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Texas A&M-Qatar Campus To Close By 2028

Board of Regents votes to terminate contract with Qatar Foundation.

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The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents voted Thursday to close the university's campus in Qatar.

 *Credit: Texas A&M University College of Engineering*

The Board of Regents of the Texas A&M University System voted Thursday to begin a multi-year process to shut down the flagship's campus in the Middle East nation of Qatar.

"The Board has decided that the core mission of Texas A&M should be advanced primarily within Texas and the United States," Board Chairman Bill Mahomes said. "By the middle of the 21st century, the university will not necessarily need a campus infrastructure 8,000 miles away to support education and research collaborations."

The decision does not immediately change operations or services on the campus. Under terms of the contract with the Qatar Foundation, the termination will take four years. In the coming days, the university administration will assemble a team to ensure several imperatives: Students complete their education, faculty and staff are supported, and research obligations are appropriately fulfilled.

Texas A&M at Qatar (TAMUQ) opened in 2003 to advance education and research in chemical, mechanical, and petroleum engineering. TAMUQ is one of six U.S. universities in Qatar's Education City.

"Over the last two decades, the Qatar campus has advanced ideals, graduated exceptional Aggie engineers, and is cemented as an important legacy of Texas A&M," **said General (Ret.) Mark A. Welsh III, president of Texas A&M University.** "As we look to the future of our land-, sea- and space-grant university, the global exchange of research and education will continue to be integral to our world-class campuses here in the U.S."

Qatar is a peninsula that shares a land border with Saudi Arabia and sits across the Persian Gulf from Iran. The U.S. considers Qatar an ally. The nation hosts the largest U.S. military base in the Middle East. Scores of U.S. businesses operate in Qatar, including major Texas-based energy companies.

The Board of Regents decided to reassess the university's physical presence in Qatar in fall 2023 due to the heightened instability in the

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Middle East. Thursday morning, Regents discussed the topic with Welsh and other top administrators in executive session. In the afternoon's public session, Regent Mike Hernandez made a motion to terminate the agreement with the Qatar Foundation. The motion was seconded by Regent Randy Brooks and passed on a 7-1 vote. Regent Michael Plank dissented.

Mahomes said the board decided that Texas A&M can best advance its core mission — educating and serving Texans while advancing knowledge and innovation through world-class research — by concentrating its focus in Texas.

“The work in Qatar is great work,” Mahomes said. “But it is a fraction of what Texas A&M accomplishes year after year.”

He noted that Texas A&M and affiliated System agencies collaborate on research with about 30 other nations without operating separate campuses on foreign soil.

“The university has numerous other ways to give international students opportunities to be Aggies and to give Aggies opportunities to study internationally,” Mahomes said.



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