrust, suspicion, and disrespect I feel as a teacher at an institution for which I have worked for [redacted] years and given everything to my students is akin to stabbing me both in my head and in my heart.”

“I received guidance from the Regents ACS to change 1 week's worth of readings for my course. This guidance was handed to me in early May (no electronic paper trail). It was composed by AI and filled with inaccuracies. My instructions of what to change were for someone else's course!”

“I will be leaving my job in the coming months because of this, I cannot and will not work at a place like this and I will tell my network to not come here (students and faculty).”

“The Chancellor's memos have had absolute NO impact on my teaching, research, or writing.”

“I think the decentering of left-wing activism in our educational system is a good thing. I've had conservative students tell me they had to pretend to hold positions they don't actually believe just to pass classes. I'm not sure barring graduate students from studying certain topics is the right solution. But there does need to be an expansion of theories students are exposed to, and professors shouldn't be afraid of teaching points of view with which they disagree. Critical thinking means equipping students to think through why they disagree/agree with certain theories. It's up to the students, not the professors, to decide what theories are compelling to them. The Academy should embrace more debate and open conversation. At the same time, I think students, staff, and faculty who sincerely believe and theorize that there is a gender binary should not be shamed into silence.”

“I agree wholeheartedly with the content and goals of the Chancellor's memos as it pertains to the goals outlined. Their implementation has been fair and consistent.”