



University of Houston Chapter

To: University of Houston Administration

From: UH AAUP

We write to express our serious concerns regarding the proposed amendments to the University of Houston Faculty Council Bylaws scheduled for consideration at the August 20 Board of Regents meeting. We respectfully urge you to withdraw this proposal from the upcoming Board agenda and initiate a collaborative, faculty-led review process before any structural revisions are submitted for approval.

These amendments were drafted without Faculty Council notification, input, or deliberation. Bypassing faculty governance has prevented representatives from consulting the broader campus community and colleagues they serve. Advancing major changes through a non-consultative process undermines institutional trust and directly contradicts the Faculty Council's stated principle that *"[s]uccessful shared governance requires active partnerships at all levels, from setting priorities to formulating policy."*

While we recognize the need to ensure bylaws comply with statutory requirements under Texas Senate Bill 37, the most consequential structural revisions in this proposal extend far beyond legislative mandates. Specifically, the draft would:

- assign four senior administrators voting seats on the Faculty Council Executive Committee and install one as co-chair;
- grant administrators authority over appointing committee leadership, replacing peer election;
- require administrative approval for the agendas and activities of the Faculty Council and its standing committees; and
- remove the Faculty Affairs Committee's explicit charge to review and advise on faculty employment conditions and workload.

An effective faculty council must remain an independent advisory body capable of developing candid, peer-driven perspectives on teaching, research, and institutional policy. Placing administrative leadership in direct operational and voting control over faculty governance compromises that independence, creating structural conflicts of interest that diminish the value of faculty counsel to leadership. Furthermore, bypassing traditional shared governance mechanisms runs counter to the standards articulated by our accreditors and the AAUP regarding healthy decision-making in complex Tier One research universities.

Shared governance is not an impediment to university leadership; it is an essential partnership that ensures institutional decisions are grounded in the expertise of those delivering the core academic mission.

We respectfully request that you pause the current submission to the Board of Regents and bring these proposed changes to the Faculty Council for transparent, structured deliberation. We welcome the opportunity to work alongside administration to develop bylaws that achieve legal compliance while safeguarding faculty governance and academic freedom.



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Sincerely,

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