



112th STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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Executive Summary

*Passed by
unanimous
consent 2/12/19*

J.R. 6: In Support of the Creation of Permanent Deans' Student Advisory Committees

Summary: Over the past few years, there have been various campus climate issues and events, encompassing nearly every college across the University, which students feel have not always been met with strong and tactful responses by the faculty. To address these problems, some of the colleges across campus have created formal and informal avenues through which students can discuss their grievances and provide feedback to the deans. This bill suggests creating official committees composed of student leaders to report to each and every college's Dean to voice the students' concerns, beliefs, and suggestions. The streamlined implementation and consistent communication that these committees will provide can be mutually beneficial to both students and the deans.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this necessary?
 - a. The student body seems upset with many of the decisions that the faculty and administration make. These committees would ensure that the faculty and administration are aware of the students' concerns so they can make more informed decisions, and also serves to give the administration an outlet to pass down information to the student body.
2. Who will serve on these committees?
 - a. This will be decided by each individual college. Preferably, student leaders from the LSOs will be appointed to the committees, but the committees could potentially be open to any student from the college. The amount of committee members will also be left to the discretion of the individual colleges.
3. What will happen with the DSACs that already exist?
 - a. Several colleges already have groups of students that meet with the administration to foster communication and cooperation. If the Deans are satisfied with the structure of these committees, there is no need to alter them, and they should remain in place as the official DSAC.

J.R. 6

In Support of the Creation of Permanent Deans' Student Advisory Committees

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Sponsors: REPRESENTATIVE MARIANA LOZANO (*Moody College of Communications*), REPRESENTATIVE YESSMEEN MOHARRAM (*College of Fine Arts*), AND REPRESENTATIVE AMRUTHA SREEDHARANI (*College of Natural Sciences*)

WHEREAS, The Senate of College Councils is an umbrella organization composed of students from several undergraduate and graduate colleges whose duty is to represent their student constituents; and,

WHEREAS, The Student Government Assembly is composed of representatives elected directly by the student body in order to represent the students of each undergraduate college; and,

WHEREAS, The Graduate Student Assembly serves to represent the graduate students of the University; and,

WHEREAS, Many of these representatives meet frequently with staff, faculty, and administrators; and,

WHEREAS, These meetings often times drive policy change, innovation, increased recognition of student affairs on campus, and can serve as an avenue to address student grievances and concerns; and,

WHEREAS, Appointees from the Legislative Student Organizations (LSO) currently have the responsibility to serve on the President Student Advisory Committee which "advises the President of the University of Texas at Austin on matters of importance and concern to students and serves as the principal body of communication between students and the president;"¹ and,

¹ <http://president.utexas.edu/awards-and-programs/presidents-student-advisory-committee>

- WHEREAS,** Currently a few colleges, such as Liberal Arts and Undergraduate Studies², already have similar student advisory committees with their Dean; and,
- WHEREAS,** These groups guarantee student interaction and that the concerns of the students are being voiced directly to those in positions of high authority; and,
- WHEREAS,** Over the past few years, several high-profile and controversial issues have arisen around campus³⁴⁵ ; and,
- WHEREAS,** In these instances, faculty response occurred largely without student feedback, and incurred widespread student criticism⁶; and,
- WHEREAS,** Students deserve to have representation that can effectively communicate their concerns to those who will make decisions that affect them; and,
- WHEREAS,** Consulting students during times of controversy better the odds that faculty response will satisfy students; and,
- WHEREAS,** Deans' Student Advisory Committees would allow the students' college representatives to have direct, open dialogue with the Deans of their colleges; and,
- WHEREAS,** More voices on campus-wide/college specific issues would help to improve the University as a whole; and therefore,
- BE IT RESOLVED,** That Dean Student Advisory Committees will be installed within every college at the University of Texas at Austin with regularly scheduled meetings; and therefore,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** The membership of said committees will remain at the discretion of each college; and therefore,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** For graduate schools, it would be most beneficial for the corresponding Dean's Student Advisory Committee to be composed solely of graduate students; and therefore,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the Chair and Agenda Master for each committee will be the Council President of that college for the academic year; and therefore,
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** At the beginning of each academic year, we recommend the Dean of the college submit the frequency and times of the meetings and the membership of each committee to the Provost to ensure accountability; and therefore,

² <https://ugs.utexas.edu/support/advisory-council>

³ <https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/ut-school-of-business-removes-racially-offensive-holiday-decoration/1031439809?fbclid=IwAR3mPLAmzGgLOfYuvR-YTXekpo1S6P0ekWQKGaPawfNPJR4Kdy5bMrUECI0>

⁴ <https://www.statesman.com/NEWS/20180125/UT-declined-to-sanction-professor-who-pleaded-guilty-to-violent-felony>

⁵ <https://www.statesman.com/news/20180819/at-ut-an-inappropriate-relationship-alters-futures-raises-questions>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/eliasscortez/status/1047198535664513025>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to The Daily Texan, President Gregory Fenves, *President of the University of Texas at Austin*, Dr. Maurie McInnis, *Executive Vice President and Provost*, Dean Sharon Wood, *Cockrell School of Engineering*, Dean Sherry Field, *College of Education*, Dean Doug Dempster, *College of Fine Arts*, Dean Randy L. Diehl, *College of Liberal Arts*, Dean Paul Goldbart, *College of Natural Sciences*, Dean M. Lynn Crismon, *College of Pharmacy*, Dean S. Claiborne Johnston, *Dell Medical School*, Dean Mark J.T. Smith, *Graduate School*, Dean Sharon Mosher, *Jackson School of Geosciences*, Dean Angela Evans, *Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs*, Dean Jay C. Hartzell, *McCombs School of Business*, Dean Jay M. Bernhardt, *Moody College of Communication*, Dean Michelle Addington, *School of Architecture*, Dean Eric Meyer, *School of Information*, Dean Ward Farnsworth, *School of Law*, Dean Alexa Stuijbergen, *School of Nursing*, Dean Luis H. Zayas, *Steve Hicks School of Social Work*, and Dean Brent L. Iverson, *School of Undergraduate Studies*.