



Faculty Senate Bulletin

February 2022



"The giving of love is an education in itself." -- Eleanor Roosevelt

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64th Faculty Senate



The 64th Faculty Senate 2022-2023

Chair: Lynn Ledbetter

Vice Chair: Jennifer Jensen

Co-Secretaries: Dale Blasingame and Ben Martin

Faculty Senate Elections



Voting for Faculty Senate Elections 2023 takes place from Feb 20 - Mar 06.

2023 Senate Vacancies:

College of Education

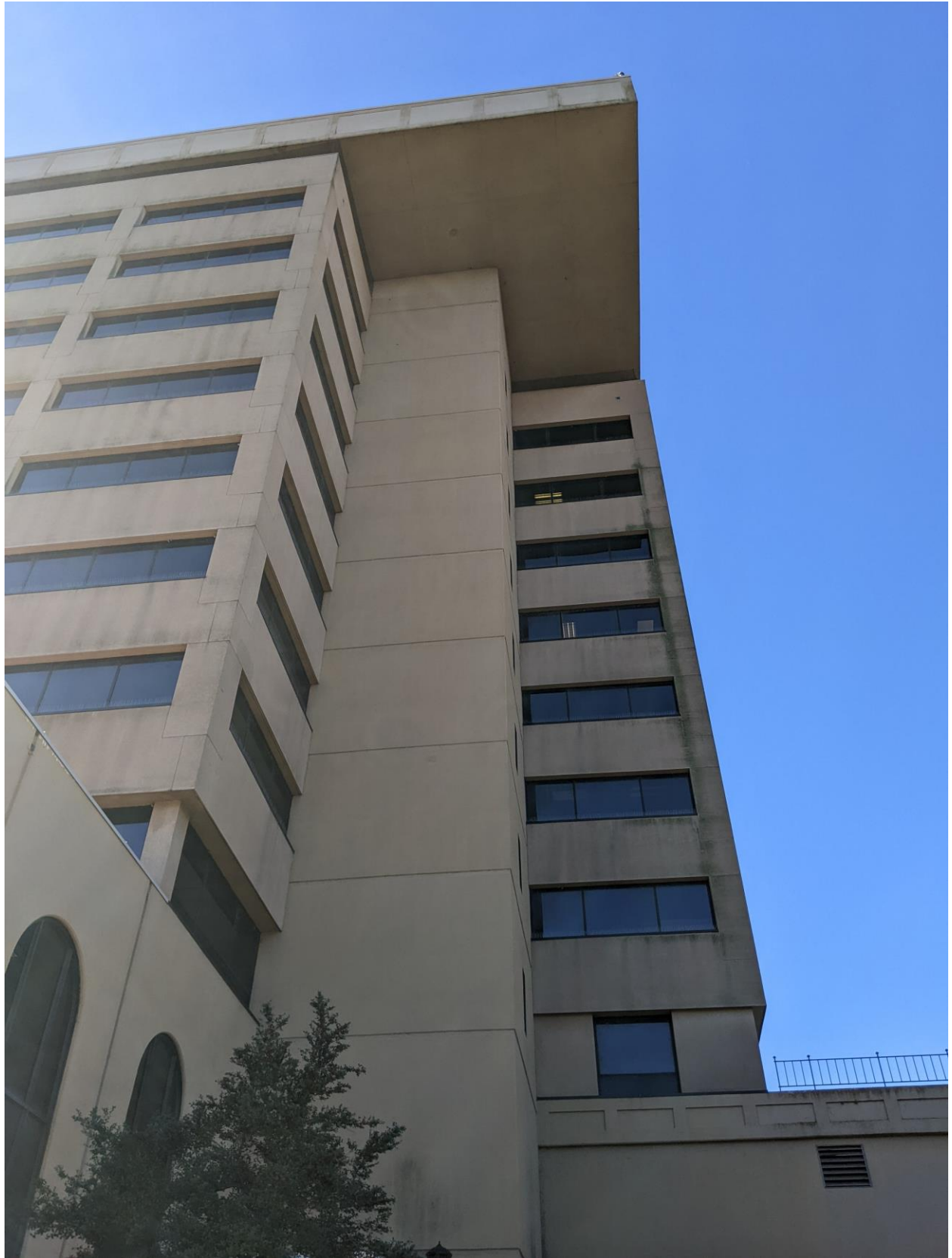
College of Fine Arts & Communication

McCoy College of Business Administration

College of Liberal Arts

College of Science & Engineering

Faculty Senate Purpose



In order to foster an environment at Texas State University which promotes continual improvement toward excellence, the Faculty Senate has as its basic purposes:

- advocating for faculty viewpoints on all issues in which faculty perceive themselves as stakeholders
- promoting communication between faculty and other groups on campus
- making recommendations on university policy and governance issues of concern to faculty
- soliciting faculty perceptions, suggestions, and recommendations
- seeking accurate data for use in advocating positions taken by faculty
- improving faculty salaries and working conditions
- facilitating budgetary education and assuring the opportunity for faculty participation in fiscal planning and decision making
- assuring appropriate faculty participation at all levels of university governance

Visit the Faculty Senate [website](#) to learn more about the [role](#) of the Faculty Senate

Spring Meeting Dates



All meetings are held in JCK 880 from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM with a Zoom option (unless otherwise noted on the [agenda](#))

January 18, January 25

February 01 (cancelled), February 08, February 15, February 22

March 01, March 08, March 22, March 29

April 05, April 12, April 19, April 26

May 03

Previous 22-23 approved meeting minutes are available on the Faculty Senate [website](#).

Academic Freedom Corner



Academic Freedom Survey Data Analysis:

The Academic Freedom Committee produced a report last year on findings from the academic freedom survey distributed to Texas State faculty. The full report can be found [here](#). Below is a bullet-point summary of key findings from the survey.

Quantitative analysis of survey data show that perceptions of having academic freedom are strongest among older faculty and faculty housed in the Science and Engineering college, and weakest among younger faculty, female faculty, Latino faculty, faculty of color, non-tenure-line faculty, and faculty in the Liberal Arts college.

Qualitative data on challenges to academic freedom show that faculty were most worried about:

- administrators and chairs not supporting them when students expressed unfair complaints toward or unfair accusations against a faculty member
- senior faculty and chairs marginalizing faculty in numerous ways, or even firing lower-ranked faculty because of their approach to teaching or research, or because of their identity or orientation
- marginalization of research agendas in a way that negatively impacted research funding opportunities, tenure applications, and the description/discussion of research
- marginalization of or the risk thereof to faculty with a) political views that differ from most of their colleagues; b) research agendas that have been heavily politicized; c) threats from politicians and legislators against those with politicized research agendas.

With regard to academic freedom paving the way for academic accomplishments:

- faculty feel they can be creative or conduct research on certain topics they may not be able to conduct in non-university settings
- it also allows them to teach various subjects as they see fit, and to have the freedom to try different approaches in the classroom.
- others said was not an issue to them because they studied or taught things that were not controversial, or because they avoided controversial topics so that academic freedom would be less of an issue

When asked for any other thoughts on academic freedom:

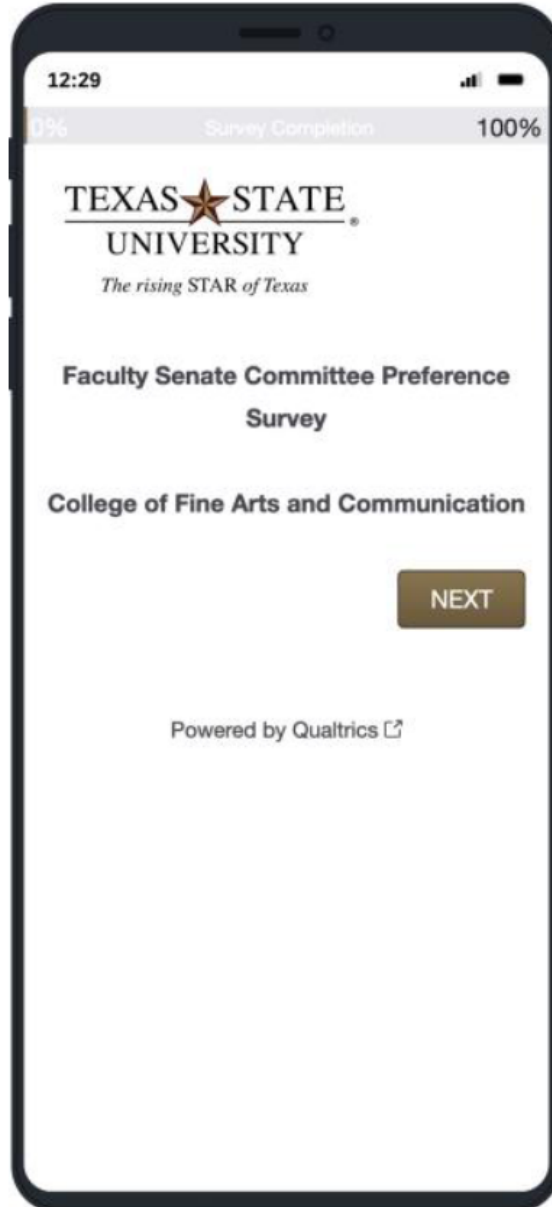
- There was a definite lack of consensus among faculty who wrote about general academic-freedom perceptions. Some thought the academic freedom climate was positive. Others were fearful or anxious of losing academic freedom, and some felt that academic freedom did not really exist in practice. A few wrote that the concept of academic freedom was murky or complicated. Another few wrote that academic freedom was essential, while others felt it was constrained by senior colleagues and/or administrators.
- many faculty across the political spectrum expressed concern about how politics and an increasing lack of tolerance for alternative views were negatively impacting academic freedom. Most mentioned politics and political actors in the state of Texas restricting academic freedom, while others mentioned the political views of the majority of faculty on campus doing so.

- many wrote that upper-level administrators and chairs were not supportive enough of academic freedom, and would not offer protection against threats from politicians or speak out against such threats.
- some wrote that upper-level administrators and chairs would not provide protection from students complaining about something a faculty member said in class (or was misinterpreted as saying), and would not provide transparency regarding decisions impacting how complaints from students against faculty are handled. Others wrote about how this lack of protection would also affect tenure decisions.
- a number of comments were written on threats to academic freedom for those who teach about or conduct research involving critical race theory and gender studies.
- there were also perceptions regarding a lack of protection for faculty who come from marginalized groups with regard to race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation; as well as a lack of protection for graduate assistants, non-tenure-line, and nontenured faculty.

If you would like to contact the committee about any concerns regarding academic freedom on campus, you can contact us using our contact form at the link below.

<https://www.txst.edu/facultysenate/committees/freedom/contact-afc.html>

Committee Preference Survey

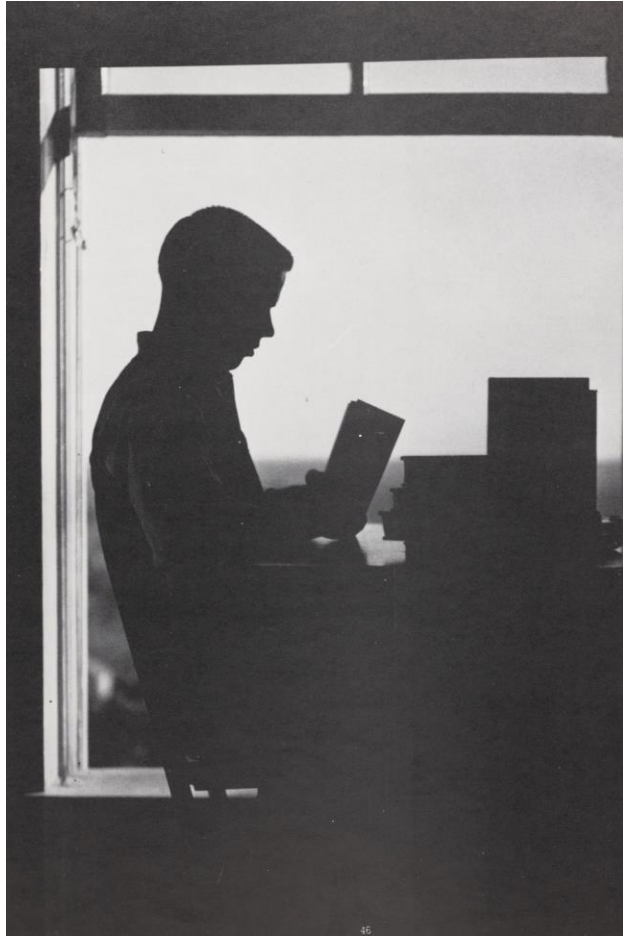


The Faculty Senate encourages all faculty members to participate in shared governance by volunteering for university level committee service. On February 9th the Faculty Senate distributed a survey to determine faculty members' preferences for committee service. You should have received an email from the Faculty Senate with a Qualtrics link. We estimate that it will take about ten minutes for faculty to review the committees and indicate three ranked preferences for Faculty Senate Committees and three ranked preferences for University-wide Committees/Councils.

The survey will close Monday, March 6, 2022.

If you did not receive the email, please contact us at facultysenate@txstate.edu - you may want to check your junk folder too.

Assessment of Administrators



The Faculty Senate conducts an Assessment of Administrators. Your senators request that each voting faculty member at Texas State University **participate in this year's assessment by March 3, 2023**. Each survey will only take a few minutes to complete, so please do not miss your opportunity to evaluate the person who was your dean during the fall 2022 semester.

While the surveys are confidential, filling out the instrument does require one to log in. However, every reasonable effort is made to preserve the anonymity of respondents.

Contact Us!



Do you have a question, concern or issue you want the Faculty Senate to address? Want to make a suggestion? [Contact the senate via our website.](#)

More information about these and other topics can be found in the Faculty Senate minutes posted on the [Faculty Senate website](#), or by contacting your [Faculty Senator](#) or [Senate Liaison](#). The Faculty Senate encourages you to voice your concerns and comments on any faculty and shared governance topics to these representatives or directly to the senate.