

## Student Media Advisory Committee Bylaws

1. **PURPOSE** — The Student Media Advisory Committee (hereafter referred to as the Committee or the SMAC) has been established by the University of Houston to formulate, implement and monitor general policies as related to student media.
2. **RESPONSIBILITIES**
  - A. This committee shall have the responsibility for the execution of the rules and procedures, as set forth in these Bylaws, for *The Daily Cougar*, the official student newspaper of the University of Houston, *Student Video Network* and *COOG Radio*. It shall also have similar responsibility for any other specific media organization which may be formed in the future and which falls under its jurisdiction.

The SMAC provides advice and recommendations regarding:

    1. Budgets
    2. Student Salaries and Commissions
    3. Contracts
    4. Advertising rates
    5. Subscription rates
    6. Financial reports
    7. General media policies
    8. Advertising policies
  - B. The Committee elects the primary executive officer of the media organizations.
  - C. The Committee has the power to remove or suspend any student media executive provided the student has violated section 5.C. of the Bylaws and has been given an opportunity to present his/her case before the Committee. Such a removal or suspension would require a 2/3 vote of the voting members.
  - D. The Committee will, when required, serve as arbiter for problems arising from content or format of the media under its jurisdiction.
  - E. A suggested change to the bylaws can be effected only with the approval of at least 2/3 of the voting members present. Recommendations for bylaw changes and/or amendments will be made to the Vice President for Student Affairs for approval.
3. **MEMBERSHIP** — Membership shall consist of nine (9) voting members, and twelve (12) ex-officio members, appointed by their respective parties.
  - A. Student Voting Members
    1. There shall be six (6) student voting members:
      - a. One student shall represent *The Daily Cougar*, appointed by the editor in chief.
      - b. One student shall represent *Student Video Network*, appointed by the president.
      - c. One student shall represent *COOG Radio*, appointed by the station director.
      - d. Three students shall be appointed by the University of Houston's Student Government Association (UHSGA) President with the advice and consent of the UHSGA Senate. At least one of these students shall be a communication major.
    2. No student member shall be an executive board member of his or her student media organization.
    3. No student member shall be a member of the executive branch of the SGA.
    4. Student members must have at least a 2.5 overall grade point average and cannot be on either academic or disciplinary probation when nominated or during their term of office; must have completed 12 semester hours in residence in the semester

immediately before membership is passed; must be a full-time student at the time of election and during their term of office.

- B. Non-Student Voting Members
  - 1. Three representatives of the professional media shall be appointed by the Committee at its first meeting.
  - 2. No UH employee may serve as a voting member.
- C. Terms of Office
  - 1. All Committee members shall serve one academic year.
  - 2. Any voting member who is absent from three consecutive meetings shall be removed from the Committee.
  - 3. No Committee member shall have a designate serving in his or her place unless approved by the Committee.
  - 4. Those who are responsible for appointing representatives shall fill vacancies in a timely manner.
- D. Officers
  - 1. A Chair shall be elected by the Committee from its student membership at the first September meeting, which will be chaired by the Student Media director or his/her representative until the new Chair is elected. The Chair will serve for a period of one academic year starting at the September meeting.
  - 2. A Vice Chair shall be elected by the Committee from its student membership after the Chair has been elected. The Vice Chair will assume that position immediately after election at the September meeting and continue through the academic year.
  - 3. Vice Chair shall retain full parliamentary and voting rights.
  - 4. The Chair shall have no voting rights, except in the case of a tie.
  - 5. Neither the chair nor the vice chair may hold an elected office of the SGA or be a candidate for such an office.
  - 6. A secretary shall be appointed by the Committee from its ex-officio membership at the first September meeting. The secretary shall record the minutes of the meeting.
- E. Ex-Officio Members
  - 1. Ex-officio members shall have all the rights and privileges of the appointed members other than the right to vote.
  - 2. Ex-officio members shall include:
    - a. The editor of *The Daily Cougar*.
    - b. The president of Student Video Network.
    - c. The station director of COOG Radio.
    - d. The director of Student Media.
    - e. The official advisers of Student Media.
    - f. A designated representative of the Student Affairs Division nominated by the Vice President for Student Affairs.
    - g. Director of the School of Communication or designated representative.
    - h. Advertising manager of Student Media or designated representative.
    - i. Student Government Association President.
    - j. One faculty member shall be nominated by the Faculty Senate.
    - k. One UH staff member shall be nominated by the Staff Council.
  - 3. The committee may establish new ex-officio positions and offer one-year appointments on a case-by-case basis.

#### 4. MEETINGS

- A. Meetings of the Student Media Advisory Committee shall be open to the public unless otherwise specified by state law.
- B. The Committee shall meet at least twice in each Fall and Spring semester. Voting on agenda items requires a quorum consisting of the chair or vice-chair and five voting members of the Committee.
- C. Special meetings will be called by the chair or vice-chair if requested in writing by any three or more voting members of the Committee, or by general agreement at a committee meeting.
- D. All meetings will be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*, except where the bylaws specify otherwise.
- E. All meetings should allocate time for an open forum for discussion from members of the committee and visitors. Forum may be suspended with the consent of the committee.
- F. Agenda items should be requested in writing to the Chair at least five (5) days prior to the next meeting.

## **5. STUDENT MEDIA LEADERS**

- A. Qualifications for student media leaders:
  - 1. Applicants must be currently enrolled and not on academic or disciplinary probation at the time of application or at any time during the period of service.
  - 2. Applicants must be enrolled at the University of Houston for at least one year prior to effective date of appointment.
  - 3. Applicants must have an overall GPA of not less than 2.5.
  - 4. Applicants must fill out an application form supplied by the Director of Student Media and provide supporting documentation as prescribed by the form.
- B. Interview and election process
  - 1. The Student Media Advisory Committee shall select the chief executive of each student media organization.
  - 2. Three standing committees shall be established to interview the candidates for each position. The membership of the subcommittees shall be determined by the chair and announced prior to the application process.
  - 3. The appointment committees shall recommend no more than two candidates to the Student Media Advisory Committee for final vote.
  - 4. The deadlines for applications will be determined by the Committee in January.
    - a. Public notice will be given at least two weeks in advance of the application deadline.
    - b. The effective date of appointment for each leader shall be May 1.
  - 5. If a voting member of the Committee is applying for the position of student leader, he or she shall relinquish his or her vote for the duration of the election. Quorum, having been established prior to the election, will remain in place provided that the candidate resume his or her voting positions once the election is completed.
  - 6. Appointments to fill vacancies created by resignation or other causes will be made in an expeditious manner by the appointment committee with final approval by the SMAC.
- C. Responsibilities
  - 1. Appointed leaders shall:
    - a. Carry out the overall policies established by their organization constitution.
    - b. Interview and select their leadership teams as outlined by their constitution.
    - c. Follow laws regarding libel, defamation, copyright and freedom of the press.
  - 2. Appointed leaders must maintain a GPA of 2.5 and enroll in a minimum of nine (9) credit hours each semester during their term of office, unless it is the last semester prior to graduation.

## **6. STUDENT MEDIA POLICIES**

- A. Overall
  - 1. Leaders of student media shall exercise all of the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a free press as we know it in the United States today. They are specifically charged with understanding the freedom automatically involves responsibility and judgment.
  - 2. Leaders of student media shall act without “prior restraint” in the same way a trusted media manager would act under in a professional media environment. Students alone shall be responsible for the final content and composition of their media productions.

## **7. ADVERTISING**

- A. Policy — Student media may accept advertising from any legitimate business that, in the judgment of the media director, is in consonance with honesty, accuracy and good taste. Discriminatory advertising will not be accepted.

## **8. SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS**

- A. It is the policy of the Student Media Advisory Committee that all persons associated with the committee or the Center for Student Media should listen to any suggestions or complaints by any member of the University of Houston community. They should direct those who complain to the appropriate student leader and see that the complainant receives an answer. If complaints are unresolved, they should be brought to the chair of the committee.