



SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

2201 Speedway A6210 · Austin, TX 78712-0810 · (512) 471-3166 · Fax: (512) 471-3408 · www.utsenate.org

S.B. 2004

A Bill to Institute Provisions for Council Inactivity

Executive Summary

This bill seeks to institute official provisions and related rules and procedures for Council inactivity within Senate. It also seeks to address what occurs should a College or School lose its entire representation within Senate.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is this necessary?

A: Historically, although it has been improving more recently, there has existed some Councils who have had a continued lack of attendance, spanning several years, without notification. This lack of attendance and participation has been seen as unfair to the active and participating Councils and negatively affects quorum. There are already provisions within the Spending Rules and Regulations which stipulate that after five unexcused absences, a Council loses its access to Senate funds, so this legislation would make it standard across the governing documents. Additionally, there is currently no provision for Councils to go “inactive” for a semester, which has become more of a necessity recently with the situation surrounding COVID-19.

Q: What would be the stipulations for an inactivity period?

A: If necessary, a College Council may deem themselves “inactive” for a semester, during which they do not count towards quorum and are exempt from attendance regulations, pending approval from the Senate President. In that semester of inactivity, if found necessary by the Council, the Senate President, and the respective College or School Dean, another representative organization may sit in their place for that semester. However, a Council may not go inactive for more than one semester.

Q: What would be the stipulations for a probationary period?

A: For a Council to be placed on a probationary period, they would have had to have >75% unexcused absences for General Assemblies in the previous semester, as recorded by the Senate Administrative Director. During the probationary period of one semester, for the Council to regain its official voting status, it must accrue no more than one unexcused absence. After the probationary period is over, if the Council has accrued unexcused absences, a bill must be passed to remove them from the Constitution and sent to their respective Dean, as stipulated in Bylaw III, Section F.



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October 1, 2020

Introduced in The Senate of College Councils on October 1, 2020 • Voted on in The Senate of College Councils on October 15, 2020 • The Bill Passed on a 17-0 vote.

- WHEREAS,** Historically, there has been an imbalance in representation and unequal standards for quorum and elections amongst the College Councils; and,
- WHEREAS,** In accordance with Bylaw III, Section A of the Senate Bylaws, “College Councils serve as the official voices in their respective colleges and schools,” and the absence of a College Council does not properly represent those students; and,
- WHEREAS,** There is currently no provision for Councils to choose to go inactive; and,
- WHEREAS,** In the event that a College or School does not have representation within Senate, an active Registered or Sponsored Student Organization should be found as a replacement for fair representation; therefore be it,
- ENACTED,** Article IV of the Senate Constitution and Bylaw III of the Senate Bylaws be amended as follows.
- AUTHOR,** Adebayo Gbakinro, Equity & Inclusion General Member, Senate of College Councils



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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS

Updated: October 1, 2020

ARTICLE V: General Assemblies and Voting Procedures

4. Legislation cannot be passed unless a quorum is achieved. A majority of the active College Councils must have at least one delegate present at the meeting in order for a quorum to be achieved. College Council attendance is determined by roll call at the beginning of each meeting.

THE BYLAWS OF THE SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS

Updated: October 1, 2020

BYLAW III: The College Councils

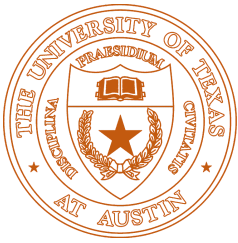
- A. The College Councils serve as the official voices of students in their respective colleges and schools by (1) working to improve the academic experience of students in each college and school, (2) providing programming to promote academic excellence, and (3) fostering interaction between students and faculty.
- B. The General Assembly may approve a registered student organization or sponsored student organization as a College Council, provided that the respective dean supports the status of the organization as a College Council. A registered student organization or sponsored student organization must maintain its status as such in order to retain its status as a College Council.
- C. Each College Council sends a delegation to the General Assembly. Each delegation includes the President, Financial Director, and Senate Representative.
- D. Each College Council selects a Senate Representative in accordance with the procedure outlined in its own constitution.
- E. New College Councils immediately receive a vote in the General Assembly. New College Councils are eligible for funding from the Senate of College Councils at the beginning of the following fiscal year.



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- F. A College Council may utilize the option to go inactive for a maximum of one (1) consecutive long semester with the approval of the Senate President and Administrative Director. Inactive College Councils remain in good standing within the organization, do not count towards quorum, and are not able to vote for Senate legislation. College Councils who choose to go inactive must notify the Senate Administrative Director before the first General Assembly of the semester.
- G. If a College Council accrues unexcused absences for more than seventy-five percent (75%) of General Assemblies in a long semester, as recorded by the Senate Administrative Director, their status as a College Council will be suspended for the following long semester and will not count towards quorum, being placed on a semester-long probationary period. A College Council may appeal this decision to the General Assembly, after which two-thirds (2/3) of Councils present must vote on its status for the next long semester.
- H. During the probationary period, in order for a Council to regain its quorum status, it must accrue no more than one (1) unexcused absence, as verified by the Senate Administrative Director, after which it will recover its status as an official College Council. However, if during this period, a Council continues to accrue unexcused absences, at the beginning of the following long semester, a bill must be written to formally remove them as a Council from the Constitution, in accordance with Bylaw III(F).
- I. The General Assembly may revoke the status of a registered student organization or sponsored student organization as a College Council of the Senate of College Councils, provided that the respective dean approves of such an action.
- J. In the event that an entire College or School does not have representation within the Senate of College Councils, it will be left up to the respective Dean to nominate another registered or sponsored student organization.
- K. The official College Councils of the Senate of College Councils are: (1) Association of Nurses in Graduate School, (2) Communication Council, (3) Dell Medical School Student Senate, (4) Education Council, (5) Fine Arts Council, (6) Graduate Business Council, (7) Graduate Communication Council,



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(8) Graduate Engineering Council, (9) Graduate Public Affairs Council, (10) Liberal Arts Council, (11) Master in Professional Accounting Council, (12) Natural Sciences Council, (13) Pharmacy Council, (14) Social Work Council, (15) Student Association for the School of Information, (16) Student Bar Association, (17) Student Engineering Council, (18) Undergraduate Architecture Student Council, (19) Undergraduate Business Council, (20) Undergraduate Geological Society, (21) Undergraduate Studies Council, (22) University of Texas Nursing Students' Association.