



UT Energy Bulletin | March 2021

Energy@UT News



UT Energy Week 2021

On April 13 – 14, 2021, the Energy Institute will host its annual UT Energy Week. This year's theme is [Energy Transition: Agents of Change, Changing Agents](#), which will feature panelists and speakers from UT Austin as well as ExxonMobil, Google, the University of Sussex, the Rockefeller Foundation, and more. The event will be virtual and free to attend for all participants. Register for UT Energy Week [here](#).



True Cost of Major Power Outages Remains a Mystery, Report Finds

Researchers with the [Cockrell School of Engineering](#) and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory authored a study in November 2020 on the economic impacts of power interruptions with funding from the U.S. Dept. of Energy's Electricity Office. The paper relies on case studies to model the true cost of widespread

outages from damage to electricity system infrastructure from extreme events. Access the news article [here](#).



An Energy Agenda for 2021 and Beyond

Energy Institute Director Varun Rai, senior vice president at bp America Mary Streett, LBJ School Associate Professor Joshua Busby, and Energy Institute Fellow Aldo Flores-Quiroga joined a panel "[An Energy Agenda for 2021 and Beyond](#)" hosted by the LBJ School of Public Affairs. The panel is part of the "[LBJ in the Arena](#)" series and explored the state of U.S. and international action on carbon and climate action as well as what's ahead for energy policy in the Biden Administration.



Cockrell School Assistant Professor Hao Zhu on the 2021 Texas Power Outages

Cockrell School of Engineering and [Dept. of Electrical and Computer Engineering](#) Assistant Professor Hao Zhu summarized the timeline of events and shared some initial thoughts on the 2021 Texas Power Outages. The presentation describes the factors that contributed to the widespread outages experienced during the extreme winter weather and offers a potential roadmap for preventing a similar outcome in the future. Access the presentation and recorded talk [here](#).

Scott Tinker Testifies Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources

On February 3rd, 2021, Director of the [Bureau of Economic Geology](#) Scott Tinker provided testimony for a [hearing of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy](#)



[and Natural Resources](#) on climate change. The purpose of the hearing was to draw on data and analysis by the United States' and world's leading authorities on global climate trends from energy related sectors to consider where and how progress has been made in addressing climate change.



LBJ School of Public Affairs Faculty Unpack the Texas Freeze

[LBJ School of Public Affairs](#) urban policy experts Sherri Greenberg and Steven Pedigo discussed the impacts from the Texas winter storms on statewide power grid failures. The discussion covered topics on energy resiliency and the policymaking implications for determining the future of Texas' energy system. Watch the recorded conversation [here](#).



#UTEnergyTalks: Enabling Virtual Power Plants at Scale

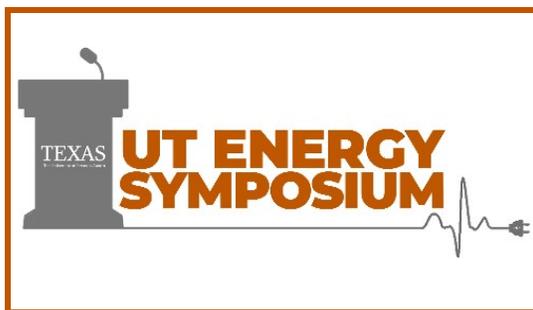
In case you missed it, check out the recorded #UTEnergyTalks panel - *Enabling Virtual Power Plants at Scale*. Stay tuned for more information about future webinars or panels hosted by the EI Fellows. Click [here](#) to watch the recorded session.

News from Around Campus

- **Jackson School of Geosciences:** Listen to Jorge Pinon's [interview](#) via *The World* on how the Texas power outages may impact Mexico.
- **Department of Mechanical Engineering:** Michael Webber was featured in an *NBC News* article on "[Who's really left holding the bag for those sky-high electricity bills in Texas?](#)", a *Texas Tribune* article: "[What it means to](#)

- [winterize Texas' energy plants](#)", a *New York Times* article: "[How Texas' Drive for Energy Independence Set It Up for Disaster](#)", and authored an opinion piece on "[Texas' grid should diversify to reduce interdependencies](#)" via the *Austin American-Statesman*.
- **LBJ School of Public Affairs | Energy Institute:** Varun Rai shared insights in an *E&E News* article on the [Texas grid crisis and its environmental justice implications](#) and an article in *The Hill* on "[Five things to know about Texas's strained electric grid](#)".
 - **Energy Institute:** Carey King authored an opinion article on "[How economic theories influence energy policy](#)" in the *Austin American-Statesman*.
 - **LBJ School of Public Affairs:** James Galbraith wrote an opinion piece entitled "[Texas Froze by Design](#)" in the *Project Syndicate*.
 - **Department of Mechanical Engineering:** Joshua Rhodes was featured in an *Atlantic* article "[Texas Failed Because It Did Not Plan](#)", CBS article "[Texans face drinking water shortage as power grid returns to normal](#)", and *Houston Chronicle* article "[Winter 2021 wrought the power crisis of a lifetime. Will it spur reform?](#)"
 - **Energy Institute:** David Tuttle was featured in a *KXAN* article: "[State of Texas: Who's responsible and how do we keep a winter storm crisis from happening again?](#)"
 - **McCombs School of Business | Department of Mechanical Engineering:** David Spence and Michael Webber were featured in a [story on Texas power grid deregulation](#) by the *Austin American-Statesman*.
 - **Energy Institute:** Carey King authored an opinion article on "[After power outages end, Texas must debate its electricity independence](#)" via *MarketWatch* and discussed [Governor Abbott's February 24 Statement on addressing Texas Blackout Issues](#).
 - **Cockrell School of Engineering:** Benjamin Leibowicz authored an opinion piece on "[Don't blame wind energy for the crisis](#)" on the Texas blackouts in the *San Antonio Express-News*.
 - **Energy Institute:** Varun Rai and Carey King were featured in a *USA Today* [piece on the 2021 Texas Power Outages](#).
 - **Jackson School of Geosciences:** Tip Meckel discussed recent [investments in carbon capture technology](#) via the *Houston Chronicle*.

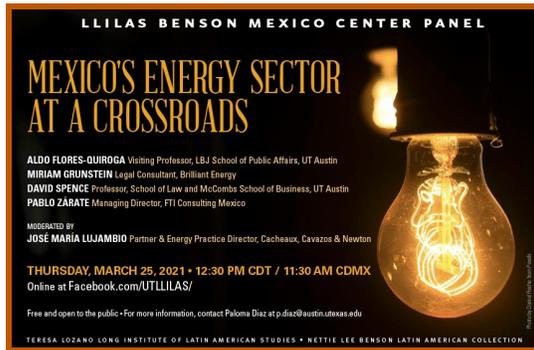
Upcoming Events



UT Energy Symposium: Spring 2021

This semester, the [UT Energy Symposium](#) (UTES) series features guest speakers from Google, Bipartisan Policy Center, and Universidade de Lisboa. The symposium, which is free and open to the public, is held virtually on Tuesdays from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. See the full

schedule [here](#).



Mexico Energy Sector at a Crossroads

On March 25, 2021 from 12:30 pm - 1:45 pm, the [Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies](#) (LLILAS) Benson Mexico Center will host a panel, "[Mexico's Energy Sector at a Crossroads](#)". During this discussion, panelists will analyze the amendments recently proposed by Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador to the Electricity Industry Law.



TexTalks: CO2 Carbon Capture with Ionic Liquids

Join the Cockrell School on Fri. 3/26 at 12pm for their latest [TexTalks](#), a free, online seminar series, on "[CO2 Carbon Capture with Ionic Liquids.](#)" Register by 3/25 to attend this presentation led by [Joan F. Brennecke](#) of the McKetta Dept. of Chemical Engineering on a new class of materials, Ionic liquids (ILs), that may be used for CO2 capture applications.

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