

Bylaws of the Student InterCouncil at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

(Revised, February 2011)

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Preamble

The bylaws establish the Student InterCouncil at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHSC-H) and the procedures for the conduct of its business.

ARTICLE 1: Name

The organization shall be known as the Student InterCouncil (hereinafter referred to as SIC).

ARTICLE 2: Mission Statement

The purpose of the SIC shall be to improve the quality of student life at the UTHSC-H by providing an opportunity for the voice of the student body to be expressed and for student-based solutions to be advanced in coordination with administrative policies.

ARTICLE 3: Membership Qualifications

The SIC shall be comprised of registered students in good standing; there shall be three representatives from each component school of the UTHSC-H. Special groups may be represented as decided by the SIC. It is recommended that each representative complete one semester of enrollment at their school prior to serving as a representative on the SIC.

Section 1. School Representatives

Members must be elected by the student body or appointed by the elected student government organization of the school which they will represent. Election/appointment of members representing UTHSC-H component schools shall be selected according to the bylaws of the school in which they will represent. Three representatives must be elected/appointed from each component school of the UTHSC-H. If elected as an SIC officer, the member must be allowed to serve in that capacity for the duration of the officers term of office. It is recommended that one-third of the representatives should serve at least a two-year term, and one-third should be new members, thus ensuring continuity of the SIC from year to year.

Section 2. Under-represented Student Group Representatives

Three students from under-represented groups shall be appointed as representatives on SIC by the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (hereinafter referred to as the Office of Academic Affairs) to represent under-represented students. A call for applications from under-represented students will be sent out by the SIC selection committee to all UTHSC-H students no later than the last week in February and the applications shall be collected by the first week in April. The UTHSC-H Selection Committee shall oversee the nomination of twice the number of representatives needed and submit the selected applications to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than April 15. The Office of Academic Affairs will then rank the applications and appoint the appropriate number of representatives to serve on the SIC as under-represented student representatives. The president of the SIC shall be notified by June 15 of the appointed representatives. If a representative for under-represented students is elected to an SIC officer position, he/she will be automatically appointed to the SIC as a representative for under-represented student groups for the duration of his/her elected term. All

representatives for under-represented student groups must be an American citizen or permanent resident.

Section 3. International Student Representatives

Three international representatives shall be appointed by the Office of Academic Affairs to represent international students. A call for applications from international students will be sent out by the SIC selection committee to all UTHSC-H students no later than the last week in February and the applications shall be collected by the first week in April. The UTHSC-H Selection Committee shall oversee the nomination of twice the number of representatives needed and submit the selected applications to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than April 15. The Office of Academic Affairs will then rank the applications and appoint the appropriate number of representatives to serve on the SIC as international representatives. The president of the SIC shall be notified by June 15 of the appointed international representatives. If an international representative is elected to an SIC officer position, he/she will be automatically appointed to the SIC as an international representative for the duration of his/her elected term.

Section 4. Election and Term of Office

Election/appointment of representatives shall be conducted once a year by each individual institution unless a special election is needed. The President of the SIC shall be notified of the elections by June 15. Schools without representatives in place by June 15 shall forfeit representation until such time as representative(s) are elected/appointed.

In the event that representatives are not in place by October 31, the SIC selection committee may call for applicants to fill the vacant position(s). SIC shall notify the school of a vacancy in written format 60 days prior to sending out applications. Applications shall be sent out to the student body during the first week in November and shall be collected the first week in December. The SIC selection committee will then nominate twice the number of representatives needed and submit the selected applications to the Office of Academic Affairs no later than December 15. The Office of Academic Affairs shall rank the applicants nominated and appoint representatives by January 15. The appointed representative(s) must be registered student(s) in good standing at the school which they represent and shall serve for the duration of the term.

A given representative must begin and end their term on SIC while representing the same school or constituency. Representatives will not be allowed to represent a different school or constituency from term-to-term or within a term without first being elected/appointed to the new position.

The term of office for SIC representatives shall begin on June 15 and end on June 14 of the following year.

Section 5. Vacancies

Given that an elected or appointed member of the SIC has chosen to serve his/her constituents and that said service cannot be adequately performed when the representative is absent from SIC meetings, a replacement will be chosen after any representative fails to attend at least 50% of meetings in a semester. Members must also attend at least 50% of SIC events in a given semester unless granted an excused absence. Excused absences may be granted with appropriate cause by the SIC president at his/her discretion and should be submitted as a written request to the SIC president no later than 48 hours prior to the event, when possible. There is no limit to the number of excused absences an SIC representative may receive from the president for events. Any member failing to attend at least 50% of SIC events without obtaining excused absences will be removed from council.

In the event that the president removes a member from council based on attendance, he/she must notify the member in question as well as the SIC officers promptly in written format. The member in question shall have 14 days to appeal the decision before being permanently removed from council. If a member is removed, and decides to appeal, he/she must notify SIC within 14 days by sending a written request to the SIC vice president requesting to be added to the next full council meeting agenda for an appeal. During the meeting, the appealing member may discuss the circumstances of their removal and motion the council to vote against removal. SIC shall take a confidential vote and the decision of this vote, decided by simple majority, will be final. The appealing member shall retain the status of a voting representative until the appeal process is finalized by a full council vote. After 14 days, if an appeal is not made, the member in question thereby forfeits the ability to appeal the decision and shall be permanently removed from council.

In the event that a member is removed from council either after appealing or after waving the appeal process, the president of the SIC shall submit written notice to the representative and representative's school informing the dean of the need to replace said representative. Should a student need to be replaced mid-term, the secretary of the SIC shall advise the school's governing body of the need to fill that position. The student body and dean then have 30 days from the time they were notified to fill the vacant position. If the position is not filled after 30 days, the SIC selection committee shall send out a call for applications to the student body of the given school and nominate twice the number of representatives needed. The Office of Academic Affairs shall rank these nominees and select representatives to fill the vacant positions. If an international or under-represented student representative should need to be replaced mid-term, the Office of Academic Affairs shall appoint the next highest ranked applicant on file for that year.

Section 6. Committee Participation

Each representative shall formally participate in at least three ad-hoc, standing, or affiliated committees, one of which must be a standing committee.

ARTICLE 4: Officers

Section 1. Officer Positions

- a. The elected officers of the SIC shall be president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, historian and three UT System Student Advisory Council (UTSSAC) representatives.
- b. Non-elected Position: previous SIC President as an *ex officio* (non-voting) member. In the event that the previous president remains on council as a voting member (either by election or appointment), the *ex officio* position shall not be recognized.

Section 2. Qualifications

- a. All officers shall be duly elected or appointed representatives of schools, an under-represented student representative, or an international student representative in the UTHSC-H.
- b. The president shall have served on the SIC for at least one year prior to election.
- c. There shall be no more than two officers from each school or constituency of the UTHSC-H. In the event that more than two representatives from the same school or constituency are running for office, voting for new officers shall proceed as follows: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, historian, UTSSAC delegates.

Section 3. Election and Term of Office

All officers shall be elected to a one-year term at the April meeting of the SIC. Two of the three UTSSAC representatives shall be elected for a one-year term, and the third UTSSAC representative shall be elected for a two-year term. The two-year representative will serve as an alternate during the first year of the two-year term. Voting shall be by written ballot except when there is only one nominee, in which case a voice vote may be taken. Election shall be by plurality vote.

Section 4. Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs in any office of the SIC, the president shall call a special election to fill the office. When a vacancy occurs in the office of president, the vice president shall fill the unexpired term.

Section 5. Duties of Officers

- a. The president shall: be the voice of the SIC in all matters pertaining to the organization and preside at the meetings. At the end of his/her term, the president is also responsible for compiling a binder of all pertinent information and correspondence during his/her term of office. This binder shall be given to the president elect by June 15.

b. The vice president shall: assume the duties of the president in his or her absence, prepare the agenda for SIC meetings and chair the SIC Operations Committee.

c. The secretary shall: assist in recording, preparation, and distribution of meeting minutes, be responsible for maintaining records of attendance at SIC meetings and events, and shall serve as the chair the Scholarship Committee.

d. The treasurer shall: prepare a budget for the SIC based on the program activities, present a treasurer's report at each meeting, and chair the Project Funding Committee.

e. The historian shall: serve as editor of UTHSC-H *Student Pulse* and oversee it's publication at least once per semester, ensure photographs are taken at all SIC functions and events, compile the yearly slideshow for Dean's Dinner, and chair the Public Relations Committee.

f. The UTSSAC representatives shall: - represent UTHSC-H at UTSSAC meetings in Austin and present a report to SIC at the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE 5: Administrative Advisor and Staff

Section 1. Administrative Advisor

A representative to the SIC shall be appointed annually by the president of the UTHSC-H from the staff of the UTHSC-H. This representative may serve for an indefinite number of terms. His/her function shall be to maintain communication between the president of the UTHSC-H and the SIC. The administrative advisor shall have privileges of the floor.

Section 2. Administrative Staff

An administrative staff member shall be appointed by the Office of Academic Affairs to assist with preparation and distribution of SIC documents, and to provide administrative support necessary to forward the work of the SIC.

ARTICLE 6: Faculty Advisor

A faculty representative and advisor to the SIC shall be appointed annually by the president of the UTHSC-H based on the recommendation of the InterFaculty Council. His/her function shall be to maintain communication between the UTHSC-H president and the SIC, and to represent UTHSC-H faculty at SIC proceedings. This representative shall serve a one-year term rotated among the schools. The faculty advisor shall have privileges of the floor.

ARTICLE 7: Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held monthly from September to April at a time specified during the first regular meeting each September. It is recommended that meetings also be held May – August, but attendance at summer meetings will not count towards attendance requirements.

Section 2. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the SIC president or by written request of four or more members of the SIC to the SIC president, but *must* be scheduled at least 72 hours in advance and on a regular school day. Attendance at special meetings is recommended, but will not count towards attendance requirements.

Section 3. Agenda

The agenda for regular meetings shall include call to order, introduction of guests, determination of the presence of a quorum, approval of minutes of previous meetings, committee reports, unfinished business, new business, announcements, and adjournment. The vice president of the SIC shall be responsible for preparing the agenda for each meeting. The president of the SIC shall be responsible for final approval and distribution of the agenda.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum shall be called when the majority of all voting eligible SIC representatives are present or if the rules of order are suspended (see Article 11). Meetings may be held without quorum but no motions may be introduced or passed.

Section 5. Voting

Voting may be by voice or by written ballot.

Section 6. Rules of Order

Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority, but may be suspended by the SIC president with a two-thirds vote of concurrence by the representatives present.

Section 7. Minutes

The SIC secretary shall keep record of meeting minutes and distribute them after the meeting to council for approval in a timely manner. If the secretary is not present, he/she may appoint someone to record the minutes in his/her place.

Section 8. Visitors

Visitors may attend meetings, make presentations, and have the privileges of the floor (except the vote) upon invitation of the SIC. Visitors wishing to present or to propose a motion as well as those requesting privileges of the floor must be included on the agenda.

Section 9. Motions.

Motions that come out of SIC committees or that are presented by any student or outside student committee must be sent via email to all of the SIC representatives at least two working days prior to a general meeting and added to the meeting agenda. Written versions of the motion must be supplied to each SIC member at the meeting. Procedural motions and motions concerning new business may be presented from the floor at a general meeting.

ARTICLE 8: Finance and Budget

Operating funds for the SIC shall come from a portion of the Student Services Fee collected each term through the registration process. The portion designated for use by the SIC shall provide the source of funds for the budgetary planning and fiscal operation of the SIC. No financial obligations shall be incurred by any officer or committee except as authorized within annual budgets, or under authority of special interim action, approved by the SIC. The fiscal year shall conform to the academic year. Because the operating funds for the SIC come from a portion of the Student Services Fee, the treasurer of the SIC shall publish a budget report once per semester in the *Student Pulse* stating at the outset, the funds available and in the end, giving an account of how funds were distributed during the course of the year. At a time no later than the first regularly scheduled meeting, the SIC treasurer shall present the proposed budget to the general membership. The budget shall be accepted by a two-thirds majority vote of the representatives.

ARTICLE 9: Committees

Section 1. *Ad Hoc* Committees

The president shall be empowered to appoint from time to time *ad hoc* committees on any of a variety of issues. All functioning committees shall be automatically dissolved at

the termination of the last meeting each year, but may be reappointed by the incoming president.

Section 2. UTHSC-H Committees

The president shall respond to requests from the president of the UTHSC-H seeking names of SIC representatives to sit on standing and special committees.

Section 3. SIC Standing Committees

a. The Operations Committee: This committee oversees the administrative operations of the SIC. The duties of this committee should include, but are not limited to, planning the meetings, overseeing, amending and upholding the bylaws of the SIC, and receiving nominations for officers. Reports from each committee chair will be received and compiled by the Secretary. Committee reports will be presented to the president at each SIC meeting. It shall be chaired by the SIC vice president.

b. The Scholarship Committee: The duties of this committee should include, but are not limited to, overseeing the planning and implementation of special projects to support student scholarships and making recommendations for disbursement of scholarship funds. It shall be chaired by the secretary of the SIC. Any SIC member is eligible to receive SIC awards/scholarships with the exception of SIC members serving on the SIC Scholarship Committee. Scholarship Committee members may only apply for the Shohrae Hajibashi Memorial Leadership Award, in which the SIC Alumni Association and external representatives from UTHealth will select the award recipient. The SIC president is eligible to apply for any/all SIC scholarships and awards if he/she removes his/herself from the scholarship committee for the semester the award/scholarships are selected.

c. The Public Relations Committee: The duties of this committee should include, but are not limited to, managing the *Student Pulse* and ensuring it's publication at least once per semester. It shall be chaired by the historian of the SIC. The committee shall publicize SIC activities, meetings and events and improve communication between UTHSC-H constituents. It is responsible for coordinating website updates to the SIC webpage. The committee also is charged with the duty of overseeing that projects funded by the SIC include recognition of SIC support.

d. The Project Funding Committee: The duties of this committee should include, but are not limited to, making recommendations regarding the disbursement of SIC funds to student-sponsored activities, and its members will be responsible for keeping historical records. It shall be chaired by the treasurer of the SIC.

e. The Student Activities Council (SAC): This council is charged with promoting social life at the UTHSC-H with an emphasis on inter-school interactions. It shall be co-chaired by two members of the SIC.

f. The SIC Selection Committee: This committee shall coordinate the distribution, collection, and review of applications for minority and international representatives. Upon reviewing the applications, the committee shall submit selected applications to the Office of Academic Affairs for further review. The committee is also responsible for reviewing applications from UTHSC-H students for The University of Texas System Student Regent position. The committee shall select the appropriate number of individuals to nominate from UTHSC-H for the student regent position and submit the applications to The University of Texas System according to System requirements for consideration. It shall be co-chaired by two members of the SIC. Any SIC member who does not serve on the SIC selection committee may submit an application and be selected as a UTHSC-H nominee for The University of Texas System Student Regent.

Section 4. The Texas Medical Center - Student Affairs Advisory Council (TMC-SAAC)

This council is made up of representatives from institutions within the Texas Medical Center. The SIC shall select one SIC representative to serve on the TMC-SAAC for a one-year term. The representative will serve for a term of 12 consecutive months.

Section 5. The Student Fees Advisory Committee

The duties of this committee will be to provide student input into all proposed fees from all schools, incidental fees, lab fees, and any changes to student services fees or general use fees. Its recommendations will be taken to the President and the Executive Council. Membership shall consist of two representatives from each school and two SIC members. It will meet as needed.

Section 6. Committee Accountability

The chair of each committee will present a report on the committee's activities to the Chair of the Operations Committee. Each committee member will be held accountable to report on issues related to committee findings during official SIC meetings. It is the responsibility of the committee members to stay informed on topics relating to their committees and to submit an end-of-the term report to the president summarizing the committee's work throughout the term by June 1.

ARTICLE 10: Jurisdiction

The SIC shall be advisory to the president of the UTHSC-H. It may elaborate a position or positions on matters within any of the constituent schools; or on matters generated within the SIC. Its recommendations, if any, shall be forwarded to the president of the UTHSC-H in writing.

ARTICLE 11: Amendments and Adoptions

Proposed amendments to the bylaws must be submitted for inclusion on the agenda and for distribution to all SIC members prior to the meeting in which they are considered. Amendments to the bylaws shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the SIC membership.

ARTICLE 12: Student Referendums

An SIC representative, or any student through his or her representative to the SIC, may request a referendum on issues pertaining to students. The issue of a referendum shall be placed on an SIC agenda and a majority of the voting representatives present shall vote to hold the referendum. SIC representatives shall be responsible for polling their respective schools. The referendum shall be passed if approved by a two-thirds majority of those students voting.

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