Non-Traditional Student Organization Minutes, February 24, 2005:

I. Call to Order:
   - NTSO President Frances Crawford Fennessy called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

II. Minutes of the February 24, 2005 meeting:
   - Financial Aid Coordinator Doug Wright, and Financial Aid Counselor Terri Colley were guest speakers at the meeting.

III. President's Announcement:
   - Frances Crawford Fennessy announced that the theme, “Denim and Diamonds,” has been selected for the formal dance which will be held on April 30th, 2005.
   - The men will be allowed to wear blue jeans to the dance, while the women can wear formal dresses or gowns.
   - Admission to the dance will be $10 per ticket, which will include full dinner and music.
   - For information about tickets contact Dr. Keri Rogers (at: 294-3422 or krogers@shsu.edu), our faculty advisor, for the organization or Frances (at: 294-1995 or roughneckbooks@hotmail.com).
   - You can also purchase tickets at the next meeting.
   - Student activities will provide a D.J. for the dance.
   - In addition, Student Activities has changed their procedures for our monthly meetings. They will be providing cookies and drinks for the NTSO meetings instead of lunches from this point forward.

IV. Vice-President’s Announcement:
   - John Fennessy announced the garage sale will be coming up very soon.
   - This event is important for fundraising, since there are no dues required to be a member of NTSO.
   - Donations and volunteers are needed for the garage sale.
   - The coordinator for the O’Reilly’s shopping center has agreed to let NTSO use the parking lot for the event.
   - This event will probably happen the first weekend of April. We are waiting for confirmation in regard to the date.

V. Business Manager’s Announcement:
   - Ralph Bales talked about the baseball day that is tentatively planned for April 17th, 2005.
   - This will be a family event and a day to bring the kids and have fun.
   - There will be a price reduction in the sale of hotdogs, cake, and chips.

VI. Additional Announcements:
   - Cindy Lindquist announced that the Crime Victim’s Services Alliance will be having a fashion show in support of Saafthouse and the Elite Repeat store on the square.
   - Donations and volunteers are needed to help with the event.
   - For more information contact the Cindy or the Crime Victim’s Services Alliance.
   - Dr. Keri Rogers announced that the Sammy Awards will take place on April 27th, 2005 in the LSC Theater.
   - This is an opportunity to nominate someone for student leadership.
   - There has been a category added for outstanding non-traditional student leader.
   - The nominations are due by March 4th, 2005.
   - If you would like to nominate someone from this organization or elsewhere, you can get a nomination form from the Student Activities office on the 3rd floor of the LSC.
   - There is no fee to nominate someone.
- The nomination form is a short, fill-in-the-blank sheet that can be easily filled out in about 5 minutes.
- You do not have to be a member of any organization to nominate someone.
- The Student Health Care Center is free for students, and prescriptions are discounted.
- The Counseling Center, in the LDB annex, offers help with stress management, relationships, and couples.
- Legal aid is also available in the LDB annex for those students who might legal advice.
- Dr. Bernice Strauss from the Sam Center offers help with study skills counseling.
- Students are now only allowed five “Q's” on their transcripts starting fall, 2004. If a student exceeds five “Q’s” then out of state tuition will be charged.

VII. Discussion with Guest Speakers:
- Financial aid is researching the aid options for dual enrollment (college enrolled) high school seniors.
- Tuition reimbursements are offered through the state for undergraduates, but certain criteria must be met.
- If you have dropped more than two classes, then you are not eligible for the reimbursement.
- More information can be found about tuition reimbursements at www.collegefortexans.com.
- There is a special loan called the “Texans be on Time” loan which can be forgiven if you graduate with a “B” average or better within four years.
- The “Texans be on Time” loan must be claimed as income on yearly taxes if the loan is forgiven.
- More information can be found about the “Texans be on Time” loan at www.collegefortexans.com.
- The amount awarded for Pell grants can never be reduced, but loans, other grants, and late scholarships can be reduced to meet the yearly undergraduate financial aid limit.
- $15,973 is the yearly limit for undergraduate financial aid, composed of a combination of grants, loans, and work study.
- Certain students who are eligible might choose to use some of their financial aid to pay back loans, as a rebate to the lender.
- More information can be found about pay back rebates through the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation or by visiting this website: www.nslds.ed.gov.
- The summer supplement form for financial aid is due ASAP.
- The priority deadline for the supplement form is February 28, 2005, and the extended deadline is March 31, 2005.
- An undergraduate student must take 6 hours each summer session to be eligible for financial aid over the summer.
- A graduate student must take 3 hours each summer session to be eligible for financial aid over the summer.
- For students who do not qualify for federal financial aid, there are alternative loans offered that are not certified by the school.
- More information on alternative loans can be found by visiting the website www.terri.com, or by contacting Chase, Campus Door, or Lonestar websites.
- The limit for federal loans is approximately $10,000 per year for undergraduates and $18,000 per year for graduates.
- If you start a new program in the spring semester, such as a graduate program, then the yearly limit for federal loans starts over again, and you should qualify for loans over the following summer.
- Financial aid does not usually have to be reported as taxable income.
- There is no help on campus for preparing taxes and the Hope Scholarship Tax Credit, but software such as Turbo Tax can be downloaded for free from www.irs.gov for tax preparation.
• The Turbo Tax software is quick and easy, and most people receive the tax refund within one to two weeks directly into a personal bank account.
• If you will be attending a different university for graduate school, then you must contact the financial department of the university that you are interested in for information regarding aid.
• Upon graduation, the exit exam for financial aid must be completed, or a hold will be placed on the student’s transcript.
• If a student is not eligible for financial aid, then the decision can be appealed if the denial is based on a change of major.
• Students are eligible for aid in four different areas after graduation: teacher’s certification, 2nd bachelors, masters, and doctoral.
• Doctoral aid is determined on individual basis based on the amount of hours completed as a post-bachelor/graduate student.
• Doctoral students are accepted on a conditional basis during the first semester, but financial aid is still awarded.
• Links for scholarship information include: www.collegetexans.com, and www.fastweb.com.
• SHSU scholarship information can be found at: http://www.shsu.edu/~sfa_www/scholarship.html.
• For additional questions about financial aid, feel free to stop by the financial aid office located on the 2nd floor of the Estill building.

VIII. Next Meeting:
• The next NTSO meeting will be held on March 31st, 2005.
• A representative from Career Services will be present to discuss the job search process, resume building, and interview preparation.
• The meeting will be held in LSC 315, from 11:45a.m. to 1p.m.
• Become a member of the NTSO listserv, and receive announcements of the meetings and events by email.
• We will also have candidates for NTSO Officer Elections speak to members who are present.
• In addition, we will vote for a change in the NTSO Constitution at this meeting.

IX. Adjournment:
• The NTSO meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

Submitted by:
Andrea Woodlief
NTSO Secretary