

Statement Regarding Campus Carry

Austin Graduate School of Theology (Austin Grad) desires to have a safe and secure campus for students, faculty, staff, and guests. The 84th Texas legislature passed what is popularly known as campus carry. Governor Abbott signed it into law on June 13, 2015. The law requires public universities to allow concealed handgun license holders to carry their concealed weapons on public university campuses, subject to certain exceptions. However, private colleges and universities were given the right to opt out of that requirement. The statute also requires all schools to conduct a period of consultation with faculty, staff, and students.

Students, faculty, staff, and the board of trustees at Austin Grad were consulted regarding their thoughts and preferences on this matter. Campus carry has been a controversial topic. Although strong opinions on both sides of the issue were voiced during the consultation process, the administration appreciates the moderation with which those opinions were offered. After the board of trustees meeting on April 15, Austin Grad completed its period of considering whether campus carry should be permitted on its campus.

After reviewing all of the comments and relevant concerns, the administration concluded that Austin Grad should opt out of campus carry. This decision is consistent with its current practice of prohibiting individuals from carrying any type of weapon on campus—a policy that has served the school well in the past and should do so in the future. This policy does not prohibit individuals from storing their properly licensed handguns in locked vehicles in the Austin Grad parking lot.

Having a safe and secure campus environment is important to Austin Grad. All of us have a stake in this. Therefore, students, faculty, staff, and guests are encouraged to practice due diligence.

I appreciate the effort of everyone to live within and fulfill Austin Grad's mission "to promote knowledge, understanding, and practice of the Christian faith by equipping Christians and churches for service in the Kingdom of God."

Grace,
Stan Reid
President