

# Faculty Ombudsperson

## Faculty Ombudsperson

*The university has a Faculty Ombudsperson, who is appointed by the President for a three-year term. The ombudsperson is a designated neutral, neither an employee nor a management advocate. In addition to the explicit responsibilities detailed below, the ombudsperson is empowered to develop procedures, consistent with this policy, to facilitate the timely and equitable resolution of faculty concerns and grievances- and, via the Faculty Senate, to recommend changes to [AA/PPS 04.02.32, Faculty Grievance Policy](#).*

*Beginning June 2022, the university is implementing a new model of support that includes two faculty ombudspersons. This model is designed to better serve Texas State's large and diverse faculty body and to provide faculty members with an additional layer of support in addressing questions, concerns, and solutions to work-related issues. The faculty ombudspersons are advocates for respectful and civil dialogue, transparent and fair policies, and continuous improvement.*

*Ombuds support is available to all faculty during the fall, spring, and summer terms. Faculty members seeking assistance may contact either ombudsperson listed below by emailing [facultyombuds@txstate.edu](mailto:facultyombuds@txstate.edu) and addressing the email to the preferred ombudsperson, providing their name, contact information, and preferred meeting times/days, and briefly describing any questions, support, and assistance needs.*

[Dr. Todd Jewell](#), Professor, Department of Finance and Economics

Appointed: June 2022 (term expires August 2025)

Email: [facultyombuds@txstate.edu](mailto:facultyombuds@txstate.edu)

Dr. Jewell earned a BA in Economics from Pepperdine University and a MA and PhD in Economics from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Before joining Texas State University as the Chair of the Department of Finance and Economics in 2014, Dr. Jewell worked at the University of North Texas, where he was Chair of the Department of Economics from 2010 to 2014. While at Texas State, Dr. Jewell has also served as the Associate Dean of Research and International Programs in the McCoy College of Business and as the Interim Chair of the Department of Computer Information Systems and Quantitative Methods. Dr. Jewell's main research areas are Health Economics (especially International Health) and Sports Economics (especially the Labor Market of Professional Sports).

[Dr. Colleen Myles](#), Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Environmental Studies

Appointed: June 2022 (term expires August 2025)

Email: [facultyombuds@txstate.edu](mailto:facultyombuds@txstate.edu)

Dr. Colleen C. Myles, a first-generation college student, has a BA in Liberal Studies and Political Science from Sonoma State University of California, Davis. Dr. Myles served as an AmeriCorps Volunteer as an undergraduate and then as a Community-Based Natural Resources Manager in Tanzania with the Peace Corps following graduation. Dr. Myles came to Texas State University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies in 2013 and was promoted to Associate Professor in 2019. She is currently the Regional Councilor for the Southwest on the National Council for the American Association of

Geographers and is the former Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee at Texas State University. Dr. Myles is a human geographer and political ecologist whose research and teaching focus on land and environmental management, sustainability, food and agriculture, and fermented landscapes.

### **Role of Faculty Ombudsperson**

The Ombuds is a neutral person with whom faculty members can voice concerns, evaluate situations, organize thoughts, and identify options. The Ombuds adheres to the principles outlined in the [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice](#) advocated by the International Ombudsman Association:

**Independence:** The Ombuds is independent in structure, function, and appearance to the highest degree possible within Texas State. The Ombuds is independent of the University's formal administrative structure and strives to consider all sides of an issue in an impartial and objective manner. The Ombuds cannot impose solutions, but identifies options and strategies for resolution of disputes.

**Neutrality and Impartiality:** The Ombuds, as a designated neutral, remains unaligned and impartial. The Ombuds strives to promote procedural fairness in the content and administration of Texas State's practices, processes, and policies. The Ombuds does not engage in any situation that could create a conflict of interest.

**Confidentiality:** The Ombuds holds all communications with those seeking assistance in strict confidence, and does not disclose confidential communications unless given permission to do so, except as required by law, or where, in the judgment of the Ombuds, there appears to be imminent risk of serious harm.

**Informality:** The Ombuds, as an informal resource, does not participate in any formal adjudicative or administrative procedure related to concerns brought to their attention. The Ombuds provides information relating to university policies and procedures and facilitates the resolution of problems and grievances through informal investigation and mediation, but does not replace or supersede other university grievances, complaint or appeal procedures.

### **Informal Resolution and Mediation**

Faculty members must make a bona fide effort to resolve an issue collegially by discussing their concerns with their director/chair and dean. If this does not prove satisfactory, faculty members may consult with the Faculty Ombudsperson. The Ombuds serves as a confidential, neutral, informal and independent resource for faculty concerns and conflicts at Texas State. As an independent resource for problem resolution, the Ombuds works to ensure that all members of the faculty are treated equitably and fairly. The Ombuds can provide confidential and informal assistance to help resolve issues related to both the workplace and academic environments.

### **Filing a Grievance**

If informal resolution is neither possible nor satisfactory in the judgment of the concerned faculty member, the faculty member may file a formal grievance pursuant to procedures described in [AA/PPS 04.02.32](#), Faculty Grievance Policy, section 4.