

Truman AAUP Fall 2023 Survey

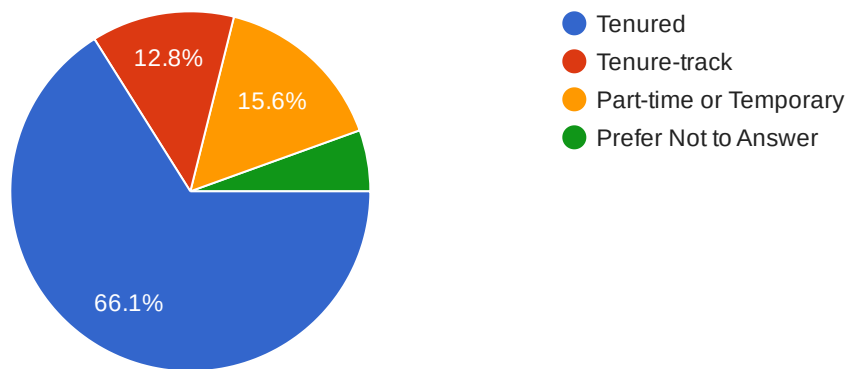
109 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

What is your tenure status at Truman?

 Copy

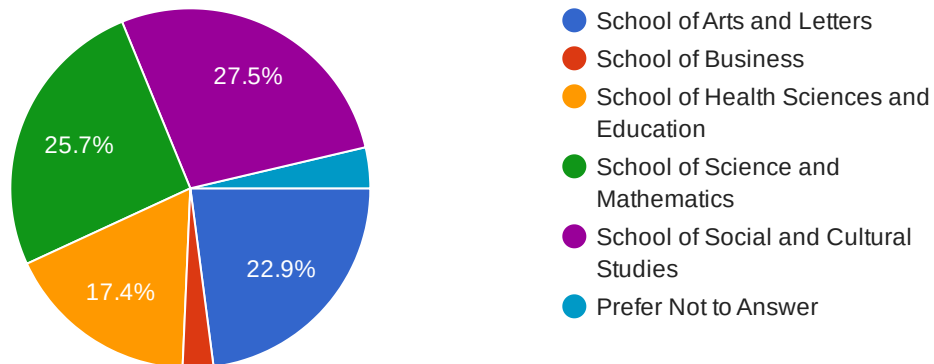
109 responses



To which school do you belong?

 Copy

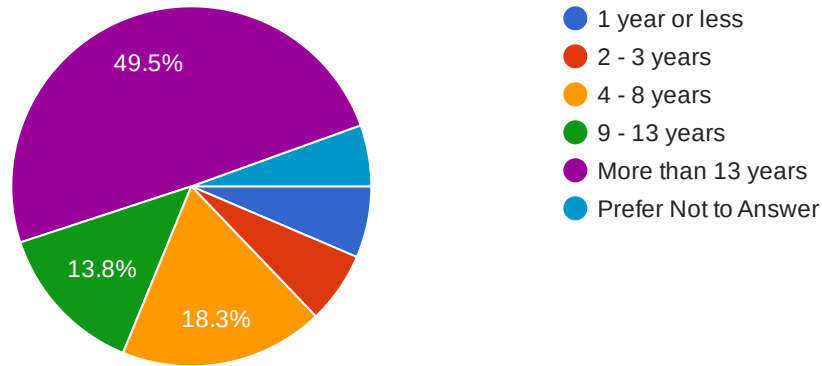
109 responses



How many years have you been employed by Truman State University?

 Copy

109 responses



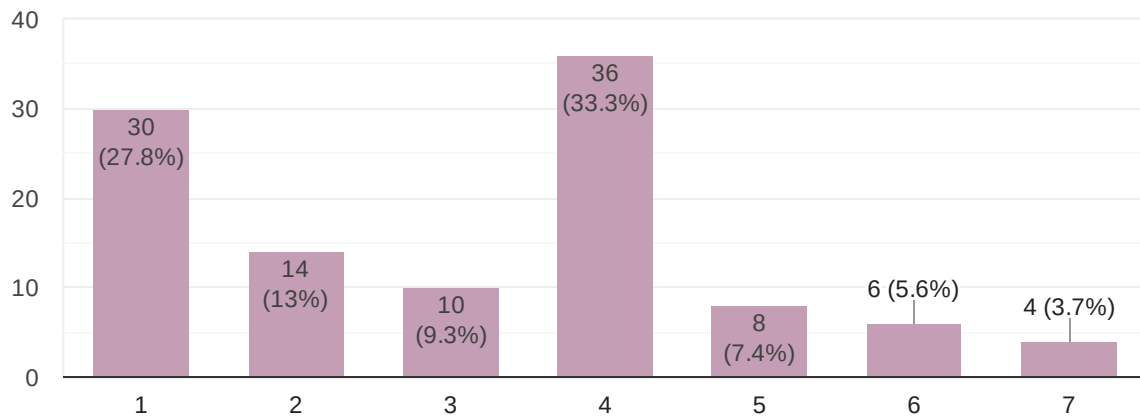
Recent Issues and Campus Climate

Section I: Truman's Reorganization Plan

1. I think that the reorganization will benefit my department more than the current organizational structure.

 Copy

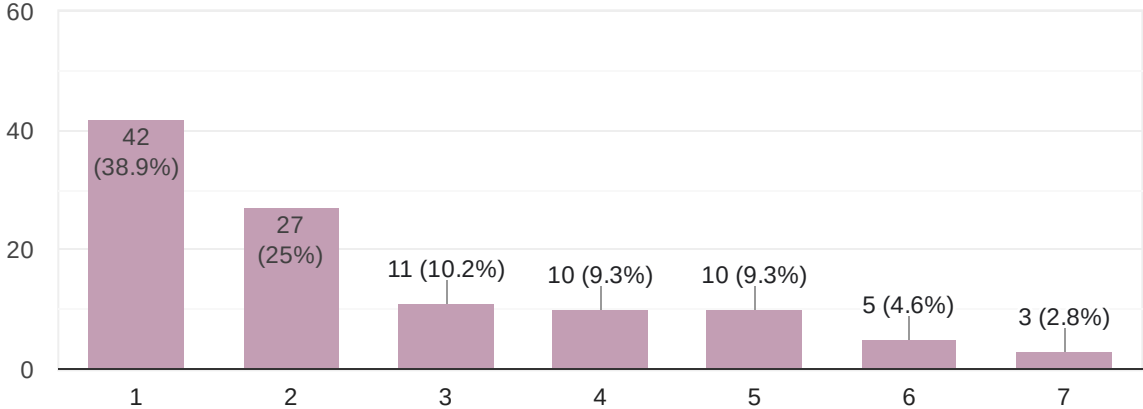
108 responses



2. The administration operated in a transparent manner in the creation of this reorganization plan.



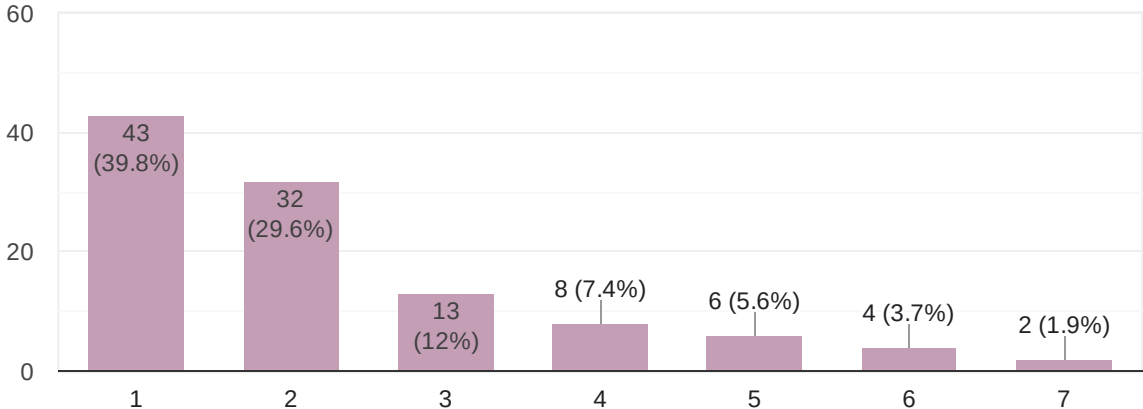
108 responses



3. The rationale for these changes has been effectively communicated to university faculty.



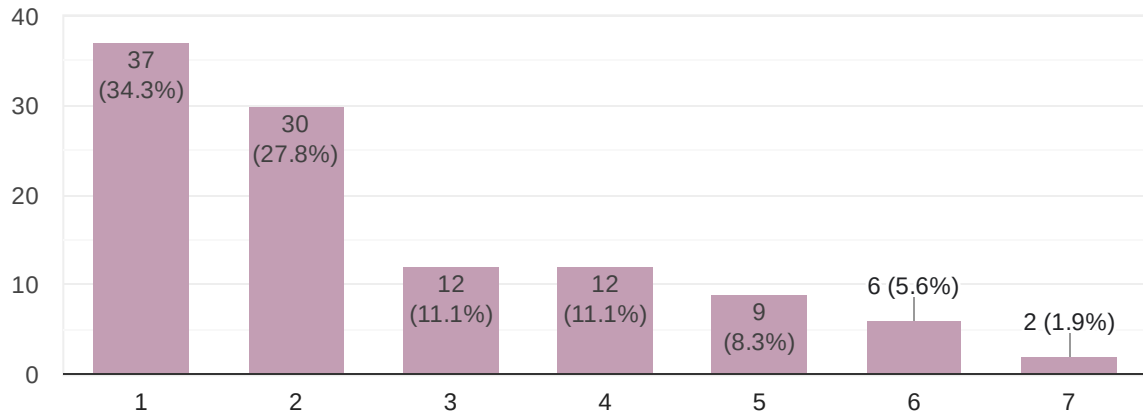
108 responses



4. The administration has valued faculty responses to this reorganization plan.



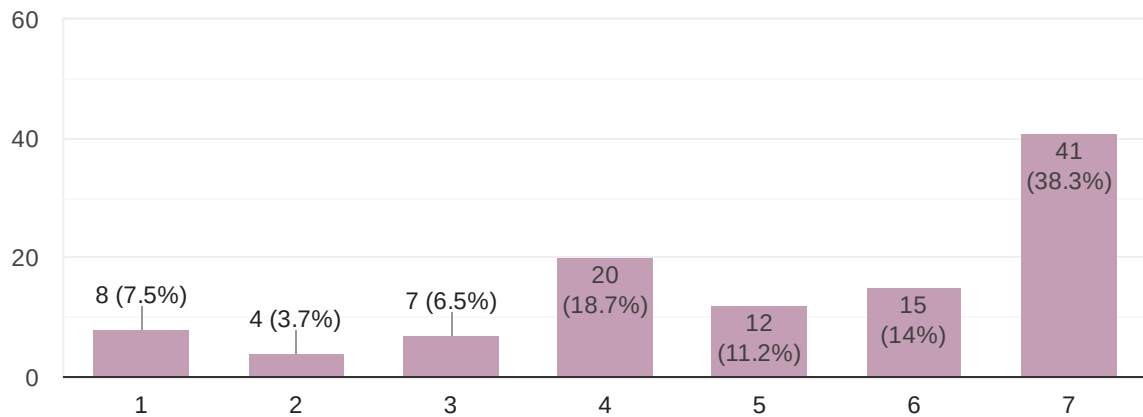
108 responses



5. The university administration should have an open faculty forum to discuss faculty concerns about the reorganization plan.



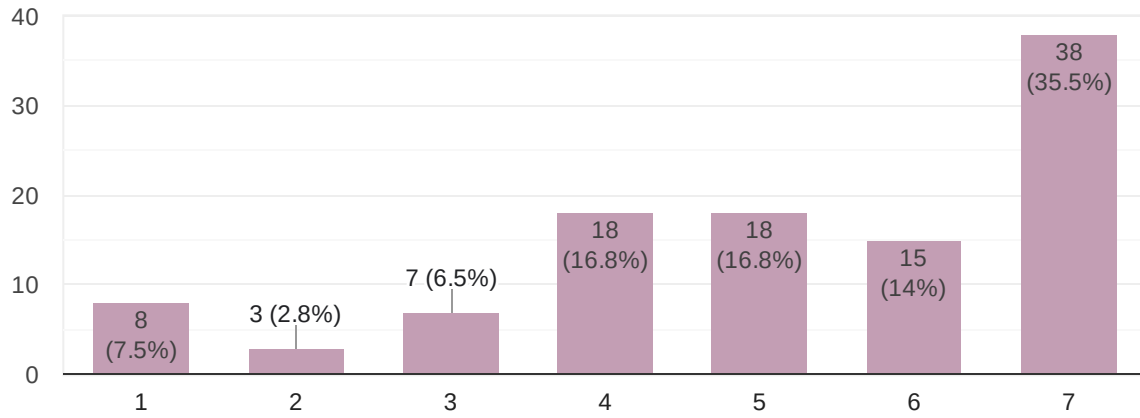
107 responses



6. I think that the reorganization will disproportionately hurt some disciplines and/or programs.

 Copy

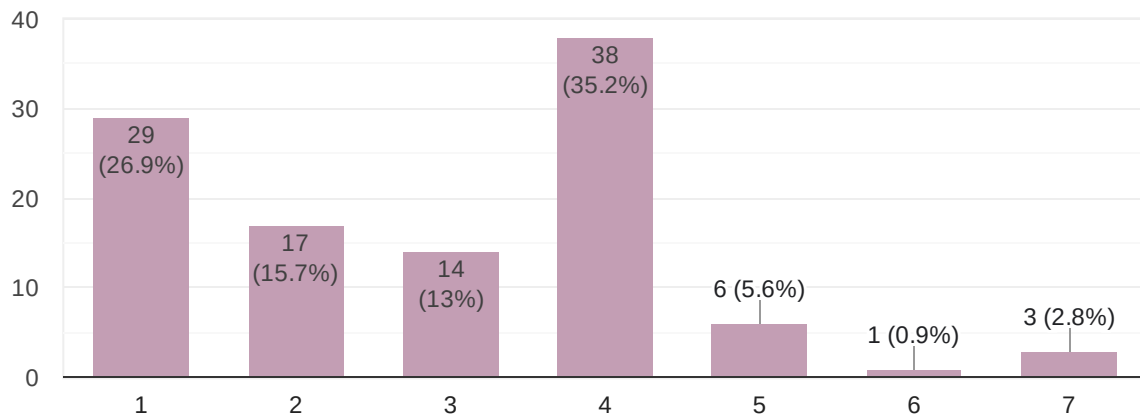
107 responses



7. The reorganization plan will make it easier to recruit and retain faculty for my department.

 Copy

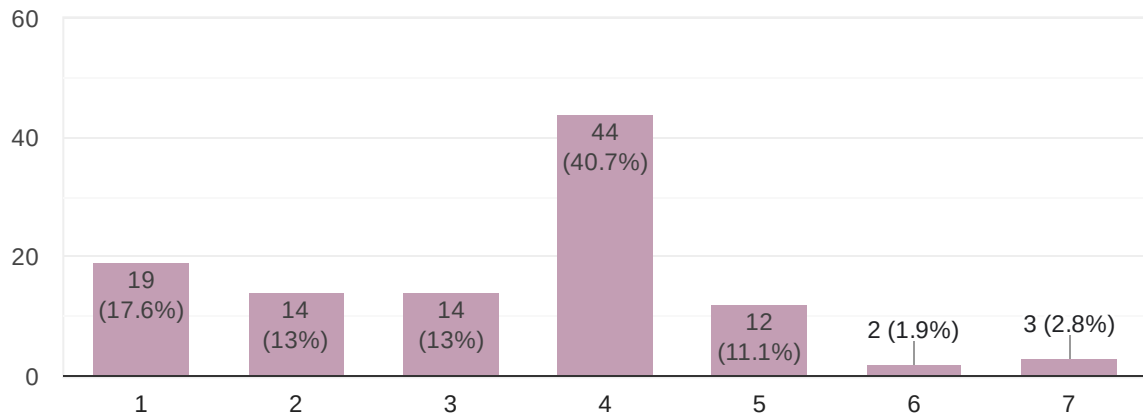
108 responses



8. The reorganization plan will benefit Truman's students.

 Copy

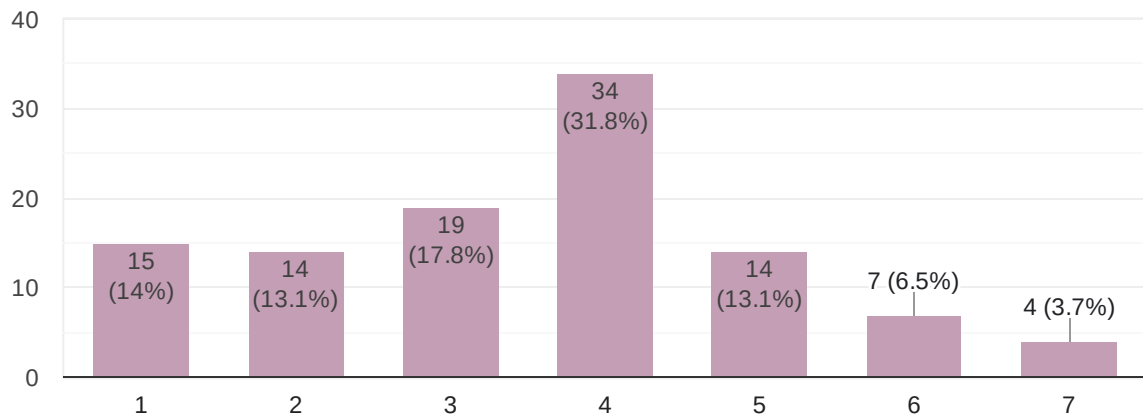
108 responses



9. The reorganization plan will make interdisciplinary work easier for my discipline.

 Copy

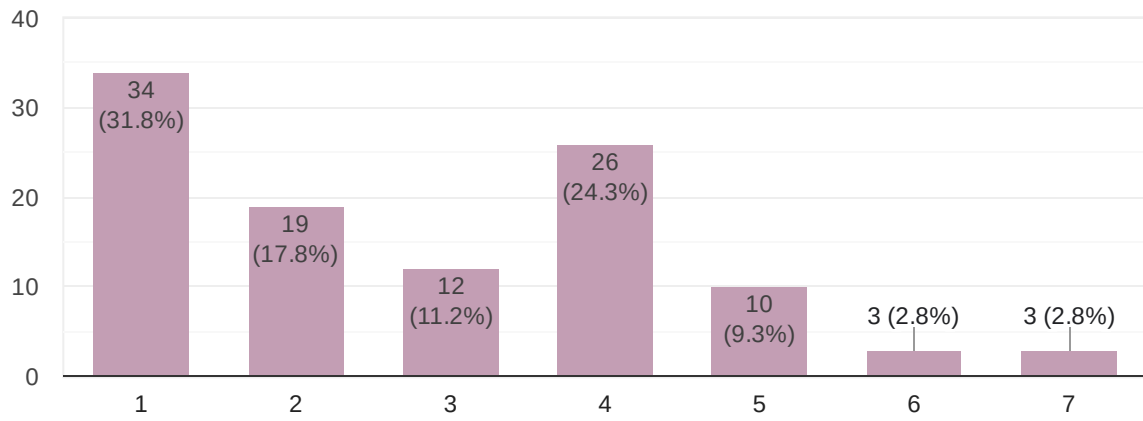
107 responses



10. I am excited about the reorganization plan.

 Copy

107 responses



11. Please share any other comments you have about the reorganization plan.

43 responses

This is what nitwits do when they have free time - it makes them feel like they're DOING something. They were failures in the classroom and as researchers, so this is what they do now.

At the SPAW, the VP and Pres were not on the same page about reorg. New VPs use reorg to make their mark in order to move up the ladder, however, this VP did not do his homework on our majors/depts/students, only listened to selected and biased viewpoints (and left at least one Dean out of the entire convo and Deans' emails throughout the whole process - very unprofessional and nasty), talked out of both sides of his mouth like a sleazy politician, told us it was not about FTEs on Thurs, but said it was about FTEs on Friday. No one has told us/taxpayers how much \$ this will cost or save, have not seen evidence/data/documentation for reorg rationale. Have not seen a logistics plan or any action plan - do they have them?? Is Dave Rector on board with the budget? Did they even submit a proposed budget that aligns with their objectives/goals from the strategic plan or any plan (that we have not yet seen)? Big question: showing us evidence, stats, numbers, data - will this be better for the students/depts/majors re: better grades, increased employability, higher passing rates on certification exams, increased retention rates, lower tuition, higher national rankings, etc? Is any of this backed up by best practices or evidence-based strategies or just something made-up that would get an F if a student presented it? Have no problem 'changing' - have lived thru the 'mission change' and get it. As administration, they would get an F in change management - their process and presentation of it was NOT professional or best practices - therefore, do they even care? Campus climate is in the strategic plan - looks like they won't hit that mark - faculty morale just took a big hit from this and may not recover for a long time (which indirectly affects students). When a faculty member introduced themselves to the new VP with a handshake; he did not shake their hand, was exceptionally rude, and did not even attempt to listen to their presentation. Sue talked about the trend of quiet quitting in the workforce at the SPAW - how do I sign up for that?

I have no power or voice whatsoever. It's pointless for me to even think about it. If you tenured faculty want to have any sort of power or influence, unionize.

I am appalled at the current lack of shared governance that is currently running rampant at Truman. The amount of group-think that occurs at every decision point is shockingly predictable.

The plan seems neutral. All the work, all the time, and we will go through an expensive contraction to get rid of some chairs and deans, but then have to hire sub-deans and sub-chairs that, with the new software costs, will render it cost-neutral, so why are we going through all this?! All the classes will still be the same, so for students, no diff.

The plan proposes at least one Frankenstein's monster of a department that will not deliver improvements for either students or faculty, but will probably lead to a deterioration in



conditions for both.

It really just seems like it was the three proposed new deans just picking what they wanted until maybe some existing departments were left over and had to be put somewhere. Building a sense of belonging in some of the proposed new schools will be next to impossible, given how little some of the disciplines have in common. I feel sorry for anyone from a department other than the Dean's home discipline.

The administration has a strange conception of what a stakeholder meeting is. No rank-and-file faculty are considered to be stakeholders. Only existing chairs are allowed to speak for their entire departments and the administration is so closed-minded and defensive regarding their seriously flawed restructuring model.

The lack of rationales for the composition of disciplines in the 3 schools is puzzling. I would like to hear, in detail, how this particular model of the schools will benefit Truman, the students, and its employees. I am not asking about the purpose of reorganization broadly, I am asking about the proposed groupings of departments. Also, the president and other higher administration on campus, seem disconnected from faculty on discussing the details of reorganization. It seems as though there is a pretense in involving faculty in restructuring when in the end, the provost and president make the final decision regardless of faculty input.

My concern is that the Dean of the new school including education will not have any ideas about our department.

For the most part, I don't think that my every day job is going to feel that much different as a result of the reorganization. I certainly don't think that the students will care that much. I do think it is good to reduce the number of departments. In fact, I think we should probably have reduced that number a little more.

I am in favor of shrinking the number of schools and even combining some departments to create administrative efficiencies. I am also in favor of interdisciplinary collaboration. I am disappointed that the faculty in each department didn't have more say in who they were merged with and feel that the way the reorganization was done has negatively impacted faculty morale, especially in the School of Social and Cultural Studies significantly. I do like the language the Provost used when discussing the reorg at SPAW but haven't seen that holistic approach in practice in the way siloed meetings and discussions have been scheduled.

I have yet to hear any specific justification for why the reorganization is happening, or any specific ways in which it will improve. Conversely, I have concerns about it, and have heard more concerns from others, but I have not heard anything from the administration about how those concerns will be addressed (if at all).

This reorganization plan did not take into account the methodological and disciplinary perspectives of the SSCS at all. It lumps disciplines together in nonsensical ways, that are not considered appropriate by the disciplines themselves. This will make it impossible to hire new faculty, and it will destroy these departments. For other schools, some departments were split in ways that will hurt them as well. Some were joined in ways that will hurt them. Overall,



nothing makes sense.

This plan ignores the recommendations from the faculty reorganization plan report, and the administration has provided no explanation for the proposed plan at all. No one understands what is planned or is going on. None of that has been communicated to faculty or anyone else. The timeline for change is very quick, and I have little trust in the administration to enact positive change.

By destroying our currently successful department, I have to assume students will suffer. I know they already suffer with the lack of communication and information about this reorganization. I don't know why the university administration is working to destroy successful department structures to drive students away when we are in the middle of an enrollment crisis.

In general, this plan doesn't take into account the actual similarities and differences between disciplines. It also doesn't take into account our programs or our strengths.

Most importantly, it doesn't create any vision for Truman or support for our excellence. If anything, it further reduces our support of the liberal arts and sciences mission without replacing it with "radical clarity" or clarity of any type.

The lack of appropriate communication (e.g. positions being restructured or units changing) and lack of transparency especially related to the decision-making process is extremely concerning. The level of trust at both my individual level and at the level of my department has been so severely eroded in such a short amount of time, that I don't see how it can be recovered under the current administration. What a waste of time to provide input/feedback when it was, in many cases, disregarded.

The lack of transparency on how the plan was created is very concerning. By not providing a forum to discuss faculty concerns about the reorganization plan, demonstrates that administration does not value faculty feedback.

I was disappointed that the new Provost made this major decision about the reorganization of schools without providing a clear rationale and before he had even met the faculty. I wonder what happened to the survey results from last spring? Did our comments there matter at all? This feels like an inauspicious beginning for Dr. Freedman's tenure here. The tone of his email of August 21, 2023 gave me the impression that he is willing to listen to department chairs now only to convince them of the merits of his plan. The faculty deserve to be heard.

Did the provost look at ours and base his on that? I still remember at the ALF meeting where someone asked last year....."what is to stop the new provost from coming in and doing whatever they want" and the President raised her hand and said "I will". Now the provost presented his own plan with very little indication that he looked at the other proposed models and the president said nothing. Perhaps he did look at the other models and base his proposal on what had already been developed but there was no indication that had happen. We were just suddenly presented at SPAW with the new plan.



The structure doesn't matter as much as people worry about.

I have a comment...But if you know what it is, you're in the circle...I don't trust "Rats"

Very simple. "If it's not broke, don't 'fix' it." HES is one of the few things that has been working at this university. Focus on the departments that are tanking instead. That also doesn't mean poaching students/courses from HES.

I have just started here at Truman and in fact have relocated a considerable distance to work here. The abrupt (to me) reorganization plan has left me slightly questioning my decision; as in, I am a bit concerned about the stability of the university during the current climate.

I am not sure the intent has been communicated to faculty

I am disappointed in the President and the VPAA in how they have handled reorganization. Reorg is a distraction from the greater issues (e.g. continued enrollment decline) and it has demonstrated to me and others that the administration does not value faculty time (formed a committee- didn't use their suggestions) or preferences (I know no one who likes reorg). It was never clearly communicated why we are even reorganizing. It doesn't save money, it doesn't reduce layers of administration, and it doesn't respect Truman's history or legacy. I don't think they researched best practices in reorganizational structuring. Nonetheless, I fear this mistake is too late to be fixed. My understanding is that the President and VPAA will self rationalize this poor choice no matter what evidence is presented to them.

It disgusts me. We wasted all kinds of time and energy giving our input and feedback on reorganization and the new provost ignored it. He's isolated an arrogant, and refuses to listen to input about how to better his plan that was pulled out of thin air over the summer. Sadly, this is true also about other decisions made by the administration here.

Very confused about why HES is being split as a dept. Rationale doesn't make sense. Very concerned moving forward. Feel like our Dean was not included on this process

It seems like our whole school was demoted from being a school to becoming a single department (with a few departments sent elsewhere).

None of the four plans for reorganization were offered as an option. I feel badly for the committee to have worked so hard to come up with ways to restructure the university that were clearly overlooked. In none of the proposed plans were Health and Exercise Sciences split up. I don't understand the rationale for splitting up a STRONG department that has a high number of majors.

I have answer the questions about "reorganization". I do not think the reorganization *plan* is all that clear. To clarify, I think the initial rationale for the reorganization makes sense. But the actual implementation and the rationale for choosing this particular way of doing it, has really not been explained very well at all.



It would be nice to know why the committee's hard work was simply cast aside.

Many of these questions ask me to think about the university as a whole. That's nearly impossible to do without detailed knowledge of how every other department works. Therefore, I've had to interpret several questions to refer to areas that I do have knowledge of. I assume others will do the same, but I thought it would be fair to include information on how to interpret my responses.

I think some of these questions are hard to answer. I'm answering them based on the potential benefits to my program and students. I could entirely be wrong though. I'm optimistic about the changes to my program, but I also think reorg could be damaging to some programs. I think my program being moved to a different school has a lot of potential, but I also don't understand how we can be sustainable as a department of four people (especially when other departments were collapsed to form one large department).

At some point a decision needed to be made. We as faculty had three opportunities to weigh in (although it seems like that faculty feedback for some mergers was totally disregarded). I am not sure having faculty weigh in more collectively will be productive at this point.

I have little trust in this administration now.

As much as I dislike the idea of the restructuring, I do think that we have gotten smaller as a university and we probably have too many small departments. You get to a point where it is difficult to staff a chair, a FS rep, a UGC rep, departmental committees, and university committees.

This is a nightmare. I plan on quitting.

It is an unfortunate, but necessary change.

I think small group discussions might be more productive than a huge open forum, but the larger open forum will help others understand the problems that some departments have (even if we don't all share those problems)

Although the administration poorly communicated the process of reaching the final model, the model itself is a viable and clear one to audiences outside of campus.

Reorganization has the potential to be exciting. However, the one presented by the provost does not take into account months of hard work by the faculty committee. Some programs--especially those in the social sciences--seem arbitrarily scattered or integrated. A coherent rationale has not been shared with faculty. And communication from the provost has not made clear whether or not he is in fact open to making changes. As a result, the plan feels unilaterally imposed by the provost & president.

This process has repeated the missteps of the last reorg. Very disappointing.



Huge debacle, no cost savings, increases bureaucratic hoops even though we will be less than half the size of the institution that adopted the current structure, no place in the structure for the social sciences which is a vital part of the liberal arts and sciences. The new structure mimics community colleges. To have a provost with no understanding of our history, culture or mission arbitrarily determine new clusters based on his post-modern view of higher education is offensive. Furthermore, that he expects Truman faculty to route their ideas through hierarchical positions chosen by the administration is equally offensive and violates promises made to many faculty members when they were hired. The collegial model of administration is the one we should be following, not the corporate model of administration.

I think that rather than having a university forum to hear faculty concerns, the administration should have a university forum to better explain the vision for what's possible with reorganization. I haven't worked with a Provost who had a vision and tried to get others on board with it. I don't think the vision has been well communicated to campus as a whole. I do think there is a vision and that it is why the Provost seems not to be listening to faculty concerns.

I am excited to be rid of a dean for my current school who I don't think has supported my program/discipline well.

It is frustrating and alarming that the new provost's proposed plan diverged so significantly from the proposed plans that a well appointed and hard working committee spent over a year working on. I didn't think he would pick one plan to the T but I expected him to generally follow one of the proposed plans and maybe change a few minor things. Instead what we are being told we must accept looks nothing like any of the proposed plans, especially in how it impacts my current department and school. I expected him to take in account all the work of the committee and all of the faculty who gave feedback at various stages during the committee's work. But instead it seems all of that faculty input and guidance meant very little to a person who has barely been here 3 months. Faculty have tried to talk with him and offer alternatives that would be easy to implement but he is clearly not willing to actually listen to anyone (except maybe Sue).

The new provost's reorg plan does not look like a good fit for Truman as a small liberal arts college. He didn't really follow any of the proposed plans which is a bit insulting since the committee worked on it really hard and took a lot of faculty perspectives into account when they came up with it. But he couldn't care less apparently. He's stepping on rakes everywhere he turns but is oblivious about how it's negatively impacting his relationship with faculty. It's obvious why he was the provost search committee's third choice. He isn't a good fit for Truman and only time will tell if he will work out here. I think Sue brought him in to be the "enforcer" and if he wants to do that, he is in for a bumpy ride. He would do much better to compromise just a little and listen more to faculty.

Overall I am not happy with the re-org plan and how it has been communicated. I am one of the



faculty smooshed into the proposed "social sciences" department which is 5 current programs, spanning 7 unique disciplines, and almost 2 dozen faculty - far bigger on every single measure than any other of the provost's proposed departments. What makes this especially confounding is that NONE of the committee's proposed plans combined my program (or any program) into such a large department with so many disciplines.

I am astounded that the provost can't see how unwieldy such a large "social sciences" department spanning 7 disciplines would be, and how that will obviously negatively impact faculty, curriculum, and students. He didn't combine any other programs like this, in fact he split some of them up into smaller departments. It feels very unfair that we are getting treated this way because this will drastically reduce our representation in faculty governance and it means for 80% of the faculty in the department, they will have a chair from a totally different discipline. It's one thing to combine 2, 3, maybe 4 small departments but 7 disciplines is clearly out of hand. It concerns me because how can I have effective leadership from a chair who is juggling 7 different disciplines and 2 dozen faculty. Currently in my smaller department I have a wonderful and supportive relationship with my chair, which allows me to be the best teacher scholar I can be. It has absolutely benefited our students in the major, minor, or just in our classes generally for me to have that kind of relationship with my chair and colleagues, which I would certainly lose under his proposed changes.

So many of the new combinations and splitting things up and moving them around make me seriously question the provost's basic knowledge of disciplines in the college setting let alone Truman. For example, is rudimentary knowledge that philosophy and religion are humanities, not social sciences, yet he put them in the "social sciences" department. Similarly with history, anyone knows history isn't a social science, it's a humanity. And it is basic knowledge that social sciences are distinct from arts and humanities, it's not a subset of humanities; but he placed social sciences in a school with a name that doesn't even encompass social sciences. However economics and psychology are classic social sciences, and they are nowhere to be found near social sciences. Putting economics with business is something a dull witted frat bro would come up with. Economics is a social science that is more closely related to political science or frankly any of the programs he placed with "social sciences." Economics as a discipline is not simply adjacent to business. It informs some aspects of business but as disciplines they are distinct. Putting psychology with counseling again shows his ignorance of the actual discipline of psychology and how that program operates at Truman. Some psychology students go into counseling, but by no means is that the main career path. So many of these weird combinations are like something a business man who knows nothing of liberal arts or even higher ed would come up, but it fails to take into account the reality of the disciplines and how these majors have functioned at Truman for decades. Also breaking apart health and exercise science and moving health science to SAM shows a profound ignorance of how those programs have operated at Truman for decades. They aren't just interchangeable parts to be moved around willy nilly. He just got here and he's messing up a bunch of programs.

Despite the utter lack of communication and even basic rationale from the provost himself, I believe I do understand the new provost's vision for why he moved around the departments the way he did -- but his vision for Truman is terrible. He is taking us in all the wrong directions. He



is ignoring that we are a small liberal arts school, getting smaller, and trying to make us into something we aren't. We aren't a professions based curriculum. Students come here for a high caliber education across a variety of disciplines. If they want a cookie cutter degree that promises a j-o-b but nothing else, they aren't going to be happy at Truman anyway, so why promise them something we aren't designed to deliver. The proposed reorg seems like something fashioned for a different school, not Truman. Maybe that's how Columbia College in Chicago (whatever that is) is structured but it's not Truman. The committee that worked on proposals for over a year did a ton of work and that was brushed aside, but why? He has been here for barely 3 months yet he thinks he knows better than the committee that is comprised of faculty who have been here for decades? That's rich. Maybe he thinks he is being innovative... his plans are so ill-informed it would be hilarious, if there wasn't so much on the line. He is being innovative in all the wrong ways. The committee's plans had plenty of innovation and new ideas, he should have just stuck with some of those. And I don't even know what happened to the interdisciplinary fellows or that aspect of the committee's plan.

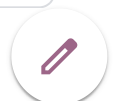
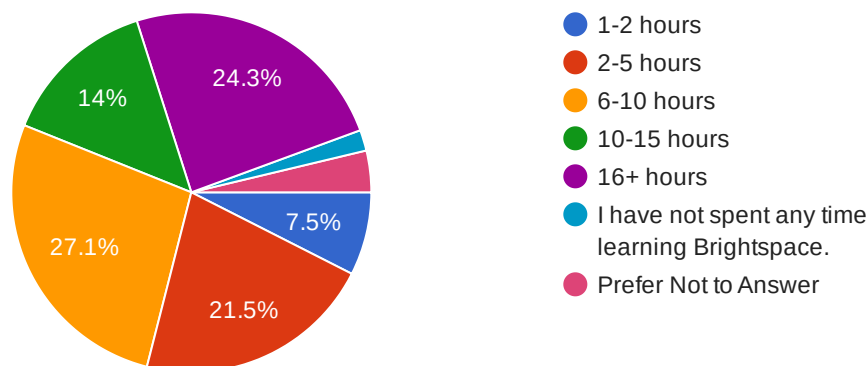
Liberal arts and sciences should have been the cornerstone of the re-org plan, at the school level, with the programs that aren't traditionally liberal arts being aligned with the more traditional liberal arts programs. Instead this plan is the other way around. There are a lot of odd combinations and things are moved around in weird ways but liberal arts is an afterthought. The provost might say the phrase liberal arts a lot but that doesn't mean he understands what liberal arts actually means. Does the provost even know what liberal arts is? He clearly doesn't know what social sciences are, or humanities, so it really makes me wonder.

Section II: Technology Issues

1. How much time would you estimate that you have spent learning Brightspace since last spring 2023?



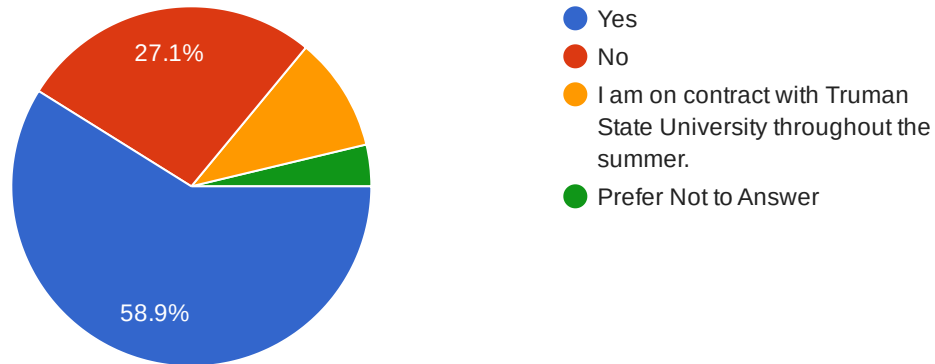
107 responses



2. Did you work on technology training or problem resolution when you were not on contract with Truman during the summer?

 Copy

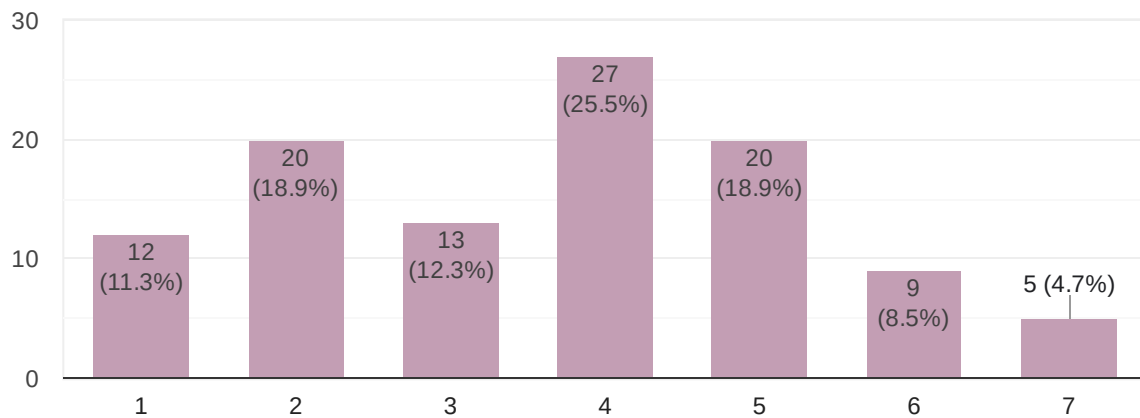
107 responses



3. The recent transition to BrightSpace D2L was easier than I expected.

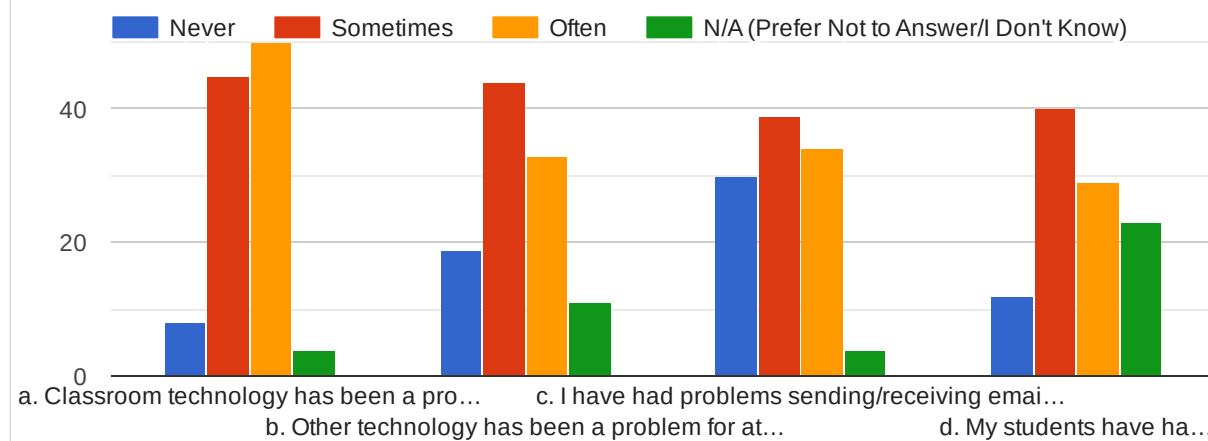
 Copy

106 responses



4. How often have you faced technology problems this fall 2023 semester?

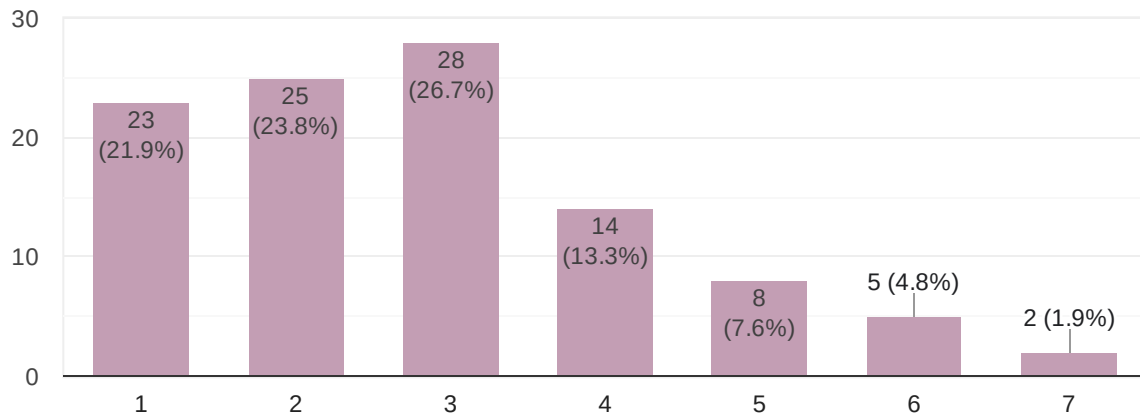
 Copy



5. The university administration has effectively communicated with faculty about technology issues this fall 2023.



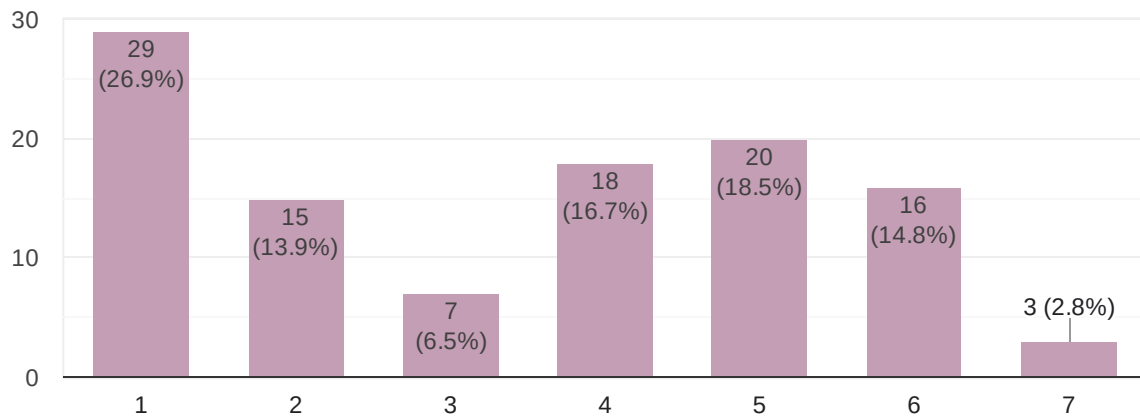
105 responses



6. The university administration effectively communicated with university faculty during the spring 2023 hacking incident.



108 responses



7. What other comments do you have about technology at Truman?

44 responses

Website has many issues. Very poor user interface.

I've used D2L at another institution. Certainly FAR superior to Blackboard

Sue gave them an award. If that's not proof of failure, I don't know what is.

There are rumors about other changes, particularly with respect to google drive. These details not been effectively communicated, like timeline, implementation, etc.

The Brightspace help time was never staffed! You can't send a 'draft' email that has been sitting in drafts, even if you make changes to it - have to do a work-around - grrrrrrrrr

At any other institution or business, heads would have rolled for not preventing the cyberattack. Here, the whole division is awarded and given a standing ovation. It's pointless for me to even list any of the dozens of issues I have had (in some cases still have) to work around thanks to poor judgement at every level.

With the move to Brightspace, Truman has once again positioned itself at the bottom of the pack. It has a clunky user interface and is causing faculty and students unnecessary frustration and stress. The current support personnel for D2L are no more knowledgeable than the faculty seeking their help. The transition to D2L should never have occurred until the support personnel had an opportunity to at least learn its basic functionality. The grading categories in both the assignments area and grading area of D2L are not intuitive and makes it difficult to set up an accurate grade book.

Truman, once again, proved a literal embarrassment when it presented an award for the hacking incident (of all things) to ITS, the very group who would have had its head fired if this had happened in industry.

There was ample opportunity for faculty to learn D2L last academic year. I attended workshops and watched recordings while still on contract last spring and found using D2L this past summer and currently to be a relatively smooth transition. If faculty waited until summer - I guess I think that is on them.

Bright space is a huge time waste.

Arriving 10 minutes early to class is often not enough to have all of the classroom technology working in time for the start of class, because the computers are so slow. Tickets with low priority seem to get ignored, even though the issue can have a major impact on my productivity.



There are problems with how some of the technology interacts that ITS did foresee. The new antivirus software interferes with some software used for teaching and learning.

There seems to have been an extreme drop-off in the response times and helpfulness of ITS over the past year or so. Perhaps they are understaffed.

Our IT department is amazing, responsive, kind, and helpful.

I think the administration has done all that they could, under the circumstances.

There was zero training or information about how to use Microsoft products on classroom computers. I have no cell reception in my classroom to receive Duo code. I spend 15 min before every class prepping my classroom computer and I'm totally stressed out when class begins.

Classroom technology is often cumbersome.

Truman's administration did not appropriately communicate with faculty during the hacking incident. Students were provided more information than faculty, and they were oftentimes provided information that countered what faculty were being told.

Likewise, our email has failed multiple times (for days on end) after the hacking incident, and the university provided no communication to faculty or students when these incidences occurred. They still have provided no explanation of what went wrong or performed any audit that would tell us how to prevent it in the future.

Classroom technology and other IT issues just need to be fixed. Classrooms need to function EVERY SINGLE DAY. Our email needs to send and receive EVERY SINGLE EMAIL. I know that Truman has no money budgeted for maintenance, but things are falling apart and we cannot work like this. Student learning is not possible when nothing works.

The change of email and LMS all at the same time has been somewhat overwhelming. I know that part of the change was necessitated by factors outside of Truman's control. Overall, my students strongly dislike (HATE) Brightspace. I don't believe that the benefits that were described to us during the selection process have turned out to be overly positive

Emails from Truman's own Human Resources department are going to "Other" messages. That's not great.

I was notified of the hack by my high school daughter an hour before anything was mentioned. Not sure how it took so long (especially with Textcaster) to let everyone know to shut everything off. That could have happened within a minutes rather than hours. I didn't need to know the details and I am sure they will never tell us. The answer I have gotten....."I have been told not to reveal any information about the hack". The response to get everything shut down was like molasses.



IT has a tough job. I empathize with the position they've been placed into. But the lack of preemptive problem solving has lead to...Wait for it....problems all around. Who's surprised? It's the Truman way....Lots of words, and little action.....(Que Rage Against the Machine - Wake up and Settle for Nothing)

None

We are not given the support for solutions when asked. We continue to have problems in the classroom when we have reported the issue. We are told to try to work around the problem but the university does not really fix any issues. There is a lack of communication about technology issues and the hacking incident. Email is still an issue. It is not easy to transition to all of the new email systems and have had to rely on co-workers because IT will not help.

It is a disaster. Just to give one of many examples, the University went "cheap" buying non solid state computers for the entire campus. Now the machines on campus are slow as molasses because they can't adequately run Windows 10. Morons.

I know we are a bit behind the curve, but should faculty be end testers?

I still worry on Monday mornings that the slides won't be available for my classes.

I've seen ITS at work and have a lot of respect for what has been on their plate and what they've gotten done. They've always been responsive when I've had a problem I can't solve myself.

Some rooms are in bad shape technology wise. I got lucky with the rooms I'm in and the tech I'm using, but I've heard it can take up to 10 minutes just to log in in some rooms.

We're falling apart

I wish the ITS is quicker in responding to tickets.

I felt like we were several months behind in regards to getting the technology up and running for the fall semester. It seemed that we were doing things the week (days) before classes that really needed to have been done mid-summer.

It's embarrassing. Why do we give a standing ovation to people for extinguishing the fire they started?

IT appears to be heavily overworked, so some patience is required.

It's the worst IT at a college that I've ever encountered.

sigh



Faculty office computers are often outdated with some issues and very slow even to boot up, with a considerable amount of time to wait for the computer to do what is supposed to do much faster.

Email has been particularly problematic. My computer demands updates to Google Chrome frequently, freezing me out of my email. The layout of the new Outlook program has taken time to get used to. My desktop computer is very slow and often freezes, preventing me from working on Powerpoint, Word, and other critical programs, often at critical times right before classes. Moreover I have frequently been unable to access my Y drive from both my computer classroom and my desktop.

The system gets messier and more complicated with every university move.

ITS sux

Why did we pay for the cheapest version of Brightspace the university could find?

In my building, IT support is actively working to get accurate reporting of technology issues in classrooms and working to solve the problems they know about.

none

The computers in magruder are embarrassingly slow. It takes a full 10 minutes to get logged in and get google slides up. We've had seminar speakers trying to show videos in their presentations but the computers are so slow that they won't play or they skip/glitch. I don't think most of the console computers have been replaced since I started 7 years ago and now with all the new anti-virus software that's on them, they are almost non-functional.

I'm also amazed at the lack of cord control with the console computers. The cords are a mess and I have no idea how the IT staff know which cords to check when there is an issue. It also prevents faculty from being able to move the hover/doc cams because the cords are so tangled.

We also have several classrooms that still only have VGA for connecting laptops, and many of these have connection issues themselves.

The administration's communication about tech has been terrible. Big surprise there. The IT team has done a decent job but even they don't seem to really know the in's and outs of brightspace. Maybe because they are overworked, I don't know. I like our IT staff but they aren't always super helpful. But at least they try.

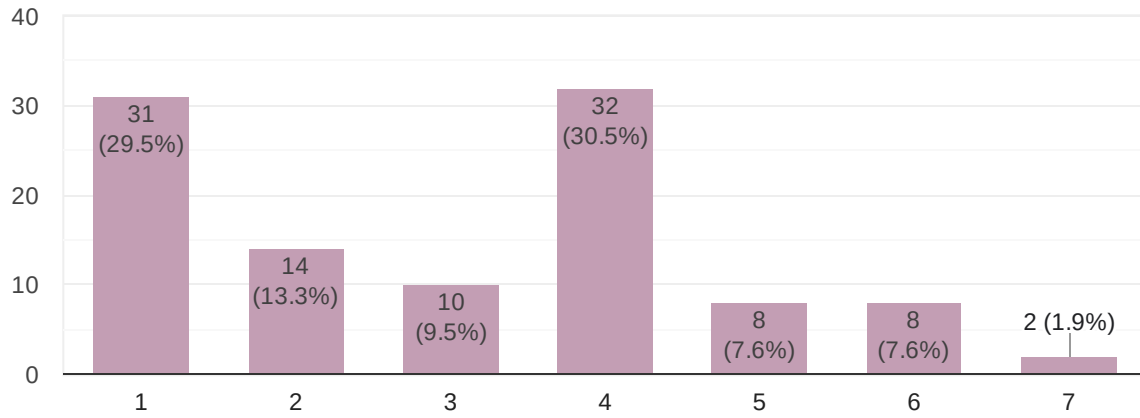
Section III: Chair Selection Policy



1. Truman's new Chair Selection policy will improve chair leadership quality.

 Copy

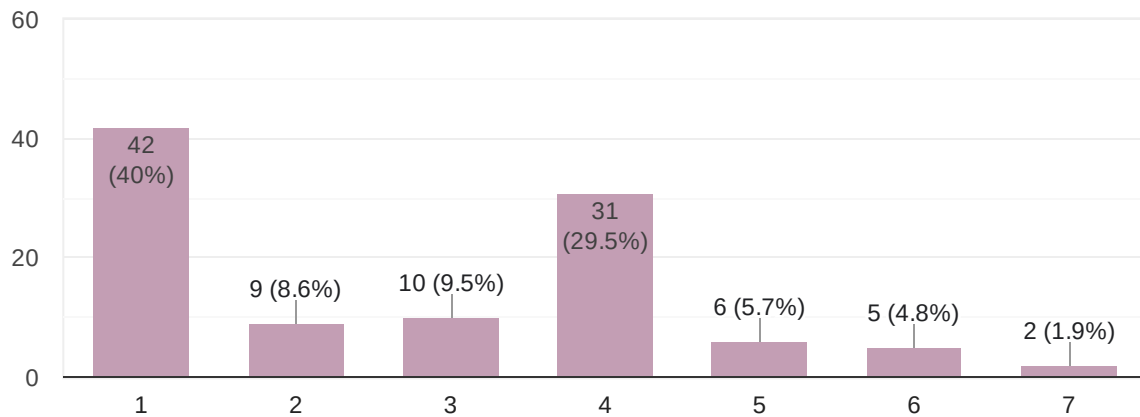
105 responses



2. Truman's new Chair Selection policy supports the values of shared governance at Truman.

 Copy

105 responses



3. Please share any other comments you have about the chair selection policy.

38 responses

Pay chairs better and give them some authority.

Details about stipend and course load are conspicuously not included in this document. The internal/external search process seems very opaque. Surely this makes it appealing for a department to collectively decide not to step forward to potentially motivate an external search, which would ultimately result in more TT faculty, and many departments have been unsuccessfully trying to get new TT lines for years. Very confusing and concerning. Why not just allow departments to hire on TT lines when there is a need? Surely that would help solve the problem of not enough faculty chair candidates.

If admin does not care about following best practices and evidence-based practices in change management, leadership, transparency, organizational communication, etc - Why would any chairs? No matter the structure - lack of caring, lack of professionalism, poor leadership, lack of training for chairs, etc - will follow the same path as their role models.

The current chair selection process is one of the few areas that is currently functioning well. Why change something that is working? What is the rationale for these changes? There is a plethora of things at Truman that is not working well. Let's try to fix those instead of changing something that works..

Chair selection should become more not less democratic. The new policy demonstrates the level of mistrust and contempt with which faculty are viewed by the administration.

There was no transparency or role for faculty input in the creation of this policy. Just like with restructuring, it is just what the upper administration wants.

I fear that the new chair selection policy will significantly reduce the power faculty have in university matters. The chairs' motivation to represent faculty interests will be crippled if "The Chair serves at the pleasure of the Dean, Provost, and President."

I am not sure I even understand how the chair selection process is going to be done moving forward.

The chair selection process is fine. In some departments it seems that a larger problem is that no one wants to serve as chair, and I don't think that is because of the reorganization. There was a lack of volunteers for chair in the old system, too. Hopefully under reorganization we will be able to find more people willing to be chair. I do think that the role of the chair will be more clearly defined, which could improve our ability to find people willing to serve. One thing I do fear is that the chair might have too many responsibilities in the new structure, which could deter people from wanting to serve.



I'm unclear how Chair Selection will actually play out.

I take issue with the fact that the new chair selection process does not involve an election with members of the relevant department. I think the chair document raises a lot of questions that need to be answered. I expect the stipend for all disciplines to be the same because the chair will be doing the same job. I am concerned that it will be unequal because the pay among faculty is so disparate and the administration might be inclined to make the stipends proportionate rather than fair. The teaching load seems more reasonable given the job that chairs do. Research was not discussed in the chair position.

This Chair Selection policy is authoritarian. It is a hand-picked way to give some faculty higher salaries for being sycophants to the administration. It might reduce the amount of time the Provost and President talk to faculty that they don't like talking to, but I don't know if that's even possible since the President and Provost don't seem to talk to average faculty members anyway.

Hopefully, more admin duties/responsibilities will equate with better overall compensation.

The authors of this new policy assume that they know best -- that administrators who have very little direct interaction with faculty members will know (based on a paper application) who is best for a job that requires strong working relationships with faculty. I am also very disappointed to see the line about chairs being dismissed "at the pleasure" of the Provost. This is poison for morale. We need emotionally intelligent leaders!

Is it truly just a written out version of what we are already doing or is there a bunch of new stuff in there. There seems to now be only a veneer of shared governance based on decisions that are being weekly disseminated to us via email.

The biggest change isn't the process, but how the role of chair is viewed - and administrator who teaches, rather than a professor with an extra leadership role.

None

The new chair policy does not respect the traditions of Truman or shared governance. I am disappointed with the President and VPAA. They do not understand the benefits of popular sovereignty and appear to want to create a culture of sycophants within leaderships.

The Provost, Deans and President simply want their hand-picked sycophants to impose their commands over the faculty below. Oh, they'll succeed in finding enough weasels to fill the jobs, but it will only magnify the hostility that the rest of the faculty have toward the failed leadership of this place

It is alarming how much of this policy happens at, or relies upon, the administration's discretion. Perhaps most alarming is the lack of indication why a search would be made external rather than internal, given the implications that has for staffing, as it adds faculty to that department that (after having been recommended by the dean and approved by the



president for hiring) become a part of that faculty. Given that they are under constant assessment from the administration and can be removed at any time, it doesn't strike me as a particularly appealing duty, so I am concerned about the amount of effort that is going to have to go into search processes to bring in chairs, who will then run departments of people they do not know, with no experience with the departmental or university policies they are meant to enact.

We should be able to choose our own chairs through deliberation and voting.

[and for those making this survey, #10 below should have an in between answer, which is what I would have picked.]

I prefer only internal candidates as chairs.

Not clear yet. May be can answer these after discussing with colleagues and subsequent reflection.

Following the staff calendar and accruing vacation days while holding a faculty position and 11 month contract sounds interesting

In the absence of a substantial stipend - at least \$25,000 - deans will have tremendous difficulty persuading anyone to take on the newly-defined chair role.

I feel that UGC and Senate are our vehicles for shared governance and that chairs are more administrative in nature. Having dealt with several chairs who are not optimally suited to some of the things that chairs have to do and some departments where no one wants to be chair, I'm cautiously optimistic that this approach will be helpful. However, the proof will be in how well qualified chairs can be recruited from within the faculty and from an external search if need be. If external searches become more frequent than "rare," then I will think something is wrong.

Heil admin?

I support it mostly because I think that the current department sizes are too small for the amount of work that current department chairs are required to do.

the new policy seems awfully cumbersome. internal elections have worked well for us in the past.

Administration continually states there are too many faculty. This new chairs plan includes a mechanism to conduct an outside search for a chair. If an outside chair is selected, they automatically become a member of the faculty, a tenured member of faculty. This seems counterintuitive.

Not sure what the new chair selection policy is



The change to the chair selection process was made unilaterally, without the provost present at Faculty Senate to hear feedback from faculty on the day the policy change was discussed. The change reduces the voice of department faculty in the selection process and distances the chair from regular faculty teaching responsibilities. Both of these shifts seem appropriate for a large research university with 10,000+ students but make little sense at a liberal arts university with a shrinking faculty & student body.

This nonsense about external hires for chairs when needed is ludicrous if the position truly is primarily a professor position. Very curious to see new compensation package for chairs

For chairs to have the confidence of the faculty they serve, they need to be chosen by the faculty NOT THE ADMINISTRATION. Resistance and quiet quitting will increase, not decrease. The Provost and President will only hear from those THEY CHOSE. They will not choose people who will speak truth to power. Decisions will be less informed and more authoritarian than ever.

It will just make my life at Truman worse

Seems that an unintended consequence of the chair selection policy is that it could promote hiring at mid-to-late career, while keeping the existing faculty (many of whom may be non-tenure track) where they are and under administration-approved "foreign" yes-men or yes-women.

I am not concerned about the internal process that has been proposed, but I would like clarity on what the external process and how that will impact faculty lines within the department. I really don't like the idea of hiring someone with tenure to fill a chair position.

I don't understand the rationale for the new policy, because no rationale or justifications have been given to us. We are just left to wonder why which is I think the intended result. I don't think the new provost cares if he gives us reasons, he just expects us to accept whatever changes he foists upon us.

Some parts of the new chair policy make sense but others do not. Giving the new chairs more course release and a longer contract makes sense, especially for larger departments. I don't understand if they will get paid more, which they probably should get paid significantly more. But I worry it will be hard to get folks to volunteer themselves for the new role which is heavily administrative. And then what? We have to hire new chairs? Which is shocking to me when we can barely get searches approved for our most basic needs. But now we might need to hire more faculty just to take on these new roles that no one wants to do? And they might come on at full tenure? That will ruffle some feathers I think for sure.

I think this new chair policy is moving in the wrong direction. It is heavy handed administration but that is now how Truman has historically been organized and we are only getting smaller, so



it just doesn't make sense. Again, it's like the provost's reorg plan, in that it seems like a plan for a different school but it doesn't make sense for Truman. What works at Truman for most departments, but maybe not all, is that we have chairs who are also in the classroom and still doing some scholarship. This new plan takes that away and puts more distance between chairs and their faculty. Which is the wrong direction for a school like Truman. Maybe it is what the admin wants, a more heavy handed approach to quasi-administrative roles and more distance between the faculty who have their boots on the ground and the so called brass. I think it is wrong headed and taking away what so many of us love about working at Truman, which is that we have smaller departments and close relationships with our chairs and colleagues. I worry we will lose faculty who don't want to work under that structure, and we won't be able to attract or retain faculty. The current structure is generally refreshing to candidates we bring to campus and they appreciate having that close knit support from their chair, who is teaching pretty extensively in the department. Candidates will definitely NOT be impressed by this heavy administrative structure and it may turn some away who want the experience of teaching in a smaller liberal arts school, but see out admin structure as more like a larger university where things are impersonal at best, and acrimonious or adversarial at worst.

The provost's new chair structure might work well for very large departments, or some of the pre-professional departments like nursing or business. But for the more traditional liberal arts disciplines, it is definitely not a good fit. It creates distance and is likely to promote an adversarial relationship between chairs and faculty. We generally value our close knit departments and support we get from our chairs who also teach and contribute to the curriculum and advising, etc. We should keep what's working and just improve it where it needs it, but we don't need this massive overhaul to every department across campus to now have a quasi-Dean as their chair who is mostly removed from teaching and the classroom.

Why is he unilaterally taking so much power away from departments to select their own chair?
What is he worried about?

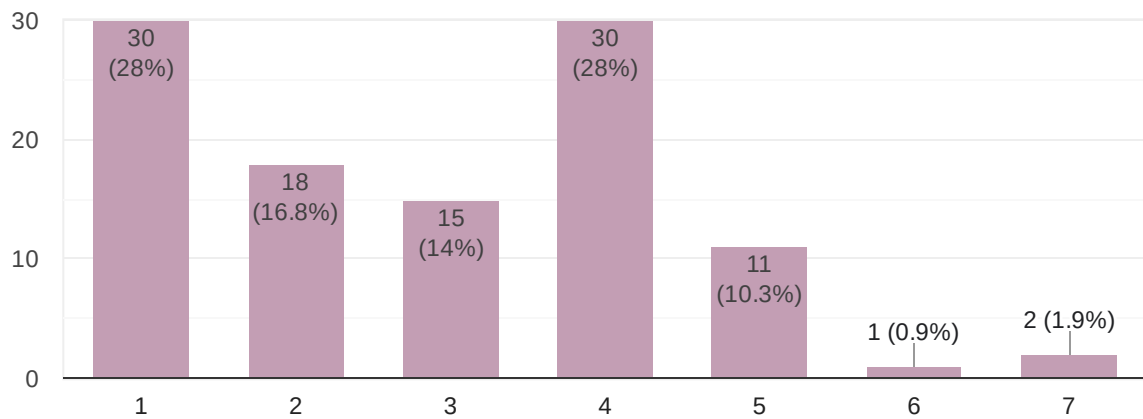
Section IV: Overall Campus Climate



1. This university is headed in the right direction.

 Copy

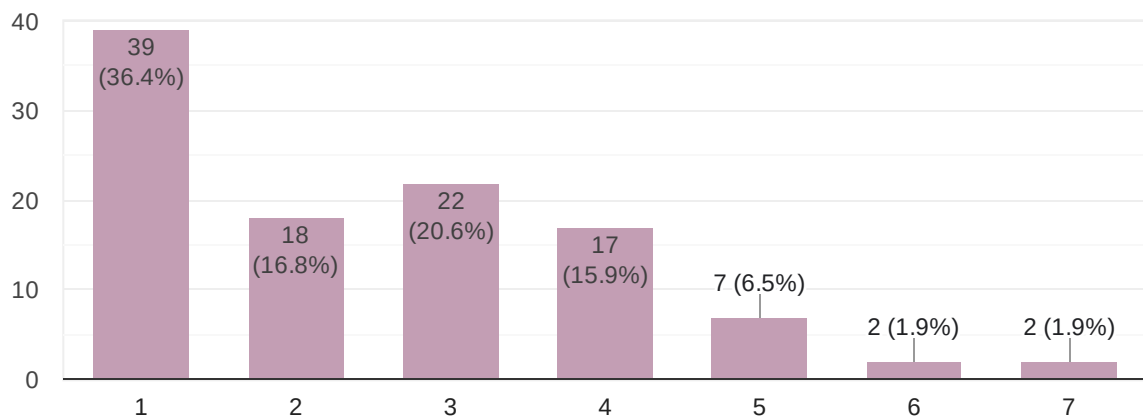
107 responses



2. The university administration values faculty participation in decision-making.

 Copy

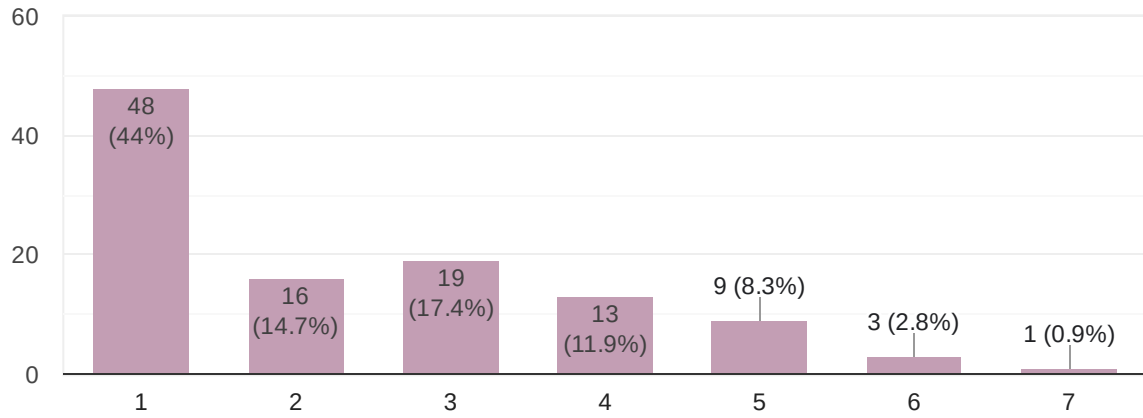
107 responses



3. My salary and benefits adequately compensate me for the work I undertake at Truman.

 Copy

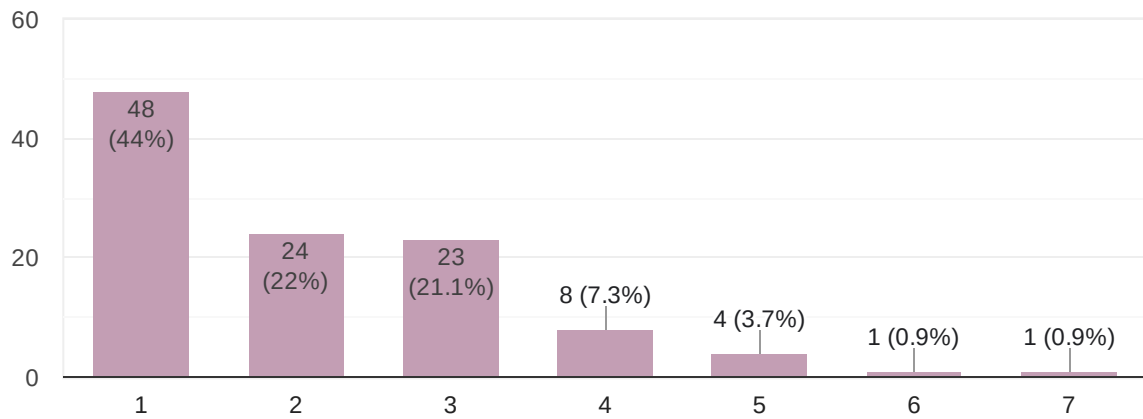
109 responses



4. Morale among faculty is currently high.

 Copy

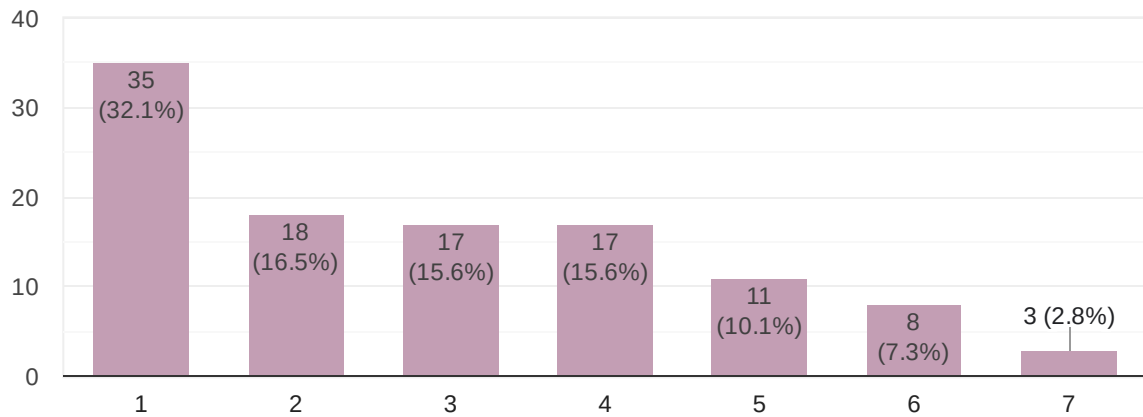
109 responses



5. I feel valued by this university.

 Copy

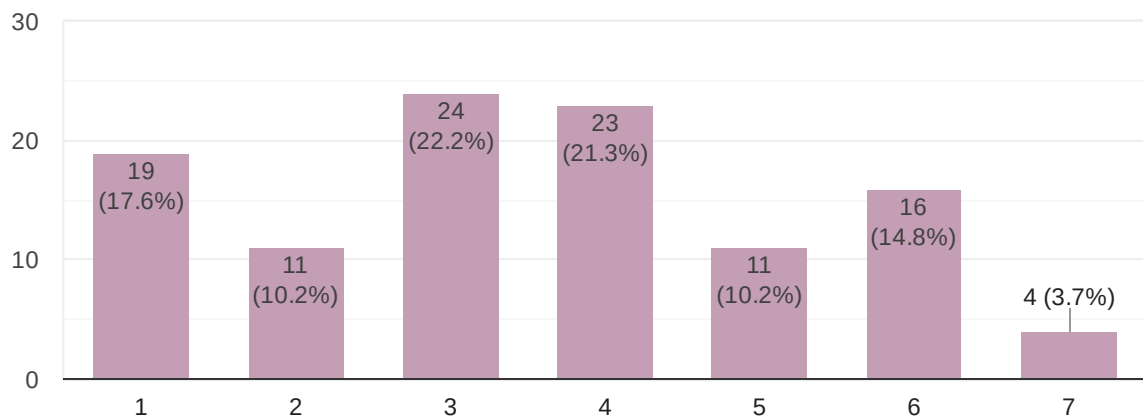
109 responses



6. My personal commitment to Truman and to the programs undertaken here is as strong as ever.

 Copy

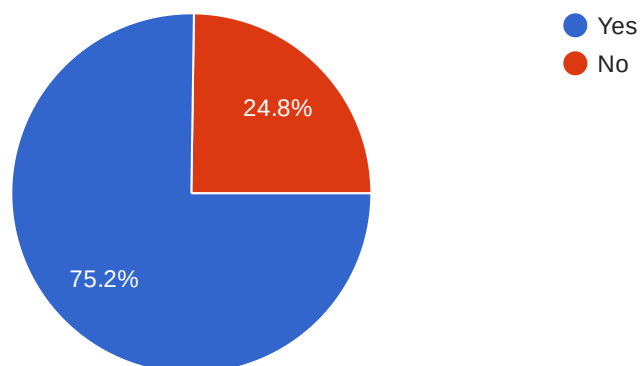
108 responses



7. Would you support your colleagues in bringing a collective bargaining unit (a faculty union) to Truman?

 Copy

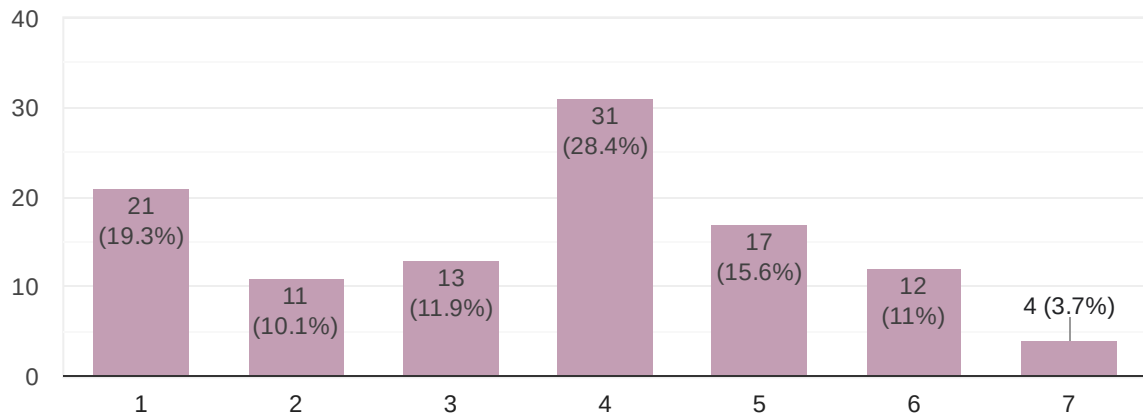
109 responses



8. I feel confident in President Sue Thomas to lead this university.

 Copy

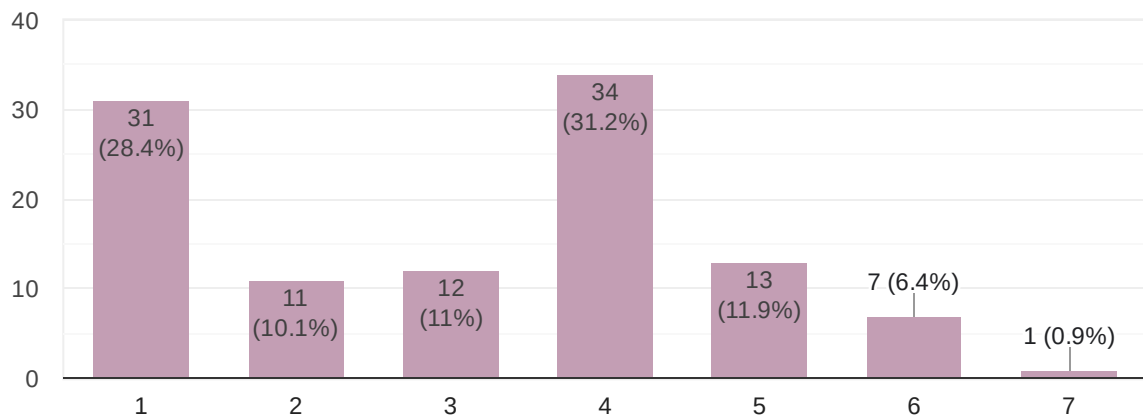
109 responses



9. I feel confident in Provost Eric Freedman to lead Academic Affairs.

 Copy

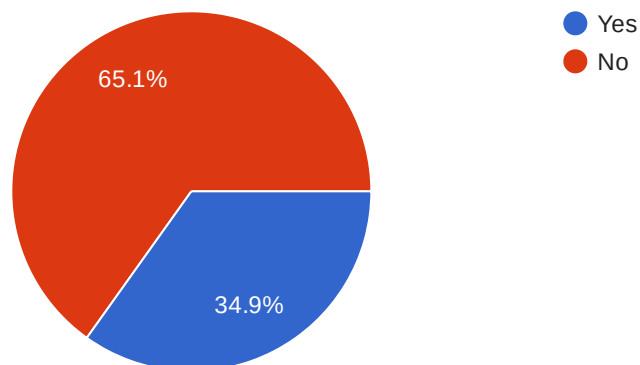
109 responses



10. I am confident in this administration to lead Truman.

 Copy

109 responses



11. Please share any other comments you have about President Sue Thomas.

30 responses

How could we possibly have such low enrollment and Sue doesn't think it's the #1 priority?! She never even talks about it except to dismiss it. How can the number of incoming freshmen drop by half over the last 5 years and yet no one loses their job? Sue has been a disaster. She thinks she's "managing" the decline of Truman as she drives it further into the toilet through a reorganization. Also, STOP talking about how you have an MBA - if Truman was a business your incompetence would have been replaced long ago. Good job getting Brammell to shut down your Faculty Senate evaluation - can't wait to see what treat she gets for that favor.

Made a bad hire in VP - may come back to bite her, but hope not - mistakes happen - hires don't always work out like you expect; hope she can salvage something from this and get us back on track

The ongoing exploitation of non-tenure-track and part-time faculty is a reprehensible disgrace, and the AAUP is complicit.

Sue is a friendly people-person but not a leader that can position Truman in its current challenging environment of declining enrollment year after year when other public Missouri universities have significantly increasing freshmen enrollments.

She seems genuine and she's been here for years, so I moderately trust her

Treats faculty with contempt.

Her selection of Eric Freedman as Provost was the single worst decision of her presidency. Nobody really knows how high up the chain of command that some initiatives are coming from, such as restructuring. Transparency must be better.

A mixed bag. I think she does a great job interacting with the Missouri legislature and advocating for Truman, but she struggles to connect with the faculty. Her signature move is to place responsibility for larger structural issues on the individual. A characteristic example of this is the "if everyone recruits one student, we won't have any enrollment issues" from a few years ago. I also don't know if she understands how severely inflation has affected our salaries. In order to have the same buying power I did when I was an assistant professor (pre-tenure!) I would now need a raise (of my associate professor's salary) of approximately 18%! It's not a surprise that so many of us are leaving and looking for better jobs, but constant faculty turnover harms the students, stresses out the faculty who are still here, and ultimately damages the reputation of the university. The faculty are the face of the university, and not making faculty morale a priority, or implying that we're entitled when we've seen such a drastic drop in our standard of living over the past few years is ultimately self-defeating.

There is a huge discrepancy between course loads and professors between departments. Some are teaching huge loads with no further compensation.



Yay Sue!

Absolutely the worst president we have had in the time that I have been here. Is in way over her head and is totally clueless as to the dire straits that the university is in. We need a vote of no confidence in the President from Faculty Senate. Such a vote from the AAUP would be symbolic, at best, but otherwise toothless.

President Thomas is leading this university towards failure. Nothing seems to work anymore. Enrollment is down again. Departments are being destroyed. IT and classroom technology don't work. President Thomas isn't connected to the university faculty/staff or the community, and she doesn't seem to understand who we are and what we do. There's no trust or goodwill there because she's made it clear that she doesn't like faculty and she views us as a problem.

I just don't see a vision. I see a "Go Bulldogs" attitude but I am not sure where we are going. I don't have the answer but I am also not the president who is in charge of this. She is a nice person but after being here for a while I don't see a unifying vision.

I think the president does a reasonable job in a difficult government climate. That doesn't mean things couldn't be better and that she hasn't made some appalling decisions (interim provost), but our university is doing much better than some others in light of recent and ongoing challenges.

She is not Troy Paino.

The results during her tenure speak for themselves. The university is dying.

Needs to expand the vision and assess what other universities are doing to increase enrollment that have been successful. Other institutions our size are seeing record high enrollment this fall while we continue to decrease. Many of these institutions have added sports yet we are not even considering that. We have to offer things that will attract today's student.

Dr. Thomas has failed to lead Truman adequately during tough times. Enrollment has been cut by 1/3rd if not more. The quality of students themselves is less (we are no longer highly selective). Faculty and Staff morale is the lowest I've ever seen. Furthermore, Dr. Thomas doesn't take criticism well and tries to avoid faculty feedback (Senate is partly to blame but so is Dr. Thomas).

Our eyes should be on recruitment. [above question, I would have put a not sure if option had been there.]

I believe she can continue her work with the University well without the provost.

She does the best she can in challenging circumstances.



No real concerns.

When you place \$\$ above humanity, the university will crumble. It is crumbling now. Talk to Jack Magruder. He put people first.

she's ok. I don't feel like she knows us very well.

I appreciate the serious challenges President Thomas is grappling with, but I have deep misgivings about her leadership style and the direction she is taking the university. The hard work of faculty committees convened to make recommendations on important matters (reorganization, parental leave, PPC recommendations, etc) seem to be used as cover for decisions that ultimately appear unilateral. There is an absence of transparency in the decision making process, whereby faculty are often seen as an impediment rather than an ally. And the direction of the university seems to increasingly be toward a vocational training institute and away from a liberal arts model.

Wish she would remind us what her latest justification for reorganizing is.

She still has no clue who we are. She has not engaged the Kirksville community, she has zero respect for faculty and faculty emeriti, she thinks of faculty members as pawns that she gets to move around. She has never created a persuasive narrative of why a student should choose Truman; she has never communicated what she thinks Truman's mission is. She thinks we can get more students by just saying we need them.

Peter's principle?

(none)

Enrollment is not going in the right direction. Enrollment is down everywhere but it is WAY worse at Truman. A fact that Sue doesn't like to share along with the high fives and pep rallies. In fact she is hiding that fact from us, that we are way worse off than any other public state school. So objective she is failing at one of the most important aspects of her job. She has been here long enough, the pandemic is behind us, and still our numbers are in the toilet. I want to see real vision and changes, not more of the same.

I really did not appreciate Sue's comments at the opening assembly. She called us all quiet quitters and basically told us to shut up and not complain because if you are critical you are what's wrong with Truman. I and everyone I know works our butts off so that was just a slap in the face. Why does she hate faculty so much? She was so condescending. I really hate this culture that she instills which is that if you're not pollyanna sunshine and you have criticism, you must hate Truman and you are a troublemaker. It's almost toxic positivity.

It was unbelievable at opening assembly when she was talking about salaries and she said *everyone* in the room should get paid more. Including her? And the provost? And all the brass making well over six figures? After she has been driving our enrollment numbers into the ground, she deserves to make more? Does she realize most staff make less than \$15/hr?!



12. Please share any other comments you have about Provost Eric Freedman.

43 responses

An empty suit who enjoys being Sue's lickspittle.

Uses big words to show-off or hide insecurity; uses political tactics right out of Alinsky's playbook - so obvious; inflexible; rude to faculty members; needs more training in organizational change management and social skills

The ongoing exploitation of non-tenure-track and part-time faculty is a reprehensible disgrace, and the AAUP is complicit.

I question his leadership abilities where he quickly demonstrated an unwillingness to learn Truman's culture and values before attempting to implement drastic changes to Truman's academic programs.

He's temporary. I expect him to be gone in a year or two at most.

Evasive, uncaring, and irresolute.

He is incredibly self-absorbed. I don't have confidence in his decision-making. He is not good at articulately a rationale for initiatives he wants to pursue or supporting his goals with quantitative evidence. I have seen him just pick numbers out of the air, with no supporting evidence, and act like they have relevance and legitimacy. Given his negative comments about his immediately-past employer, what will he say to others about Truman when he moves on?

Too soon to tell.

I don't know enough about the new Provost to make a constructive comment.

He's a pretty chill guy. He does tend to use a lot of big words, though. For example, he says "operationalize" a lot.

We need a vote of no confidence in the Provost from Faculty Senate. At the very least he needs to stop talking in management jargon and try to come across as someone who actually cares.

In theory I like the new approach he is bringing but in practice he has shown a disregard for faculty that makes my colleagues feel disrespected and insignificant, which is contagious and a serious issue at Truman where faculty investment is really what provides quality of product for our students.

I do not have enough information to fairly evaluate him. However, he had the chance to answer questions at SPAW which could have helped address concerns about reorganization and the transparency behind it; instead, his responses didn't actually provide information to help



answer the questions which were asked, which makes me less confident in what will happen going forward. People asked specific questions, but instead of providing any details, it seemed like the answers were essentially 'corporate-speak', saying a lot of words that generally sound good, but without actually conveying helpful information

Provost Freedman has been put in a hard position to rollout a reorganization plan in the first months on the job, and I recognize that. However, he could make this rollout simpler by communicating with faculty, providing more information about the plan, and being receptive to feedback about the plan. He could listen to student or staff concerns as well, and provide them with additional information. Provost Freedman has shown no desire to alter tiny pieces of the plan that would dramatically increase faculty, departmental, and student outcomes, and that seems asinine. His plan is unclear, unpopular, and uninspired. Maybe he will turn out to be a good Provost, but he just wasted all of his possible goodwill.

He has taken no initiative to get to know or understand the programs in our department (this also applies to faculty and student needs). I understand that he has only been here a short amount of time, but the lack of interest in building social capital or working toward building consensus among faculty/programs before making major reorg decisions is very different from the other leadership styles I've encountered during my journey in higher ed.

He seems ok and I am willing to give him a chance. He does seem to be the typical "new guy" who immediately sets out to immediately fix everything and in this way decisions seem quite draconian and "it's my way or the highway now". Did no one tell him what had been previously discussed about the reorganization. Was he shocked that there were so many frustrated questions at the end of SPAW when it so clearly seemed that there was almost NO faculty input about the reorganization. He then dodged the questions and seemed to be all about "business speak". One of the most important aspects of communication is to "know the audience". I feel like SPAW revealed that he really had no idea about the audience he was speaking to. He seemed to have very little empathy about the reorganization and was surprised that he didn't actually have everyone's full trust. I don't feel he should have needed to be cajoled by the faculty to say he would actually have some forums where faculty could have some input. I will admit that as an administrator he needs to clean house and that he needs to look at all aspects of everything but he seems to have gotten off on the wrong foot so to speak.

He has just arrived and I think it is important that we give him time to demonstrate his own approach and priorities before we start attacking him. Truman's communication problems existed long before he arrived at this time of great transition. If he had been here last year and had ignored the reorganization committee's recommendations I would be more willing to attack him; as it is he arrived after the committee's work was complete and that report includes recommendations but not an in-depth explanation of why every recommendation was made and others weren't. We do not know what advice Freedman received from the deans, the president, or the interim provost. I am not willing to write him off on the basis of one (albeit a very important) problematic policy rollout.

Don't know anything about him, other than others have told me he listens (as in hears) but doesn't actively listen (has his mind already made up). Maybe we should either teach him to



L.E.A.P. (listen, empathize, apologize, problem solve.) or _____

Coming in to make a splash, by messing with what works and ignoring what's failing, is not what's going to work. Focusing on identity politics and DEI will only sink the ship faster.

do not know enough about him

I do not know the new VPAA (or Provost) but he seems highly authoritarian and does not want faculty feedback. He doesn't seem to care about faculty preferences at all. I am not excited about our future under his leadership but there hasn't been enough time for me to cement these opinions.

He's arrogant and isolated, and makes decisions to drastically change the institution without consulting the people at the bottom affected by them. He is a case study in bad management.

I'm unclear on how much of the restructuring is coming from Freedman and how much he essentially inherited. It doesn't seem to be closely based on the proposals that the committee spent untold hours putting together last year, so presumably it comes either from Freedman or the other admin.

Haven't really met him, but have heard he is not open to our input. Heard he said only student learning should matter. Well, does not faculty morale impact student learning? Studies say so. [Not sure if he was brought in to implement these changes, or if he is the source of the choices of change.]

I believe from listening to his "tap dancing" at the last session of SPAW that he doesn't understand many of our programs at Truman. Our Health Science students' Senior Test is to become a Certified Health Education Specialist; they are not going to be scientists or all go to Med School. Separation of Health Sciences from Exercise Sciences doesn't make sense as we help each other out with coursework and the sharing of resources. The Health Science and Exercise Science programs share a faculty line. We can't cut this person in half! With very few Health Science faculty (3.5), they will be challenged to provide the quality education their students expect to be CHES certified.

Too early to tell

Made a major misstep on SPAW Friday when he engaged in corporate double talk instead directly answering faculty questions. He will be a long time recovering from that.

It's really too soon to tell.

I've seldom seen anyone destroy faculty confidence in administration so fast.

I feel like he is doing an okay job. In a way, I feel like he was thrust into a no-win situation as he is being tasked with the restructuring as he arrived on campus and no matter what was done, people were going to dislike the end result.



Good luck.

It is hard to judge when I have been unable to interact with him at all.

Not enough information or time to properly assess the provost to say i am confident or not in his ability

VPAA Freedman's first major decision as provost--presenting a reorganization plan--appears to have been made without serious consideration of the hard work put forth by the Faculty Committee on Reorganization. The plan bears little resemblance to any of the options presented by faculty, and elements of it seem arbitrary. Similarly, the change to the chair selection process was run through Faculty Senate without the opportunity for faculty to comment on it in his presence. These initial decisions suggest a unilateral leadership style, and while I wish to still give him the benefit of the doubt given that he is new to the position, they have left a poor impression.

No basis for evaluation.

Seems disinterested in Truman faculty and Truman culture.

Restructuring plans are notorious for their ineffectiveness. They cost time and money and create insecurity in the organization. In our case, declining enrollments and Covid depression among faculty and staff is already very high. Thus it seems a very inopportune time for a massive restructuring. Getting to know the campus should be the first objective for our new provost. At that point he would be somewhat prepared to know whether a new structure would enhance the institution. In almost zero cases will restructuring reduce obstacles, or save money or time.

Tone deaf

Seems to make decisions based on unfounded opinions or his own experiences or what he thinks is best, not what is actually needed.

I believe he has a coherent vision for Academic Affairs that could revitalize and refocus what we do in a way that really would better prepare students for their future challenges. I don't think he has been very effective articulating that vision to the faculty as a whole.

He is so new, I haven't had enough experience with him to know how he is.

So far I think the provost has presented interesting and innovative ideas and I value his forward-thinking approach. But I think some ideas have been shared prematurely and he hasn't answered questions about implementation or provided other details that would help us understand the logistics of how things will work.



His communication skills are terrible, which is really bad because we already had that problem at Truman before he came. He has no desire to actually communicate with faculty or even chairs. We're told we'll get info from deans to chairs, but it is not happening. He isn't giving anyone information. So what is going on? What is he even doing?

He seems like he isn't really the brightest and he doesn't really get what Truman is. His reorg plan is like someone playing with a doll house, but with our actual university, just moving departments around here, there, everywhere and he is far too pleased with himself.

I think it is really troubling that the provost simply announced the reorg plan and chair plan and so far has given very little in the way of justifications and rationale for his plans, even though we have directly asked him for rationale. That leads me to believe his rationale is weak or non-existent, so I seriously question his leadership potential and it also speaks to the value (or lack thereof) that he places on communicating with faculty. We've been repeatedly told info will flow from him to deans to chairs to faculty, and that input we faculty have must be siphoned through that same channel in reverse. It is ineffective, at best, but I can't help but wonder if that is his preferred design: to not have open channels of communication and to keep faculty at arm's length and to string us along until his plan just inevitably is implemented and we can't do anything about it.

Sometimes the provost is really articulate and he says the right phrases, but it's kind of like chat GPT: It's all empty word salad and when you put it together, it's all out of context and it doesn't actually make any sense. Maybe he was really great at being a dean of a TV department but in this context, I don't think he is suitable to be a provost of liberal arts institution. No wonder he was like the third choice of the search committee.



13. Please share any other comments you have about Truman's campus climate.

45 responses

The students are worse than they were even five years ago. The administration is the worst it has ever been. Sue should be fired.

Poor and getting poorer - Took a big dive down

Thank you so much for doing this survey! Maybe this time you'll spend more than 10 seconds discussing the results at an upcoming meeting before you resort to complaining about trivialities and cracking jokes. Then again, we wouldn't want to break with a long-standing AAUP tradition, would we? In the meantime, I'll continue to live in squalor, impoverished, isolated, insulted, ignored, powerless, voiceless, betrayed. If this work didn't still mean so much to me, and if I weren't burdened with six figures of student debt, I would have left years ago.

faculty are generally pessimistic, staff much more so due to being even more poorly paid. This has led to students noticing.

Nadir in terms of respect for faculty.

I have never felt worse about this place and have never felt so entirely disrespected and that the administration does not value me personally. We are moving quickly, and at an accelerating rate, towards a completely autocratic, top-down model of administration, with no role or opportunities for input from below.

Faculty morale is bad. We can't serve our students well if we have to worry about making up for lost income and retirement savings due to inflation. It can't go on like this.

There is a great deal of speculation among faculty about what the priorities are for the University as a whole. Student population has decreased as a result of many factors. It seems recruitment and retention of students is still a focus but faculty has been encouraged and even compensated to leave. Who will mentor the tenure track faculty to continue to stay? If further expectations to do more with less continues, what is to keep faculty motivated to stay at Truman?

I think the question, "Morale among faculty is currently high," is a misleading question. If you want to gauge morale, you should ask if we agree with the statement, "My morale is high." Also, when it comes to valuing faculty participation in decision making, I often hear faculty feeling like their voices are not being heard. I don't think I agree with this statement. I think faculty voices are heard. Just because the administration may not end up taking the advice of faculty, that does not mean that their voices were not heard. Regarding bringing a collective bargaining unit, I recall Troy Paino talking about his experience with that at a previous university, and he said that when that happened, faculty lost a lot of the flexibility in their jobs. I think we should think very carefully before we entertain that idea.



A good rat would abandon this sinking ship. The administration continues to rearrange the deck chairs while the Titanic sinks. Forcefully pursuing inclusion and diversity programs in a state dominated by the reactionary right-wing maggots seems like a recipe for Truman to become Missouri's New College.

Too many rats jumping off the ship. High turnover in all types of staff. Makes me feel like joining the off ship party.

I wish the administration did not seem to see faculty in an adversarial way.

Overall, I love Truman, and interactions with students and other faculty are great. However, the lack of transparency about the reorganization, combined with the almost complete lack of information about why the reorganization is happening and specifics of how it will (or even can) improve things, makes it hard to be positive about it going forward.

When Troy tried to "create a sense of urgency" Truman turned. It was a mistake to instill fear in the faculty, because it made us withdraw. A university works because people are inspired to go above and beyond, and that is less true all the time here. Maybe it was what was necessary to keep the doors open, but I don't know how we recover to be like we used to be. Troy is gone but this is still a place driven by fear.

Campus climate is awful. We are paid less than we are worth. Most faculty are waiting for retirement or seeking other jobs -- even tenured faculty. This university could be amazing but we need leaders who want to be here and want to lead. We need leaders who value people because Truman has some excellent faculty and excellent staff.

It's at an all-time low. The reorg with the email, LMS, declining enrollment, etc has brought even some of my most positive colleagues to a new level of weariness. I feel like we're all just very tired and feel more beaten down than we should be at this point in the semester. I came to Truman because my department seemed upbeat, energetic, and headed in a positive direction. Now, it feels hard. I felt like our department was headed in a positive direction, but the reorg has derailed many of those expectations.

The biggest issue is that there seems to now be a rather thin, eroding veneer of "shared governance". Seems like the administration is getting prepared to simply call all of the shots without much caring about faculty opinion. Sure, they will ask our opinion but when the decision is made I don't see that faculty suggestions are taken into consideration much if at all.

Setting up a straw man question to start SPAW "raise your hand if you feel you are paid what you are worth" actually upset me. Maybe a question like, "how many of us here have a side gig to make ends meet" might have been better. Yes, we are doing better with compensation (and there will never be reparations for the years previous where I did not get cost of living increases etc....). I should mention here that treatment of adjuncts is pretty despicable.

I think there are many issues that are contributing to the current negativity of the climate at Truman. Some are beyond administration control like the pandemic, inflation and the declining number of students available to recruit but they still have a huge effect. The lack of vision is



very concerning. The fact that we haven't seemed to have someone in charge of marketing our university for quite some time is concerning. Driving around the state and seeing every other college has a billboard along major highways but one would never know we exist is concerning. Will Truman be around 10 years from now or will I be looking for a new job soon? Are we going to continue to increase workload expectations while keeping compensation the same as enrollment declines. So many issues....

The bad Deans are part of the problem.

Everyone is overworked and exhausted

Kirksville depends on Truman in many ways. The current leadership has led to a drop in over half of the enrollment, which hurts everyone. Adapt to what the current kids actually are looking for, and want, and grow into those sectors. As, clearly, being seen over the last decade, nationwide, kids are NOT flocking towards liberal arts anymore. Put the focus back on merit and stop the identity politics. I have zero faith the current President and Provost can do that.

The climate is so negative and toxic with faculty. When reported retaliation is done (is make known even) and is ignored. Faculty who have been at Truman for 25+ years feel the same about recruiting as it was in the 90's and do not accept change. This holds the university back from ever growing. The mindset of "people know Truman and want to come here" is hurting enrollment but many faculty still believe this so do not believe in recruiting. Faculty talk so negatively about other employees it is hard to be in the environment.

Lowest faculty, staff, and student morale that I've seen here.

We seriously need to be merged with some other set of institutions by the state. I no longer believe that the leadership of this university is competent to handle out challenges.

It's truly unfortunate how much additional anxiety and distrust the opaque nature of the restructuring has caused. Even if the overall result of the process were the same, the way it was handled (and especially the communication between administration and faculty) made this more unpleasant than it needed to be.

Down sizing is hard politically. But zero compromise with reasonable suggestions does not make it any better. And if the things asked for are not a great deal to the administration, (aside from fears of looking weak), and they will not negatively impact student learning, and there are very strong feelings among faculty about these things, then why not compromise? It's is a cost benefit analysis, not a show down at high noon -- or it should not be seen that way. I think everyone wants what is best for Truman. We see what lack of compromise brings us by looking at the current situation in the US House of Representatives.

I am happy that this survey was developed since it was such a shock to everyone at the SPAW session when a BRAND NEW, NEVER SEEN BEFORE reorganization plan was delivered without any opportunity to have faculty input. Is the VPAA a scapegoat for someone with an agenda? I hope the results of the survey will make an impact on the VPAA that Truman faculty won't just



accept administrative dictators who think they know what is best for everyone without speaking first to the faculty.

Under no circumstances should we unionize the faculty. I will not agree to any collective bargaining agreement. If one is imposed upon me, I will resign.

Right now I feel like we are bleeding faculty and not capable of hiring anyone new. It goes along with bleeding students. I feel like everyone feels down and negative. It doesn't feel like the university is being honest with us about how bad the enrollment is and I don't feel like there's a plan for fixing it. Our entering student ACT averages are down by almost a point but that isn't being shared.

Morale is about as low as I've ever seen it. It feels like a lot of people are just holding out until they can retire or looking for something else.

The salary question is a hard one to answer. I'm rich compared to most of the world, and that's how I encourage my kids to evaluate any salary they get as well. I know we make less than colleagues elsewhere, but that's never bothered me particularly. I'd actually take a pay cut if it meant we could offer more to new hires (and if it bought me a little more free time!).

It's very hard to speak of morale at Truman in a monolithic block. I don't have enough knowledge. I'm hopeful because I believe that we will have to change if we want to remain a viable institution, and I think the administration is moving us in the right direction. I think that change is hard, and I think we as a faculty have pushed back on it for years, although the writing has been on the wall longer than we care to acknowledge. I'm very aware that some people feel much less hopeful about these changes than I do, but I have no knowledge about what the proportions are, since we tend to hear only the loudest voices. While I am positive about the future, I would want to support my colleagues who have faced harder conditions than I have (although I am teaching two courses over the normal this semester, so I feel I can claim that I'm not living in some false ideal compared to others).

I don't think the administration realizes how close they are to a faculty walk out

Actively working to leave Truman.

I worry a lot about our decreased enrollments. Truman has struggled with (slightly) decreasing enrollments for decades but the bottom really dropped out 5 years ago. I'd really like to know what happened. Did we change our (behind the scenes) financial aid packages? I know that we talked a lot about our discount rate a while back and I can't help wonder if the change in recruiting isn't related to change in strategy. Enrollments are down for many institutions but ours is down more than most. I am also concerned about the loss of younger tenure track people who have left in the last few years. Its hard for the university to move forward if you are losing your young and energetic individuals.

Disgusting. It's not just an admin issue, either.



I am not certain if reorganization is exactly the change we need, but I strongly feel that some sort of change is needed. I also believe that most of the people who oppose reorganization are likely people who just oppose change in general.

It's too bad for a good college that we are struggling.

general exhaustion in my area. Frustration over inability to hire and retain qualified faculty.

Students are starting to pick up on the campus climate.

Not really a comment about the climate, but a comment about the response options in this last section. Requiring answers to questions with a "Yes/No" response format is frustrating. It's much easier to bend data on those kinds of questions to make it look the way you want, as you don't know if someone's "Yes" is a strong, absolute yes, or a hesitant, maybe-yes.

The climate is more negative today than in the last 25 years. The lack of respect for faculty and staff, obvious plays by faculty to gain favor to become an administrator, widespread feelings of insignificance, rampant depression, no sense of our university's mission. All we seek is more students. Why would a student come if we do not convey a strong vision of our institution that gives students a great reason to attend.

It just gets worse....

The level of stress and dissatisfaction among faculty is higher than I have seen in more than 2 decades. What concerns me most is that many of the faculty I thought would be leaders in their generation are applying for and taking jobs elsewhere. We need to recognize there are fewer benefits to tie them to Truman than there were for faculty in previous generations.

(none)

I feel valued by my chair and colleagues within my department. But we are all severely underpaid. The salary for a postdoc funded by NSF in my field is 60K...this is more than I make as a tenured professor (NIH postdocs are even higher!). The deans know that salary is a major issue when it comes to recruiting quality faculty. The administration is well aware of it and it has been a topic at many SPAW presentations. But other than hoping the governor will give us more money, I have not heard what is being done to find more money so that we can adequately pay our faculty. Factoring in inflation, I am making about \$3000/year less than my starting salary!

On top of the abysmal salary, newer faculty have much worse retirement benefits relative to the 'good' MOSERS benefits that older senior faculty get. Such that without additional contributions, comfortable retirement is unlikely. However, my understanding is that you cannot easily/automatically make additional personal contributions to the Truman funded plan. It's hard to feel excited about a demanding job and invested in the success of an institution when I don't feel like I am adequately compensated for the work I put in.



We are continually asked to do more and more with less and less. Teach more courses, serve on more committees, advise more students. My department has had a hard time retaining staff as well; we have had a lot of turnover of administrative assistants and lab techs. When these positions are vacant or someone is just starting out, there is a lot of training and work that falls on the faculty. Pay is a huge issue here as well because someone can make A LOT more money at Kraft or McDonalds.

There has been a lot of effort put into increasing student satisfaction but there doesn't seem to be an understanding that student satisfaction will increase with faculty satisfaction/morale. When the students experience a lot of faculty turn over in their major, it's hard for them to feel connected to their department and when their instructors are stretched too thin, the students don't get quality feedback or opportunities for high impact experiences.

Finally, I despise the emails that are sent out asking for volunteers. The tone of them is that we are expected to be volunteering our evenings and weekends for these events

1) NTT positions should be converted to TT positions. The ever-growing NTT community is part of the campus climate issue. If the administration refuses this basic approach taken by many other institutions, there at least needs to be a path to advancement based on teaching and publishing for NTT so that faculty can still become Associate and Full Professors and receive the pay bumps of such advancements.

2) Snow days should exist. Faculty should not be expected to make decisions about the weather for their students.

Morale is at an all time low. Part of that is from years of declining enrollment with no real vision or leadership from our administration, actually no real acknowledgment of how bad it actually is. And years of stingy, penny wise pound foolish, hiring and search decisions that have left departments in bare bones shambles especially with so many failed searches. Dave Rector bears some responsibility for that advice but ultimately it's the president and provost who are steering this ship into the bermuda triangle. Who cares if our credit rating is sterling if we are losing key faculty, shuttering programs, losing students, and can't hire anyone because we're a laughingstock? The situation is going to get worse if it's not fixed. It is now exponentially worse with a new provost who gave us this reorg plan that is very different from what our committee proposed, and he isn't willing to actually listen, so he doesn't seem to really care about faculty input unless it's on his terms. I have never heard so many faculty who have been here for a few years or more, most of whom are TT, or tenured, now say they are applying elsewhere. I am worried a lot of folks are going to retire in coming years and the junior faculty won't be there to take over. It's scary. But it's not 1997 anymore, it's not even 2017 anymore. You have to create a culture where people will want to stay and not take them for granted.

The service obligations are through the roof because we have 30% less faculty but the same or more service needs. Not to mention some very senior faculty aren't interested in helping and honestly probably wouldn't do a great job anyway. It's unsustainable.



Thank you for your completion of this survey.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. [Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#).

Google Forms



