

We, the undersigned faculty and staff members of the School of Information at The University of Texas at Austin, are opposed to guns in our classrooms, offices, lobbies, hallways, and laboratories. In our teaching and work spaces, we value information—shared freely, expressed forthrightly, and communicated without fear—as a means of educating students, expanding research frontiers, and improving school operations. Many courses at the iSchool examine information questions that reflect great political, social, and cultural controversy and that elicit strong emotional responses. Students and instructors will inhibit themselves from engaging such controversy if they fear potential violence that guns in the classroom can bring. Moreover, because guns will create an atmosphere un conducive to the conduct of academic affairs, their presence, even concealed but allowed, will diminish our ability to attract top faculty and staff members as well as students to our school. Ultimately, guns will harm our quest to be the premier research and education program for 21st century information professionals. In setting policy about carrying handguns on campus, we believe that any decisions that affect the physical and financial well-being of the UT community should be made by those with the best knowledge of the campus, its operations, and its constituents. The UT Chancellor, the Texas Association of College and University Police Administrators, and the majority of faculty members, staff members, and students have made their position clear. For all these reasons, we oppose Senate Bill 11, the “campus carry” legislation.

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