


**Joint Statement of UT Austin Faculty Council and Staff Council Leadership
Regarding Recent Staff Terminations
April 12, 2024**

On Tuesday, April 2, 2024 50+ members of the staff were abruptly fired from the University of Texas Austin. The dismissals were framed in the context of SB 17 compliance, suggesting that “additional measures were necessary to reduce overlap, streamline student-facing portfolios, and optimize and redirect resources into our fundamental activities of teaching and research” (President Jay Hartzell, April 2, 2024). Not a single dismissed staff member was working in a DEI space, but rather focusing on learning a new job assignment, as the university had fully complied with SB17 as of January 1, 2024. Several of our dismissed colleagues were award-winning, some serving more than 25 years at the university, most were from marginalized groups, including LGTBQIA+ and people of color. All were valued for their contributions to UT. We, the leadership of the Staff Council and the Faculty Council, condemn these actions and the political interference they reflect.

The state constitution charges us all with the establishment and maintenance of a “university of the first class.” We cannot do so in a climate of disruption, fear, lack of trust, and uncertainty. Political interference in operations of higher education is not a feature of a healthy and functional educational system. We are a community of teachers, researchers, historians, practitioners, lawyers, medical professionals, administrators, and caretakers. Our role is to educate, nurture, prepare, and learn from our students and each other, the proud citizens of Texas, to change the world. As stewards of this university, we are dedicated to maintaining and improving our status as one of the top ranked universities in the nation and the world.

We call on every Texan to support us as we honor the 176 year-long tradition of excellence that is exemplified by the University of Texas at Austin. We wholeheartedly believe the university is large enough to encompass many ideas, many people, and many experiences.


DocuSigned by:

2FA407DD8C7A448
Charlotte Canning, Secretary of the General Faculty and Faculty Council; Professor, Theatre and Dance

DocuSigned by:

61F3468B308B447
Stella Flores, Chair-Elect, Faculty Council; Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy

DocuSigned by:

E5964938A07D421
Megan Hildebrandt, Faculty Council Executive Committee Representative; Associate Professor of Practice, Art and Art History

DocuSigned by:

DA0527433430481
Jen Moon, Chair, Faculty Council and Professor of Instruction, Biology Instruction Office

DocuSigned by:

Domino Perez

60C299EDC032431...
Domino Perez, Past Chair, Faculty Council; Professor, English

DocuSigned by:

Ann Sellers

D8E988B0E95E450...
Ann Sellers, Chair, Staff Council; Purchasing Coordinator, Psychology

DocuSigned by:

Sarah Sloan

70389FAB381E47B
Sarah Sloan, Faculty Council Executive Committee Representative; Clinical Associate Professor, School of Social Work

DocuSigned by:

Jessica Toste

33F5328E3BBB45D
Jessica Toste, Chair, Graduate Assembly; Associate Professor, Special Education

DocuSigned by:

Steve Vladeck

9D3174FE02BB409F
Steve Vladeck, Faculty Council Executive Committee Representative; Professor, School of Law