

University of Houston-Downtown
Faculty Council
Inaugural By-Laws

Approved by UHS Board of Regents August 21, 2025

These Faculty Council By-Laws are established to provide an instrument to guide the work of the faculty at the University of Houston-Downtown.

Article One: Definition

Article Two: Membership

Article Three: Meetings

Article Four: Faculty Council Leadership

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ARTICLE ONE: DEFINITION

A faculty council means a representative faculty organization at one of the institutions of higher education in the UH System and can only be established by the Board of Regents. A faculty council is advisory only and may not be delegated the final decision-making authority on any matter. A faculty council shall represent the entire faculty of the institution of higher education and advise the institution administration and any system administration regarding matters related to the general welfare of the institution, including curriculum, faculty affairs, as well as research and scholarship. The respective campus presidents shall appoint appropriate administrators to assist the faculty council in these areas.

ARTICLE TWO: MEMBERSHIP

Section One—Faculty Council Membership

The Faculty Council Membership should:

- (1) Ensure adequate representation of each college of the institution;
- (2) Require the members to be full-time faculty members in good standing (not on a faculty development plan, post-tenure review, or subject to any

- disciplinary actions) and holding academic rank [lecturers, clinical, and tenured/tenure-track];
- (3) Require consistent and equitable representation of non-tenure track, tenured, tenure-track faculty;
- (4) Exclude faculty members with administrative appointments above the chair.

Section Two—Faculty Assembly

All university employees holding academic rank as full-time faculty [lecturers, clinical, and tenured/tenure-track], shall be eligible to serve in the faculty council, and shall constitute the Faculty Assembly.

Section Three—Representation

There will be a total of 33 faculty representatives on the faculty council. The president will appoint one faculty representative from each college. The breakdown of elected faculty representatives is based on the number of tenured/tenure-track faculty. There will be 4 elected non-tenure track positions (one from each college) with no more than 8 total non-tenure track faculty serving on the faculty council during the academic year. There will be no more than two elected T/TT representatives from any one department in the college. For the 2025-2026 academic year, college elections will be completed by 9/5/2025 and presidential appointments will be completed by 9/15/2025. In subsequent years, college elections will occur by April 1 and presidential appointments will be completed by the third week in April.

College 235 T/TT Faculty*	Elected Faculty (T/TT/NT) Representatives	Elected Non-tenure track Representatives	Appointed Faculty (T/TT/NT) Representatives	Total Number
Marilyn Davies College of Business (56 T/TT -24% of total)	6	1	1	8
College of Humanities and Social Sciences (94 T/TT – 40% of total)	10	1	1	12

College of Public Service (39 T/TT -17% of total)	4	1	1	6
College of Sciences and Technology (46 T/TT -20% of total)	5	1	1	7
Totals	25	4	4	33

**Number of T/TT Faculty per the 2024-2025 Fact Book*

To be eligible to serve as a member of the faculty council, a full-time faculty member must be in good standing (not on a faculty development plan, post-tenure review or subject to any disciplinary actions) and should have completed at least two academic years at UHD. This means that full-time faculty members (lecturers, clinical, and tenured/tenure-track) will be eligible to serve at the beginning of their third year at UHD.

The president shall appoint a presiding officer, associate presiding officer, and secretary from the 33 members of the faculty council.

The Executive Committee of the faculty council will consist of the presiding officer, the associate presiding officer, the secretary, and two at-large members elected from the membership of the faculty council.

Section Four – Terms of Service

The terms for all faculty council members begin on September 1. For the 2025-2026 academic year, the term of service will begin on 9/15/2025 and the first meeting will be in October.

A member of the faculty council appointed by the president in accordance with SB 37 may serve up to six consecutive one-year terms and then may only be reappointed after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term.

A member of the faculty council elected by a vote of the faculty of the member's respective college serves a two-year term, staggered in a manner that allows approximately one-half of the elected members to be elected each year, and may only be reelected after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term.

A faculty member serving on the faculty council may be immediately removed from the council for failing to conduct the member's responsibilities within the council's parameters, failing to attend council meetings (at least 75% attendance required) or engaging in other misconduct.

A member of a faculty council may be removed on recommendation of the institution's provost and approval by the institution's president.

Persons appointed to be the presiding officer, the associate presiding officer, or secretary will serve a one-year term with the possibility of reappointment for an additional year. Terms of all officers shall begin on September 1 and end on August 31. For the 2025-2026 academic year, the term will be September 15 – August 31.

In the event of a vacancy of an appointed member, prior to the normal expiration of the term, the president will appoint a new member to fulfill the unexpired term. If the vacancy occurs with an elected member, the respective college will hold a special election to fulfill the remaining unexpired term.

ARTICLE THREE: MEETINGS and AGENDAS

The faculty council shall normally meet once a month during the fall and spring semesters on the first Tuesday of the month from 2:30-4:00.

The Executive Committee of the faculty council will consist of the presiding officer, the associate presiding officer, the secretary, and two at-large members elected from the 33 members of the faculty council. The Executive Committee of the faculty council will meet from 2:30-4 on the Tuesday two weeks before the scheduled faculty council meetings.

The presiding officer shall preside over meetings of the faculty council and represent the council in official communications with the institution's administration and system's administration.

Chapters 551 and 2110 of the Texas Government Code do not apply to the faculty council. The faculty council may not hold executive sessions as part of their meetings.

The faculty council shall conduct meetings in person at which a quorum of 60% of the 33 members is present in a manner that is open to the public and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the president. All meetings of the council shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order. Reports from the Faculty Affairs Council, the University Curriculum Council, and the Research and Innovation Council will be provided at each faculty council meeting.

The faculty council shall broadcast over the Internet live video and audio, as applicable, of each open meeting of the council if more than 50 percent of the members of the council are in attendance.

The faculty council must post on the institution's Internet website not later than the seventh day before a meeting of the faculty council:

- (A) an agenda for the meeting with sufficient detail to indicate the items that are to be discussed or that will be subject to a vote; and
- (B) any curriculum proposals reviewed by the council that will be discussed or voted on at the meeting.

Appropriate minutes of all meetings must be maintained and the names of the members in attendance must be recorded at the meeting in which the faculty council conducts business related to:

- (A) a vote of no confidence regarding an institution or system administrator; or
- (B) policies related to curriculum and academic standards.

A meeting of the Faculty Assembly shall be called at least once a year by the faculty council presiding officer and a formal report made to the Assembly on the activities of the faculty council. The faculty council presiding officer may use the Faculty Awards Ceremony to serve this purpose.

A faculty council is advisory only and may not be delegated the final decision-making authority on any matter. All faculty members may attend and participate in discussions at the regular meetings. The faculty council will forward their feedback to the respective office or administrator for consideration. Only faculty council members are eligible to vote on items brought forward on the agenda.

ARTICLE FOUR: FACULTY COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Section One – Presiding Officer

The functions of the presiding officer are to:

1. Preside over meetings of the faculty council,
2. Make regular faculty council meeting agendas available to the faculty assembly on the seventh day before the council meeting,
3. Meet once a month with the president and provost to discuss faculty council business and updates,
4. Report official council feedback to the president of the university, provost, and other appropriate administrative authorities,

5. Ensure that all provisions of the faculty council By-laws are enacted and compliant with the provisions in SB37
6. Transmit information from the president and provost on university updates and matters of general interest to the faculty,
7. Serve as a UHD representative on the University Faculties Executive Council,
8. Represent the faculty council on appropriate university and/or UH-System committees, university activities, and before external community or governmental bodies,
9. In conjunction with the provost and/or president call special meetings of the faculty council when appropriate.

Section Two – Associate Presiding Officer

The functions of the associate presiding officer are to:

1. Preside over meetings of the faculty council in the absence of the presiding officer,
2. Assist the faculty council presiding officer, including, but not limited to, developing the faculty council agenda, posting the agenda, arranging for speakers at the faculty council meetings,
3. Serve as a UHD representative to the University Faculties Executive Council,
4. Represent the faculty council on appropriate university and /or UH-System committees, university activities, and before external community or governmental bodies,
5. Supervise the administration of the faculty climate survey in the spring of every odd-numbered year.

Section Three – Secretary

The functions of the secretary are to:

1. Compile and maintain a complete set of minutes of the meetings of the faculty council. Staff in the Office of the Provost may assist with the distribution and posting of minutes on the faculty council website.
2. Maintain appropriate minutes of all meetings; record members present at each meeting and the names of the members in attendance must be recorded at a meeting in which the faculty council conducts business related to:
 - a. A vote of no confidence regarding an institution or system administrator; or

- b. Policies related to curriculum and academic standards.
3. Send a draft of the minutes to members of the Faculty Assembly, provost, and relevant participants within a week of each meeting. When finalized and approved by the faculty council, post minutes to the faculty council website prior to the next council meeting.
4. Assist the presiding officer with any faculty council correspondence,
5. Represent the UHD faculty council on appropriate university and/or UH System committees, university activities, and before external community or governmental bodies.

Section Four – Removal of Faculty Council Members

A faculty member serving on the faculty council may be immediately removed from the faculty council for failing to conduct the member's responsibilities within the council's parameters, failing to attend faculty council meetings (at least 75% attendance required), or engaging in misconduct. A member of a faculty council may be removed on recommendation of the institution's provost and approval by the institution's president.

ARTICLE FIVE: UNIVERSITY COUNCILS

To ensure that there is wide representation on the various committees and councils, a faculty member may serve on no more than two university councils or committees during an academic year. There may be times when the chair of one of the councils may need to bring in a content expert(s) outside of the council membership for an ad hoc project. This is a short-term assignment focused on a particular task.

Section One – The University Curriculum Council

Composition: The membership of this council consists of the Associate Vice President for Programming and Curriculum (who will serve as the chair), four department chairs (one from each college), two deans, four faculty members elected from the faculty council representing the four colleges, Assistant Vice President for Advising and Student Progression, and two student representatives. The Director of Programming and Curriculum will serve in a support role and will be non-voting. All members have voting privileges. The Associate Vice President for Programming and Curriculum serves as the University Curriculum Council's chair and votes only to break a tie.

Elected and appointed members will serve two-year staggered terms.

Charge: This council is a working group that is responsible for advising the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs on new and revised courses, certificates, minors, degree programs and other curriculum changes in terms of their alignment with the university's strategic plan, budgetary factors, labor market need, and contribution to the objectives and needs of the university. Additional factors that will be considered are the impact of pre-requisites and co-requisites, duplication of content, and impact on other programs across the colleges.

Section Two – The Faculty Affairs Council

Composition: The membership of this council consists of the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development (who will serve as chair), two department chairs (must be from different colleges), two deans (must be from colleges different from the chairs), four faculty members elected from the faculty council representing the four colleges, the executive director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), and a representative from Human Resources. All members have voting privileges. The Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development serves as the Faculty Affairs Council's chair and votes only to break a tie.

Elected and appointed members will serve two-year staggered terms.

Charge: Advises the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs on issues pertaining to faculty-related personnel, workload, and professional development areas. Works with Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development and the faculty council in the review and awarding of the Faculty Development Award Program (FDA), the Faculty Excellence in Teaching, and the Faculty Excellence in Service Awards, the Outstanding Lecturer Award and the Outstanding Adjunct Award. The Faculty Affairs Council will serve as an advisory board to the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence.

Section Three – The Research and Innovation Council

Composition: The Research and Innovation Council shall be comprised of four faculty members elected by the faculty council from the Faculty Assembly (based on the criteria below), two chairs, two deans, two representatives from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, and the Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development, who will serve as the chair. All members have

voting privileges. The Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development serves as the Research and Innovation Council chair and votes only to break a tie.

Elected and appointed members will serve two-year staggered terms.

In order to be eligible for nomination for election to the Research and Innovation Council, the faculty member must satisfy the following criteria:

- A. The faculty member must be in good standing and have an ongoing, focused research agenda as evidenced by refereed scholarly articles, juried works, grant writing, research or creative presentations or other scholarly research or creative activities output deemed appropriate in their discipline. Such scholarly or creative output must satisfy the expectations of the individual department or college from which the faculty member is nominated.
- B. The faculty member must be engaged in research or creative activities with students.

Charge: The Research and Innovation Council shall focus on matters related to the research, creative activities, and innovation at the university and will be advisory to Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee.

- 1. Advise on matters related to research, scholarship, and creative activity across all disciplines.
- 2. Recommend policies to strengthen the University's research, creativity, and scholarship ecosystem, including research and creative activity infrastructure, support, and intellectual property.
- 3. Convene review panels for the selection of and make recommendations on awards such as the Faculty Research Award, Organized Research and Creative Activities (ORCA) internal grants, Faculty Team Research Incubators Program (TRIP) internal grants, and Funded Faculty Leave (FFL) awards.