



# **Houston Community College**

## **United Student Council**

### **By-Laws**

Amended June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**Article I**  
**Duties of Officers**

Section 1.

It shall be the duty of the President of this organization to:

1. Preside at all meetings of the executive board, general assembly, and any special meetings of this organization
2. Call all meetings of this organization to order.
3. Call all special general assembly meeting when deemed necessary by the organization, with the assistance of the Executive Board.
4. Prepare all agendas for all regular general assembly meetings of this organization.
5. Appoint the chairs and members of all committees of this organization.
6. Make all interim appointments as needed with the advice and consent of the USC Representatives.
7. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees, with the exception of the Executive Board where he/she is the chair of the committee.
8. Vote in cases of a tie unless serving on a committee then the President will have full voting rights.
9. Enforce all provisions of the Constitution, By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) and Standing Rules of this organization.
10. Discipline any member as necessary as prescribed in these By-Laws. Any serious infractions of system policy will be referred to the appropriate system/college office for disposition.
11. Report student concerns and recommendations monthly via a meeting with the Vice Chancellor of Student Services, Board of Trustees meeting, and by request of the Chancellor.
12. Prepare and Deliver Commencement speeches for both the Fall and Spring Graduation Ceremonies.
13. Prepare and Deliver USC Report at monthly Board of Trustee meetings.
14. Supervise the work of all committees under his/her direction.
15. Serve as chief spokesperson of the organization.
16. Make an oral report at every meeting. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.

Section 2.

It shall be the duty of the Vice-President of this organization to:

1. Assume the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence, disability, resignation, death, or any other reason that would create an office vacancy.
2. Supervise the work of those committees under his/her direction.

3. Serve as chief advocate for the membership: informing the Executive Board and President of the concerns of members.
4. Act as chief program coordinator of the Council and coordinate all district wide initiatives including but not limited to voter registration, community service, and bi annual USC Representatives outing.
5. Make an oral report at every meeting. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.

### Section 3.

It shall be the duty of the Secretary of this organization to:

1. Keep accurate records of all proceedings of this organization.
2. Make and keep a current list of all officers, USC Representatives, and associate members.
3. Make and keep a current list of all officers, USC Representatives, and associate members. List must include attendance record.
4. Forward all papers to the Executive Board members.
5. Call roll and make necessary announcements.
6. Supervise the work of those committees under his/her direction.
7. Act as chief corresponding agent for Council.
8. Send out copies of the approved proceedings records to all members and each of the organizational Advisors.
9. Send out invitations when requested by the Executive Board.
10. Send out notices of all meetings of the Council, to all members and the Executive Board of the organization.
11. Send out invitations when requested by the Executive Board.
12. Send out notices of all meetings of the Council, to all members and the Executive Board of the organization.
13. Make an oral report at every meeting. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.
14. Manage United Student Council shared mailbox.

### Section 4.

It shall be the duty of the Treasurer of this organization to

1. Be responsible for USC Fall and Spring Budgets.
2. Keep accurate record of said monies at all times.
3. Prepare a semester budget with the assistance of a Council Advisor and submit to Executive Board for approval.
4. Supervise the work of those committees under his/her direction
5. Make an oral report at every meeting. Provide a written version of said report to the membership at each meeting.

6. Attend all SFAC meetings and make oral report at General Assembly meetings sharing decisions and findings regarding the student activity fee. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.

#### Section 5.

It shall be the duty of the Parliamentarian of this organization to:

1. Act as advisor to the President and membership on all questions of parliamentary law/procedure.
2. Have a functional knowledge of parliamentary law/procedure.
3. Have functional knowledge of the policies and procedures of the college system as well as the Constitution, By-laws, Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) and any standing rules of the Council.
4. Have in hers/his possession at all meetings, copies of the Constitution, By-laws, Robert's Rules of Order, most current edition, and any standing rules.
5. Act as a resource, to currently enrolled students of this system on disciplinary matters, questions of policy and procedure of this college system.
6. Supervise the work of those committees under his/her direction.
7. Make an oral report at every meeting. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.

#### Section 6.

It shall be the duty of the Historian of this organization to:

1. Keep accurate written records of all events of this organization.
2. Keep photographic record of organizational events.
3. Keep videographic record of organizational events.
4. Keep record of current USC activities. Make such record available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.
5. Produce the semester newsletter.
6. Prepare and present historical United Student Council information to President or Advisors as requested.
7. Supervise the work of those committees under his/her direction.
8. Facilitate requests to and from HCC TV and the Communications department.
9. Make an oral report at every meeting. Make such report available to the Secretary and Advisors for permanent record.

#### Section 7.

It shall be the duty of the USC Advisors of this organization to:

1. Advise Executive Board on all matters before the general public, administration and student body receives correspondence regarding any and all business that involves the USC.
2. Ensure that the United Student Council adheres to all college policies; and local,

- state and federal laws
3. Facilitate training and transition for student leadership within the United Student Council;
  4. Provide leadership development; and assist with programming, communication and media initiatives for the United Student Council.
  5. Communicate and collaborate with appropriate university offices, departments and organizations; and assist the United Student Council leaders in developing relationships with these constituencies
  6. Other duties as assigned by the College Administration.

#### Section 8.

It shall be the duty of all officers of this organization to surrender all items for the operation of this organization to the incoming Executive Board at the expiration of the present officer's term of office. This includes agendas, minutes, financial reports, and any other documents that were used, created, and/or modified. If these duties are not met, any form of stipends will be withheld.

#### Section 9.

It shall be the duty of all officers of this organization to comply with the contract set by the United Student Council Advisors in order to receive full stipend.

#### Section 10.

It shall be the duty of all officers of this organization to attend at least two of the Board of Trustees meetings per semester.

### **Article II**

#### **Election of Officers**

##### Section 1.

The officers shall be: (1) President School, (2) Vice-President School (3) Secretary School, (4) Treasurer School, (5) Parliamentarian School, (6) Historian School. These officers shall be elected annually at the summer retreat for incoming USC Representatives for a term of one year or until a successor is elected and comes into power. Each school although allowed to run for multiple executive positions, may not be elected to more than one executive position due to a conflict of interest.

Exception: A school may give up their right to a seat on the executive board in writing at the beginning of the summer retreat. Should a school give up their seat on the executive board another school may run for any vacant position at the end of Elections. However, a school may not be elected to more than two executive board positions.

##### Section 2.

Applications to run for United Student Council Officer of Houston Community College System may be made by any USC Representative meeting the qualifications as stated in Art. II; Sec. 11 of these By-laws.

### Section 3.

Applications for offices must be submitted no later than one week prior to the annual summer retreat for verification of eligibility.

### Section 4.

Each candidate will be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to give a campaign speech to the general assembly at the election meeting.

### Section 5.

Voting shall be by secret ballot with a majority to win. Proxy votes will not be allowed.

1. Candidates who do not make the retreat may run, if found eligible, and should submit either a written or video statement.
2. Elections shall be in the following order: (1) President, (2) Vice-President, (3) Secretary, (4) Treasurer, (5) Parliamentarian, (6) Historian. Each position shall be voted on and announced individually, if a candidate does not get elected for a higher office they may announce their candidacy for a subsequent position.
3. In the case of a tie, if there were more than two candidates, there shall be a runoff election following the same rules stated in Article 2 Section 5. If there is a tie in a race with two candidates the USC Advisors shall be granted temporary voting rights and there shall be a runoff election.

### Section 6.

A person may hold office for no more than one year in the same position and no more than two years on the board.

### Section 7.

Newly elected officers shall take office upon induction at the annual summer retreat.

### Section 8.

Should an officer vacate their office for any reason, the school holding the position shall be empowered to fill that vacancy by appointment upon the advice of their respective Student Life Coordinator.

### Section 9.

Officers shall be elected for a term of not more than (1) year, May-April.

## Section 10.

All seeking an office to the United Student Council of Houston Community College System must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.75 before and during office term, be currently enrolled, and plan to be enrolled in the Fall and Spring semesters during their office term.

All USC Officers must have prior Houston Community College Student Government Experience via former SGA Officer or Active SGA Member. An Active SGA member can be defined as the recorded attendance of two general assemblies and volunteering at one student government event.

## **Article III Committees**

### Section 1.

For the purpose of conducting the necessary affairs of this organization, its membership shall be divided into several committees; in addition to the chairperson, each committee will be under the direct supervision of an Executive Board member.

### Section 2.

Of these committees, there shall be three types; standing, special and joint. Each define as follows:

1. A standing committee shall be a committee that will become a permanent committee of this organization (i.e. Grievance Committee).
2. A special committee shall be those committees that are designed to fulfill a specific task (i.e. planning a run for state office).
3. A joint committee is a committee that is formed with an organization and/or parties outside the Council (i.e. State Resolution Committee).

### Section 3.

The President, with the assistance of the Executive Board, shall appoint the chairs and members of all committees. All standing committees will be appointed no later than sixty (60) days after the start of the fall semester, with the exception of the Elections committee. The President shall appoint the chairs and members of all special committees. The President will also select members to represent this organization on all joint committees that involves this organization.

### Section 4.

The following committees shall be the standing committees of this organization.

1. District Wide Initiatives Committee (D.W.I.C.)



- a. Mission: This committee will develop district wide initiatives for the Council. This includes but is not limited to voter registration, community service, and the bi annual USC Representative outing.
  - b. This committee is under the direct supervision of the Vice-President.
2. Governmental and External Affairs Committee (G.E.A.C.)
  - a. Mission: This committee is the official liaison between the student body to the Governmental and External Affairs Department. This committee will bridge the gap between TJCSGA State initiatives and the Governmental and External Affairs Department agenda.
  - b. This committee is under the direct supervision of the President.
3. Grievance Committee (G.C.)
  - a. Mission: To assist all students, and members, of this organization, with any grievance that has not been satisfactorily resolved by any other means, and to assist students on understanding its policies and advocate if requested. This committee must have functional knowledge of all HCCS disciplinary policies and rules and regulations, especially those pertaining to students.
  - b. This committee is under the direct supervision of the Parliamentarian.
4. Student Fee Advisory Committee (E.C.)
  - a. Mission: This committee will advise the governing board of Houston Community College-District and the administration on the type, amount, and expenditure of the compulsory fee.
  - b. This committee will have seven student representatives. The USC Treasurer has a permanent seat. The President of each college's SGA will appoint one representative from their respective College Activity Board. These names shall be submitted to the following (1) the USC President, (2) the USC Secretary, (3) the USC Treasurer, and (4) all advisors.
  - c. All student committee members shall be provided with a copy of the Texas Education Code Section 52.5301
  - d. The student members committee will be under the joint direction of the Treasurer.
5. Investigations Committee (I.C.)
  - a. Mission: This committee will investigate all alleged acts of misconduct, including financial, against this organization by any member or officer and will make recommendations of the disposition of the allegations to the President and the Parliamentarian.
  - b. Upon request by any member this committee will investigate only HCC-System issues and will determine if it needs the United Student Council attention. If the situation needs the United Student Council's involvement, then this committee will determine what action is necessary.
  - c. This committee is under the direct supervision of the Parliamentarian.

Section 5.

The Council may increase and/or decrease the assigned duties of any committee, when it is deemed necessary.

Section 6.

Members may petition the President of the Council in regards to being assigned a committee chairship and membership.

Section 7.

All committees are to make monthly reports to the general assembly. All committees must submit a written copy of the report to the Secretary to be place in the permanent record.

Section 8.

Members who wish to resign from a committee or to be transferred to another committee must submit a petition in writing to the President of the Council requesting these appointments. The President of the Council will notify the chairs of each committee involved of the request for reappointment. If the committee chair resigns, then the USC President will appoint a new committee chair.

Section 9.

The membership reserves the right to recall the appointment of all committee chairs. Recalling a committee chair requires a two-thirds (2/3 vote of members present at the time

Section 10.

All committee(s) of the Council reserve the right to divide themselves into various subcommittees to accomplish their stated mission. These subcommittees can also be structured with a chair and members.

Section 11.

Committees with more than two members must have a secretary to keep a record, which may be reviewed by the Council.

## **Article IV**

### **Membership**

Section 1.

All Student Government Officers are USC Representatives. Each school may cast up to four votes on any occasion that calls for cast voting.

Section 2.

No person may become an Executive Board member of USC Senator of this organization who does not plan to stay the full year at the college in which they were elected.

Section 3.

All members will be provided with a copy of the constitution, by-laws, and the standing rules of order for this organization by the first meeting.

Section 4.

The number of Associate members of this organization shall be unlimited.

**Article V**

**Discipline**

Section 1.

The United Student Council will enforce rules and policies set forth upon itself by its constitution, by-laws, standing rules of order and the system policies.

Section 2.

All members will be granted all rights entitled to them by the System's Student "Bill of Rights," by all laws of the United States of America, and by all laws of the State of Texas, and by this organizations constitution, by-laws, and standing rules of order.

Section 3.

Members may not face the exact same allegations again once these allegations are proven to be false.

Section 4.

All members are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Section 5.

All allegations of internal misconduct will be sent to the Investigations Committee to determine the validity.

1. Once the validity is determined then the investigation committee will determine what actions are necessary.
2. If the allegations are against the Chair of the Investigations Committee, then the chairship of the committee goes to the Parliamentarian.
3. If the President and Parliamentarian are involves in the allegations, then the Vice President will select the chair of the Investigations Committee to investigate the allegations.

## Section 6.

Transgressions by any member or officer of this organization will be punishable as prescribed by these by-laws.

1. Misrepresentation: Acting on behalf of the System or this organization without the express United Student Council's permission.

Clause: This offense is punishable by the following actions: Censure, loss of privileges, loss of membership (for representatives), or referral to the Student Life Council for Executive Board members. Repetitive offenses of this will result in the removal from office by either the Executive Board or the Student Life Council.

2. Dereliction of duties: Not performing one's duties and/or responsibilities.

Clause: This offense is punishable by the following actions: Any member of the Executive Board may email a formal complaint of the officer in question to the student, the officer school advisor, and the remaining 5 student life coordinators. The officer has 10 days to make amends for the missed duties. This process can only take place twice in an academic calendar. If the Board deems it appropriate, a vote deciding the duration of their term in office must be facilitated at the next Executive Board Meeting.

3. All other offenses will be investigated by the Investigations Committee and recommendations will be made by the Student Life Council to determine the proper disposition of the offense.
4. The Investigations Committee reserves the right to refer offenders to the Student Life Council for any reason. Should the Council agree with the allegations as listed by the Investigations committee, a vote deciding the duration of their term in office or as a representative must be facilitated at the next General Assembly.

## Section 7.

Upon removal of an officer from the Executive Board, the respective school will appoint an interim member to fill the vacancy.

## Section 8.

The Investigations Committee will be under a strict code of silence in regards to any matters being investigated until such events are disclosed to the membership. Any member violating this code of silence will face disciplinary action.

## Section 9.

This organization shall only discipline its members and does not have the right to intervene in any other kind of disciplinary matters outside itself.

## Section 10.

All disciplinary actions taken against any member may be appealed to the Executive Board. If the person is not satisfied with the disposition, then they have the right to appeal to the Vice Chancellor of Student Services.

#### Section 11.

The Investigations Committee will be empowered with all authority to obtain any information necessary about any allegations, so long as it does not violate the System's policies and/or organization's constitution, by-laws, rules of order.

1. Also, this committee will have the power to call witnesses to appear before it, provided it does not violate this organization's constitution, by-laws, rules of order or any policy of the system.
2. This committee will not infringe on the rights on any individual student organization when investigating allegations of misconduct.

#### Section 12.

All allegations must be filled with the Parliamentarian and the Secretary.

#### Section 13.

All findings of the United Student Council must be filed with the Secretary and announced by the Parliamentarian to the organization.

#### Section 14.

This organization has the right to approve all punishments announced by the Parliamentarian to its member by a two-thirds (2/3) of the membership vote.

#### Section 15.

The Council reserves the Act of Clemency for all members, provided that other system policies do not have superior jurisdiction over the violation. All Acts of Clemency must be decided by three-fourths (3/4) vote of the membership present.

#### Section 16.

The Executive Board may reserve the right of commuting any punishment by unanimous vote of all Board Members. This section is enforceable so long as this policy has precedence. If another System policy has precedence, the this section had no effect.

#### Section 17.

All requests for commuting and clemency must be by written petition of the punished member and two (2) other members of this organization.

## **Article VI**

### **Amendments**

#### Section 1.

The By-laws may be amended at a general assembly meeting for said purpose by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Executive Board and active membership present. If there are no more general assembly meeting scheduled then a special meeting may be called for said purpose.

#### Section 2.

The proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board at least thirty (30) days prior to said meeting unless submitted by the Office of Student Life.

#### Section 3.

The proposed amendments, meeting locations, and time must also be sent to USC Representatives and advisors at least fifteen (15) days prior to said meeting.

#### Section 4.

The Standing Rules of Order may only be amended by the Executive Board.

1. Only Executive Board members may submit and motion to amend the Standing Rules of Order.
2. All amendments must be ratified by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Executive Board.
3. All amendments will be presented to the Advisor(s) for approval before being submitted for a ratification vote.

#### Section 5.

Once an amendment is approved, the amended document will be updated to reflect the change no later than fifteen (15) days after ratification.

#### Section 6.

All amendments that are in violation or in conflict with college and system policies and procedures are null and void.

## **Article VII**

### **Parliamentary Authority**

#### Section 1.

The most recent version of Robert's Rules of Order, shall be the parliamentary authority on rule of debate and order. It shall be referred to on all matter not covered by the Constitution and By-laws of the association.